

# Inspection of Foley Infant School Academy

Fairfield Drive, Kinver, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY7 6EW

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Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

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

Pupils enjoy their time at Foley Infant Academy. Leaders, including the local board, are raising expectations at this school. There is a strong sense of teamwork that runs through all they do and a determination to do their best for pupils. This shared vision and high ambition mean that pupils' achievements have improved.

There have been many changes in recent years. Some parents say that they do not understand why these changes were needed, while others comment that they have seen improvements in their children's education.

Pupils understand the 'Foley Five Values' and say that these help them when they find things difficult. They say that kindness is the most important value. Pupils show this in their behaviour towards each other. Pupils report that they feel safe. Many say that this is because adults make them feel this way. They feel confident that if they have a problem staff will help them solve it. They know the difference between bullying and minor friendship issues.

Leaders have worked to improve pupils' wider development. Leaders use assemblies to celebrate diversity and difference. They know it is important to contribute to life in their community. They raise money for charities and support events in their local village.

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

Leaders place reading at the heart of the curriculum. From the moment children start in Reception, they learn phonics. Staff have improved their knowledge of how to deliver the phonics programme. They step in to correct pupils' misunderstandings. Pupils not keeping up with the pace of the programme receive effective support. This helps to ensure that no one falls behind when learning to read. Most pupils enjoy reading. They like selecting books from class reading areas and say that their newly updated library has books that they 'look forward to reading'. Most pupils read at home. Where this is not the case, they receive extra support in school.

In many subjects, staff use assessment well. Where it is most effective, teachers use the information about what pupils know and can do to help plan the next steps in learning. This allows pupils to build on learning over time. However, systems to assess pupils' learning in some curriculum subjects are at an early stage of development. As a result, not all subject leaders know how well different groups of pupils are achieving. It also means that teachers do not base subsequent learning on what pupils know and can do.

Leaders have built an engaging curriculum that starts in the early years. They have mapped out the exact knowledge that pupils need to learn in each subject. In physical education (PE), for example, pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding of how to control their body movements. At a later stage, they use these skills to perform dance sequences. In mathematics, leaders have ordered the

curriculum content so that pupils can connect and remember their learning over time. Teachers recap learning at the start of lessons to help important knowledge stick. Pupils are now learning more because teachers deliver the curriculum effectively and model how to do things. However, this is not yet the case in all subjects. This means that in some subjects, pupils do not develop a deep enough understanding of how to become better at the subject.

Leaders expect pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to learn the same things as their peers. Leaders are identifying their needs at a much faster pace. Staff understand these pupils well and know what they find difficult. They change plans when pupils need more help. Leaders use specialist workers, such as the specialist SEND support and an educational psychologist, to provide bespoke advice to support pupils in overcoming challenges. This support helps pupils with SEND to do well.

Children in the early years get off to a good start. The new leader has designed an ambitious curriculum that supports children's social and academic development. Leaders make sure that staff have the training they need to develop children's curiosity and love of learning. Staff ask effective questions to make children think deeply about their learning. Children are prepared for key stage 1.

Pupils behave well, and many attend school each day. Leaders have effective systems in place to make sure that families understand the importance of regular attendance.

Leaders provide pupils with many experiences to support their wider development. Pupils enjoy reflecting on trips to castles and safari parks. Staff use these experiences to 'bring the curriculum to life'. For example, pupils could recall how visits to a Tudor house helped them understand the 'Great Fire of London'. Pupils know about other faiths and religions and say that it is 'good to be different'. They are developing into respectful young citizens.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have effective systems in place to keep pupils safe. Staff know how to spot any signs of concern. Leaders respond swiftly to offer pupils and families the support they need, including the use of external specialists. Staff carry out the required checks to ensure that adults are safe to work with pupils.

Pupils learn many ways to keep themselves safe. They understand the importance of not using screens before going to bed and the risks they can face online. Pupils feel confident to seek help from adults if they are worried about anything.

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

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

- In some subjects, changes to the curriculum are relatively recent. This means that pupils have not yet gained the depth of knowledge in these subjects as they do in others and their understanding of how to become better is weak. Leaders should continue to embed the curriculum to ensure that pupils have the same access to knowledge and skills in all subjects.
- At times, staff do not use assessment as effectively as it could be. This means that leaders do not understand how well pupils are learning in some subjects. Leaders should ensure that assessment is purposeful and used to measure how well the curriculum is being delivered and understood.
- A significant minority of parents express concerns about communication. This has resulted in some parents not feeling informed about the many changes that have taken place in school. Leaders, including the local board, should explore ways to communicate with parents more effectively so that they have greater confidence and understanding of the school's work.

## 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>	146605
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10285052
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	172
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	David Coles
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jimmy Martin
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.foleyacademy.com">www.foleyacademy.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- There have been significant changes in leadership since this school joined Manor Academy Trust. The current headteacher took up post in April 2023. Members of the local board have been in position since before the school became an academy.
- 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.
- Foley Infant School Academy converted to become an academy school in April 2019. When its predecessor school, Foley Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the head of school, other school staff,

representatives from the local board and the chief and vice executive officers.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, PE and geography. 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.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1 and 2 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 visited the before- and after-school provision.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and responses to the pupil and staff survey.
- Inspectors also surveyed parents at the start and end of the school day.

### **Inspection team**

Antony Bradshaw, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Susan Hughes

Ofsted Inspector

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