

# Inspection of a good school: Lawley Village Academy

Bryce Way, Lawley Village, Telford, Shropshire TF4 2SG

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Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

## **Outcome**

Lawley Village Academy continues to be a good school.

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

Lawley Primary Academy is a calm, safe and welcoming place. Leaders and staff are kind, fair and set high expectations. They make sure that everyone understands the rules and how to behave. Bullying is uncommon. Even so, staff teach pupils how to spot it and, if it happens, staff make sure it stops.

Pupils learn a lot in lessons, which they enjoy. Reading is taught successfully and there are plenty of books to fuel pupils' imaginations and expand their knowledge. Other subjects provide a broad curriculum and learning is often supported by trips and visitors to school. In addition, pupils benefit from many extra activities that support them to take responsibility. From leadership jobs in school to reading and singing with residents at a nearby care home, pupils are prompted to think of others.

Pupils have a say in what happens in school. A pupil safe committee and an eco-committee, for example, both play their part in improving the school. Pupils value the way adults listen to their views. They gain much from seeing how their efforts have brought about constructive change. This, along with all they learn in lessons, helps them to grow into mature responsible young people.

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

The newly appointed headteacher and deputy have continued to build on the school's existing strengths. They stay up to date with current curriculum thinking and approach school improvement in an informed, evaluative and ambitious way. This way of working is apparent in the staff team too. Supportive teamwork with an unwavering focus on what is best for the pupils is clear to see.

Expectations for pupils' behaviour are high. Pupils respond well to these. They attend regularly and look smart in their uniforms and blazers. Their positive attitudes allow everyone to get on with their learning without disruption.

The school team is committed to teaching everyone to read. A structured daily phonics programme starts straight away in Reception. This continues into key stage 1 and is very successful. This is because staff are well trained, the programme is fully resourced and staff follow it with fidelity. Leaders share their expectations with parents so that they can support reading at home, and most do. Pupils who need extra practice to keep up receive additional sessions for as long as they need them.

Once pupils have mastered phonics, staff make sure they read regularly and widely in class. Adults read aloud to pupils and give pupils time to read for pleasure. This, along with 'extras' such as author visits, helps pupils to develop an interest in books and a love of reading.

In fact, 'extras' are a regular feature of school life. The academy trust's 11-before-11 programme sets an expectation that all pupils should take part in a varied set of experiences. On top of this, staff take pupils on educational trips and residential visits to activity centres. During this inspection, for example, Year 4 pupils went on a geography field trip to support their study of rivers. In Reception, staff have made links with a local farm. This helps to pave the way for later learning in geography, history and science. Indeed, the school's approach to learning beyond the classroom enriches pupils' learning across the whole curriculum.

Across the school's broad curriculum, leaders have identified what to teach and when. They also provide informative guidance and resources for staff. Consequently, teaching supports pupils to gain, use and retain knowledge that will help them with future learning. For example, in history, the curriculum identifies recurring themes such as monarchy. This helps pupils to gain increasingly sophisticated ideas about continuity and change over time. That said, it is early days with the current curriculum model. Leaders know that further refinements are needed. Assessment, for instance, is still being reviewed to sharpen its focus and usefulness. Furthermore, while most pupils achieve well in mathematics, some classroom activities, explanations and resources do not support the intended mathematical learning as well as they might.

Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective. Leaders identify needs accurately and liaise with professional services to get advice and help. Staff adapt teaching approaches and resources so that all pupils can access the full curriculum.

The trust provides informed support for school leaders and staff. Staff like working at the school. They appreciate how leaders consider their well-being and workload when making decisions.

Parents are very supportive. They value the quality of education and care provided at Lawley Village Academy. During this inspection, parents gave many examples of how the school has helped their children.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established efficient whole-school systems for spotting and responding to concerns. Each month, they send staff an informative newsletter with safeguarding information to keep them up to date. They also involve pupils in making checks on safety matters. A pupil-led safe committee, for example, surveyed pupils' views about their playground experiences and made some recommendations.

Staff teach pupils about the importance of safe, healthy relationships. They also teach pupils how to spot and manage everyday risks.

The correct checks on staff, including checks on their social media use, are carried out. School and trust leaders keep a careful watch on this.

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

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

- The mathematics curriculum is well planned but not implemented as well as it could be. Sometimes teachers' explanations or choice of resources are not carefully matched to what pupils need to learn. Leaders should review aspects of the mathematics curriculum, and the way it is implemented, so that pupils are supported to reach even higher standards.
- Assessment in some foundation subjects is still being refined. Leaders and staff have identified what pupils need to know. Nevertheless, their checks on what pupils remember could be more efficient and focused on the most useful knowledge. Leaders should continue to sharpen the focus of assessment. They should do this so that it checks and deepens the knowledge pupils need for future learning.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2018.

## **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>	141699
<b>Local authority</b>	Telford & Wrekin
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294607
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	219
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Gavin Robert
<b>Headteacher</b>	Claire Freestone
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lawleyvillageacademy.co.uk">www.lawleyvillageacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	23 and 24 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of REAch2 Academy Trust. The current headteacher and deputy headteacher took up their posts this academic year.
- The school provides before- and after-school childcare on the school site.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provisions.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. In these subjects, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at pupils' work. The inspector also looked at the curriculum in other subjects to check how they were organised and taught. He listened to some pupils reading to a member of staff.
- The inspector looked at published performance data about the school and a range of

school documents. These included information about pupils' behaviour, attendance, the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and school improvement planning. He examined documents published on the school's website.

- The inspector asked school leaders, pupils and parents about safeguarding arrangements and safety routines. He examined the record of employment checks on school staff and looked at other records.
- The inspector talked informally with pupils, parents and staff to gather general information about school life. He took account of the responses to Ofsted's surveys of staff's and parents' views. He spoke with some parents at the start of the school day and visited the before-and after-school childcare clubs.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in class, at lunchtime, on the playground, at clubs and at other times during the day.
- During the inspection, the inspector had formal meetings with the headteacher, other leaders, school staff, pupils, the chair of governors and the trust's regional director of education.

### **Inspection team**

Martin Pye, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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