

Inspection of Olton Primary School

Lyndon Road, Olton, Solihull, West Midlands B92 7QF

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a calm and happy place for pupils to learn. Pupil and staff say how much they enjoy being part of Olton Primary. There is a buoyant, optimistic start to the school day. Some pupils arrive by walking bus, and others with their families. Pupils are welcomed the minute they arrive.

Leaders set high standards for education and behaviour for all. Pupils are expected to work hard. They achieve well as individuals and as members of the school community.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons is very good. They persevere and are positive learners. Around school and on the playground, pupils show the school values of responsibility and empathy. Pupils show care for one another. Bullying does not happen often, but, when it does, staff act quickly to stop it. Adults teach pupils to understand what bullying is and to tell an adult. Pupils feel safe in school.

Leaders and governors have worked well to build a united school culture. Staff and pupils are proud to be part of the school community. Pupils take on active leadership roles as librarians, school councillors and e-safety leaders. Pupils enjoy fundraising, for example, by designing calendars and planning school fairs.

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

Leaders ensure that pupils become successful readers. Phonics teaching in early years is effective and prepares children well for learning in key stage 1. Reading books are well matched to the sounds that pupils know and are learning. Pupils talk with a growing vocabulary about the books they enjoy and would recommend to others. Staff support pupils to catch up if they fall behind. During this inspection, pupils were excited when they talked about events that promoted their love of reading, for example bedtime-story workshops, competitions and book reviews.

Across the school, staff read books to pupils and introduce them to different authors. Library areas in classes are inviting and provide high-quality fiction and non-fiction books. Poetry has a high profile in school. Pupils confidently recite poems and rhymes.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well in reading and mathematics. Staff have strong subject knowledge. Pupils with SEND access the full breadth of the school's curriculum.

The curriculum sets out what pupils should learn. Assessment in reading, English and mathematics is effective because staff check what pupils know and can remember. However, in some foundation subjects, opportunities for pupils to revisit important knowledge vary across the school. Assessment in foundation subjects does not always identify gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Work in pupils' books reflects the progress pupils are making across the curriculum. However, there are some instances where work in pupils' books is poorly presented. This is slowing the progress of some pupils in their writing. Leaders recognise that some teachers are not providing pupils with enough help and guidance with their handwriting.

The work of leaders and the school's family support team to boost attendance is having a positive impact. Many pupils have good attendance and arrive on time each day. However, some pupils do not attend regularly enough and so miss out on learning.

Pupils' behaviour around school is good. They are polite and respectful. Staff make sure that pupils understand routines and expectations. From early years, children are encouraged to think about how they are feeling and how their behaviour affects others around them. Pupils develop confidence in expressing their feelings, ideas and views.

Leaders enrich the curriculum with a wide range of activities and experiences. These include theatre experiences, visits and visitors to school. Pupils have benefited from visits by a local police officer and talks about water safety. Pupils enjoy a variety of after-school clubs, including sports, choir and music, French, cooking and Lego clubs. Pupils participate in inter-school competitions in a range of sports, including rowing, cross-country running and football. Pupils learn about other cultures and faiths. They are thoughtful and respectful when talking about others. Pupils are knowledgeable about refugees and show sensitivity when talking about why families may need to move from different countries. Pupils are proud of their inclusive school.

The governing body and the local authority provide constructive support and challenge to leaders' work. In turn, staff feel supported by leaders. They say that leaders take account of their workload. Parents and carers expressed many positive views about the compassion of staff and the personalised care provided for pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a shared approach to safeguarding across the school. All staff see safeguarding as their responsibility. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained in identifying and reporting concerns that a child may be at risk of harm.

Senior staff and the family support team work closely with pupils and parents. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to ensure that they access the right support in a timely manner.

Pupils learn how to stay safe in school and in the wider community. The curriculum includes teaching on staying safe at home and when online.

Leaders carry out all the necessary checks on adults in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In foundation subjects, leaders have not ensured a consistent approach for pupils to revisit the most important knowledge that they want the pupils to know. This means that pupils forget some of their learning, and teachers are not sure what pupils have remembered. Leaders should ensure that teachers deliberately revisit the key knowledge that they want the pupils to practise and remember.
- Leaders have not ensured that there is a consistent, whole-school approach to the teaching of handwriting. There is variation in how teachers model handwriting, which leads to too much variability in pupils' handwriting. Leaders should make sure that staff follow a consistent, whole-school approach to teaching handwriting.
- The attendance of some pupils is too low. As a result, these pupils miss learning and have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should continue to work with these pupils and their parents to help improve their attendance.

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	104076
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10256821
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	651
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Laura Roy
Headteacher	Leon Chamberlain
Website	www.olton.solihull.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In September 2018, Daylesford Infant School and Chapel Fields Junior School amalgamated and became Olton Primary School.
- In November 2021, a new building opened on the Olton Primary School site. Children in early years and pupils in key stage 1 and two Year 3 classrooms are taught in this new building.
- The school grounds have undergone substantial development since the amalgamation, including in the playground and forest school areas.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed in 2018.
- The school manages before- and after-school childcare provision.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, subject leaders, early years leader and the SEND coordinator.
- Inspectors met with governors, trustees and staff.
- During the inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, English, mathematics, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at school documents, including information about the school's curriculum, behaviour and attendance and records of governors' meetings.
- To check the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector reviewed the school's policies and procedures. She met with safeguarding leaders and spoke to pupils and staff.
- Inspectors reviewed information published on the school's website.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around school, in classes and at social times.
- Inspectors reviewed and discussed pupils' attendance.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the end of the first day of the inspection. Inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted Parent View and considered the free-text comments.
- Inspectors also took account of one letter received during the inspection and two phone calls with parents.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.

Inspection team

Pamela Matty, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Devinder Riat	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Ogden	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Bassett	Ofsted Inspector

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