

Inspection of Sladefield Infant School

Bamville Road, Ward End, Birmingham, West Midlands B8 2TJ

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 January 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Sladefield Infant School. Staff greet them warmly by name as they arrive each morning. Classrooms are calm, friendly places with lots of smiles and laughter.

Leaders have high expectations of every pupil. They have ensured that pupils learn an ambitious curriculum that has consideration of the school's context at its heart. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and they achieve well. However, a few pupils do not attend as regularly as they should, which means they miss important learning.

Pupils are kind to each other. They understand about equality and make sure everyone is included. The 'Rights Knights' lead on this important part of the school's culture. Leaders deal with bullying effectively. This means pupils feel safe.

Pupils benefit from class swaps with rural schools and learn about schools in Africa, where they have sponsored a well. Pupils work hard to earn 'coins', reflecting the grown-up world, so that they can choose to spend them on rewards or save them for bigger treats. This teaches them about the concept of earning money and encourages them to have high aspirations. Pupils said they are aiming to become marine biologists, doctors and pilots.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have developed a carefully planned and organised curriculum. They have a clear idea of what they want pupils to learn and in what order. This means that pupils make good progress. In some foundation subjects, the links between what children learn in early years and key stage 1 are not embedded fully. This means that in these subjects, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not always building on what they already know.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use resources effectively to support learning. For example, they use puppets in mathematics to engage pupils with counting. Teachers regularly check what pupils know. This ensures that they know how well pupils are achieving and highlights any gaps in learning. Leaders use this information well to provide extra support so that pupils catch up quickly when needed. However, some pupils have not been taught enough ways to become independent learners. As a result, they sometimes miss opportunities to continue learning while they wait politely for adult support or instruction about what to do next.

Children in the early years enjoy the purposeful activities that are provided. There is a focus on improving children's communication and language skills. Staff make the most of each opportunity to talk and interact with children. They encourage children to speak in full sentences. This helps children make a successful start to their life at the school.

Leaders make sure that they quickly identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that staff and parents are clear about the extra support a pupil may need. As a result, teachers make suitable adaptations so that all pupils with SEND can join in lessons and make good progress.

Reading is a priority at the school. Leaders have ensured that pupils have daily opportunities to practise reading skills. Leaders have created a vibrant library area and invested in new reading books. Staff have had effective training in teaching reading and phonics. Pupils learn new sounds in a logical order. There is plenty of extra help for pupils who are in danger of falling behind. The majority of pupils love books and are successful readers.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Staff make their high expectations clear and pupils meet them. Learning is not disrupted by poor behaviour. Adults check how pupils are feeling daily. Regular well-being days encourage pupils and staff to consider their mental health. Pupils understand that at times others may need support with managing their feelings. The 'Shining Stars' room is a calm, nurturing space for those who need it. Pupils understand school values, such as resilience. They say, 'Making a mistake can be a good thing because you have to keep trying, and this makes you resilient.'

Pupils talk enthusiastically about school trips. For example, they visit local Tudor buildings, and this enriches their understanding of past events, such as the Great Fire of London. Pupils can remember the historical facts that they learn on these trips. They learn about keeping healthy and enjoy a range of sporting clubs.

Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Leaders' actions to address this issue have had some success. Parents value the pastoral support that is provided for the whole family. However, too many pupils are persistently absent, resulting in them missing opportunities to learn and make progress.

Governors provide effective support for leaders and staff. They hold leaders to account to continually improve the school. Staff morale is high. Staff appreciate the way leaders take account of their workload and well-being. Adults work closely together and share leaders' ambition to provide a good-quality education for every pupil.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders ensure that all staff have the skills needed to identify signs that a pupil may be at risk. Staff promptly report their concerns. Staff have built strong relationships with families and offer them pastoral support when needed. Leaders work with a range of agencies to support pupils and families. They are confident to challenge these agencies if they feel their response is not effective or timely.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online and in the wider world. They understand what to do if they need help.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few foundation subjects, leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is embedded and linked from the early years through to Year 2. This means that pupils are not always building securely on the knowledge they already know. Leaders should ensure that children’s learning in the early years supports their learning in key stage 1.
- Some pupils miss too much school. These pupils are not learning as much as they should. Leaders should continue their work to improve attendance.
- Leaders have not provided some pupils with sufficient strategies and opportunities for them to become more independent learners. Pupils wait to be told what to do next or wait for help if they are stuck, rather than using strategies to independently develop their knowledge. Leaders need to develop opportunities and teach pupils strategies to become more independent learners.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child’s school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, ‘[disadvantaged pupils](#)’ refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	103255
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10242277
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	358
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alex Tracy
Headteacher	Robert Meadows
Website	www.slfield.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 February 2009, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school operates a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history, art and physical education. For the deep dives, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the leaders responsible for the early years, pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, behaviour, attendance and personal development. The lead

inspector met representatives of the governing body and spoke with a representative from the local authority.

- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans, records of governance and documentation relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector spoke with groups of staff and took account of views shared through the staff survey.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors spoke informally with parents on arrival at school.
- Inspectors considered the school's safeguarding arrangements. They checked the school's single central record of recruitment checks on adults working in the school. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and reviewed the school's actions to support vulnerable children, including sampling relevant records.

Inspection team

Corinne Biddell, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Karen O'Keefe	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Onyon	Ofsted Inspector

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