

Inspection of Cape Primary School

Cape Hill, Smethwick, West Midlands B66 4SH

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Cape Primary School. They appreciate belonging to a community where they feel cared for and where their differences are celebrated. This is a place where everyone feels included. The 'Cape Eight Values' underpin the curriculum and pupils are proud of the rewards they receive for resilience, kindness and independent learning. Pupils value their learning because they know that 'not everyone has the right to an education'. This, they say, makes them feel 'lucky' and want to do well.

Pupils report that staff help them to feel safe. They know that adults care for them and that they will help them sort any problems that might arise. Pupils understand what bullying is and say that they know what to do if it happens. Staff build good relationships with parents who report that they feel listened to and supported.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that caters for the needs of all pupils. They link lessons to the things that pupils know and need to be successful in later life. Pupils support their community by raising awareness of issues such as homelessness and food poverty. They enjoy being reading ambassadors and safeguarding champions because they get the chance to help others.

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

Leaders have made many changes since the last inspection. A new governing body has supported them to improve teaching and learning. Governors have a clear vision for their school. They want 'to be the best they can be' and have realistic plans to achieve this. Leaders know that it can take time for changes to make a difference. Their work has led to improvements in pupils' learning.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. Pupils learn sounds at the earliest point in Reception. An increasing number of pupils can read by the end of Year 2. Well-trained staff support pupils who are unable to read fluently. Pupils take part in daily phonics sessions to help them catch up. Leaders ensure that reading books match the sounds that pupils know. Staff are also improving pupils' understanding of what they are reading. This is helping to develop pupils' enjoyment of reading.

Leaders have also supported staff to improve the quality of education in other subjects. In mathematics, more pupils know their times tables and number bonds which helps them to solve more difficult problems at a later stage. This is also the case in other subjects, where leaders have designed a curriculum that expects pupils to think as experts would. This is not yet the case in a few subjects where leaders have not thought clearly about the knowledge they want pupils to learn.

In some subjects, staff check pupils' learning well. They recap and repeat important knowledge. This helps pupils remember what they learn. However, in other subjects,

methods for checking pupils' understanding are not yet in place. As a result, some subject leaders do not know how well pupils are achieving.

Children in early years achieve well. Many arrive unable to communicate or understand English. Staff are well trained to assess children's needs and support them to develop good learning behaviours and a sense of curiosity. Staff make sure they connect pupils' learning to things they have already experienced. They create learning areas that contain familiar objects to support children to feel settled. By the end of Reception, many children are ready for the next stage of learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Leaders work with staff to identify pupils who struggle with their learning and put effective plans in place to support them. Pupils with SEND are included in all curriculum activities. Staff adapt learning to enable pupils with SEND to be successful and achieve well.

Pupils behave well. They are thoughtful and kind to their classmates and teachers. In lessons, they show a positive attitude to their work. Leaders have effective systems to deal with poor behaviour and pupils are clear about school rules. Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. A minority of pupils still have poor attendance despite staff working to improve this. This has a negative effect on their learning.

Pupils enjoy the wider experiences they have. Leaders understand that pupils need to feel excited about their learning. Pupils go on trips linked to their lessons, visiting places such as the seaside and residential centres. Many pupils hold leadership roles and say they feel like 'they make a difference to their school'. Pupils support their community in many ways and this has helped them to understand the importance of being good citizens. Pupils feel well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders train all staff to keep pupils safe. Staff know the process for identifying and reporting concerns. Leaders communicate quickly with external agencies for pupils who need extra help. Governors have effective oversight of safeguarding. They ensure that adults who work at the school are safe to do so.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn about important issues, such as online safety and healthy relationships. They know who to talk to if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not set out the focus of what pupils should learn clearly enough. This means that pupils do not always make connections to what they already know. This sometimes leads to confusion about the subject they are learning. Leaders should make sure that the curriculum clearly sets out the subject-specific knowledge they want pupils to learn.
- At times, teachers do not use assessment well enough to identify how well pupils are achieving. This means that leaders do not have a clear overview of pupils' progress. Leaders should make sure that assessment systems are purposeful and used effectively to ensure that the curriculum is impacting as intended.
- A significant number of pupils are absent or persistently absent from school. This impacts on how well they learn and slows their progress. Leaders should continue to review how they work with parents and other agencies to tackle pupils' poor 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	103937
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10268235
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	603
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Sohail Khan
Headteacher	Sally Baker
Website	www.capeprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	15 September 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school does not make use alternative provision.
- A new governing body has been in place since the previous section 5 inspection.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first section 5 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, school staff and three governors. The lead inspector held a meeting with the local authority school improvement strategic lead.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and design technology. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2, and 3 read to an adult.
- The lead inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. Inspectors talked to governors, staff and pupils about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including a small number of free-text comments, and responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Antony Bradshaw, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Emma Gater	His Majesty's Inspector
Russell Hinton	Ofsted Inspector

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