

Inspection of Woodthorpe Junior and Infant School

Greenwood Close, Kings Heath, Birmingham, West Midlands B14 6ET

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 November, and 13 December 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	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 11 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending school, where they 'learn, play and grow together'. Pupils say that they feel safe. The school has thought carefully about the design of the curriculum from early years through to Year 6. Pupils enjoy their learning and say that many of the subjects are their favourites. They particularly enjoy reading. The school is ambitious for every pupil. Pupils progress well through the curriculum in most subjects. However, recent improvements to the curriculum in some subjects have not yet had the impact on pupils' attainment that the school wants.

Pupils are happy and polite. They behave well and listen carefully to their teachers in lessons and around school. Pupils show respect and kindness to each other and to staff. They say that everyone is welcome and are eager to help each other to have a good time at school.

Pupils welcome opportunities such as taking different roles in school and trips to local science museums. This helps to develop their character. Pupils value the wider experiences available to them such as sporting tournaments with other schools. Most parents are very positive about the school. They appreciate opportunities such as being invited into school for celebration assemblies.

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

The school has established a well-sequenced, ambitious curriculum. It sets out the precise content that pupils are expected to know and remember. This starts in the early years.

The early years environment is designed to support children's learning and play. The school has thought carefully about how children in Reception learn the important skills and knowledge that they will need for later learning. For example, children follow 'mud kitchen recipes' in the outdoor area. They practise their writing skills when evaluating buildings that they have constructed using a range of different materials. Snack time is a social time where adults model respectful conversations and support children to be independent.

From Reception to Year 6, the curriculum is designed around a carefully chosen range of core texts. This helps pupils to make links between the subjects they are learning. For example, stories about evacuation help pupils in Year 6 deepen their understanding of World War II. Pupils in Year 5 draw together previous learning from different periods in history when they consider questions such as 'what is the greatest invention ever?' This helps teachers to check what pupils know and remember. However, the changes made to the curriculum have not yet had the necessary impact on pupils' attainment. In mathematics, some pupils do not understand the concepts they are being taught well enough to be able to build on them later.

The school has prioritised learning to read and to love reading. Well-trained staff deliver phonics lessons and all teachers read aloud to pupils with enthusiasm, every day. Pupils read books that are matched to the sounds they know. Extra support helps pupils at risk of falling behind to keep up.

School leaders ensure that all pupils are fully included in the life of the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have their needs identified and are supported to learn and play alongside their classmates. The school carefully monitors which pupils attend clubs and trips, and offers help to make sure that everybody can join in. For example, pupils can learn different musical instruments such as brass or keyboard.

Relationships between staff and pupils are based on mutual respect. Pupils follow the clear expectations and, as a result, learning is not disrupted. Pupils are respectful of difference and are taught about a range of cultures and traditions. Pupils confidently share their own cultures and beliefs with their classmates.

Staff value the training they are given by school leaders and the opportunities to develop professionally. This includes working with subject leaders from other schools and studying for additional qualifications. Staff say the school is mindful of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has designed a well-considered personal, social and health education curriculum. Local and national risks are considered in the content such as gang culture, knife crime and staying safe online. Concerns about pupils are followed up through a variety of support and actions including escalating to external agencies when necessary. However, some actions taken by the school are not routinely recorded in line with statutory guidance. This could make it difficult to monitor and track actions taken for vulnerable pupils and to determine when concerns continue or have been resolved. Governors are not checking this aspect of the school's work closely enough.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are some minor weaknesses in the school's record-keeping of possible safeguarding concerns. Some follow-up actions are not always recorded or easily found. This could make it difficult to monitor concerns and to understand what actions have been taken. The school needs to ensure the system for recording and analysing concerns about pupils is used consistently. Governors needs to assure themselves that all follow-up actions for any concerns have taken place and are recorded in line with statutory guidance.

- The school has not made sure that pupils always have a strong enough understanding of mathematical concepts rather than processes. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their understanding that could hinder subsequent learning. The school should ensure that the mathematics curriculum enables pupils to grasp the most important mathematical concepts securely to form the building blocks for future learning.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	103334
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10290521
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jade Guo
Headteacher	Linda McGrath
Website	www.woodthorpe-school.com
Date of previous inspection	February 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The on-site before- and after-school provision is managed by an external provider.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Very occasionally, Ofsted receives information after a visit to a school that may suggest there are gaps in the inspection evidence base, which will cause Ofsted to conclude that the inspection is incomplete. This happened at Woodthorpe Junior and Infant School. One of His Majesty's Inspectors returned to the school on 13 December 2023 to gather additional information to secure the evidence

base. In such cases, the inspection report is not published until Ofsted is satisfied that the inspection is secure.

- During the inspection, the inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, and design and technology. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans where they were available, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. A team inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and representatives of the local governing body. The lead inspector also spoke to a representative from Birmingham Education Partnership.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. The inspectors spoke to pupils about pupils' behaviour.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parent free-text responses. The inspectors also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- A team inspector talked to parents and families at the school gate.

Inspection team

Rachel Henrick, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Simon Rowe

His Majesty's Inspector

Richard Wakefield

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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