

# Inspection of Exhall Junior School

Hayes Lane, Exhall, Coventry, West Midlands CV7 9NS

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Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a welcoming and happy place to learn. Pupils know that staff care about them and will help with any worries. Pupils receive extra pastoral support in the 'Rainbow room' if they need it. This makes pupils feel safe in school.

Leaders have high expectations for behaviour and pupils meet them. They behave exceptionally well. They understand that the school values of 'safe, respectful and ready' apply to all areas of school life. Pupils are proud to collect housepoints when they demonstrate these values. They generously celebrate the achievements of their classmates in 'pride' assemblies.

Pupils enjoy opportunities to take on responsibilities in school. Rainbow rangers make sure playtimes are happy and sociable. Sports leaders say they are proud when they encourage other pupils to participate in different sports.

Pupils attend clubs such as cookery and sports clubs. They learn about animal diets and habitats while visiting the zoo. They work as a team and challenge themselves with gorge walking and rock climbing on a residential trip to Wales. Leaders want pupils to achieve well. However, some aspects of the curriculum are not yet fully embedded for some subjects. Pupils are not always learning as well as they could.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have thought about the knowledge and skills that pupils should have. Leaders recognise that there is still more work to do to provide a consistently good quality of education. There have been recent changes in the way leaders have organised the curriculum. As a result, some areas of the curriculum are less well embedded than others. This means that teachers are sometimes unclear about the precise knowledge pupils need to learn. Pupils are not learning well enough across some curriculum subjects.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. They focus on their learning and pupils rarely disrupt each other. Teachers ensure that activities are meaningful. They enrich the curriculum with visitors and trips. These help pupils to remember information. For example, pupils know that the Vikings did not really wear horned helmets because they took part in a Viking workshop. However, subject leaders do not have sufficient opportunity to make thorough checks on how well pupils are learning. This means staff are not always getting support to identify and address when the delivery of the curriculum could be even better.

In most subjects, teachers make effective checks on what pupils know and remember. In those subjects where leaders' curriculum thinking is more developed, teachers use this information to address any gaps that pupils have in learning. However, leaders know that in some foundation subjects, assessment is not effective

enough. They do not know enough about how well pupils are learning in these subjects.

Leaders focus on developing a love of reading. There are a range of opportunities for pupils to read different texts and listen to stories. 'Reading heroes' from the local community listen to pupils read regularly. Most pupils enjoy reading. However, there is not a consistent approach to helping the weakest readers get the support they need to learn to read quickly. Some pupils do not read books that precisely match their needs. Sometimes, staff use unhelpful strategies when teaching pupils to read. This is not helping pupils who have not yet mastered basic reading skills to catch up quickly enough.

Staff receive training that ensures they are effective in identifying and meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders ask pupils with SEND for their ideas, for example, about how to improve the learning environment. Leaders listen and adopt some of these ideas. As a result, pupils with SEND feel valued and included. They recognise that the help they receive is supporting them well. Nurture provision in the 'Snug' is particularly effective in developing learning and social skills for some pupils with SEND.

The school's work to support pupils' wider development is effective. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about a range of faiths and cultures and show tolerance and respect for people's differences. Pupils take part in the 'fiver challenge' and 'money matters' week to learn about business and enterprise. They become active citizens by raising money for charities and taking part in local traditions, such as Bedworth Bun Day.

Governors are enthusiastic and support leaders well. However, leadership is not always strategic enough. Leaders have worked hard to ensure school is a happy place to learn and work. They have rightly identified several areas for improvement but have not always prioritised what needs to be done first to improve the quality of education for pupils.

Staff are proud to work at the school and enjoy doing so. They feel motivated and respected. All staff members feel leaders consider their well-being. Parents and carers feel that this is a welcoming and supportive school. They say that staff are approachable and swiftly deal with any concerns.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a robust culture for safeguarding. Staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They have regular training. Adults know what to do and who to contact if they suspect that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders address concerns promptly. They provide pupils and their families with the help they need. Leaders make appropriate checks on staff before they start work at the school.

The curriculum helps pupils to learn about how to manage risk. For example, they learn about healthy relationships and how to be safe online and in the wider world.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders are still in the early stages of developing the curriculum in some subjects. As a result, teachers do not have all the information they need to deliver the curriculum as leaders intend. Leaders should continue to embed the curriculum changes and check that staff are supported to implement the curriculum effectively in all subjects.
- Teachers' use of assessment in some foundation subjects is under development. This means that teachers are not clear about what knowledge pupils have and what they need to learn next. Leaders should continue to refine their use of assessment in foundation subjects, so that it accurately identifies pupils' gaps and helps teachers adapt subsequent learning to address the gaps.
- Some pupils who are at an earlier stage of reading are not catching up quickly enough. Their reading books are not consistently well matched to the sounds they know and they do not always get the precise help they need. Leaders should ensure that staff receive the training to enable them to support pupils, who struggle to read, to catch up quickly.
- In some subjects, leaders have not had enough opportunity to check how effectively their subject is taught and how well pupils are learning. This prevents them from being able to make any necessary changes to the curriculum, support teachers and help pupils to know more and remember more. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders have the time that they need to evaluate the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning over time.
- Governors do not always sufficiently challenge leaders to improve the quality of education. Governors need to continue to develop their roles too, so that they can ensure leaders analyse information strategically, have sharply focused plans and clearly identify actions to improve the quality of education.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125585
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268250
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	163
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Amanda Gardiner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Robert Mann
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.exhalljunior.org.uk">www.exhalljunior.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	2 and 3 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and computing. 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.

- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, curriculum leaders and the leaders responsible for special educational needs. 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. Inspectors looked at a range of documentation on the school's website.
- Inspectors considered the school's safeguarding arrangements. They met with the designated leader for safeguarding to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. The lead inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the staff survey. The inspector spoke informally with parents on arrival to school.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils about school life, learning and behaviour. Inspectors also listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.

### **Inspection team**

Corinne Biddell, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Anne Potter

Ofsted Inspector

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