

Inspection of a good school: Studley Infants' School

High Street, Studley, Warwickshire B80 7HJ

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 February 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Beccy Merritt. This school is part of Arden Forest Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Adam Walsh, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nick Moon.

What is it like to attend this school?

Studley Infants is a small school with a big heart. Pupils arrive in the morning with smiles on their faces and feel a strong sense of belonging. Their parents and carers are full of praise for the welcoming, caring staff. There is a real sense of cohesion and togetherness which extends to the local governors and the trust. The school's motto of 'suppose, imagine, succeed' really captures the ambition of this vibrant school community.

The school has high expectations of how well pupils should learn and develop. Pupils typically do well and are well prepared for the move to their next schools. However, some of the less able readers do not make enough progress to catch up quickly.

Pupils behave well towards one another and are kind and helpful. They understand about fairness and respect. They enjoy strong friendships. At breaktimes, pupils take advantage of all the exciting activities on offer in the playground. They collaborate confidently with others in designing and playing games.

The relationships between staff and pupils are highly positive. Pupils know that adults will always help if they have any worries. Incidences of unkindness or bullying are rare but are taken seriously and addressed if they occur.

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

The curriculum is well structured as the school has carefully considered the order in which

lessons are taught so that pupils build on what they already know. The school has tailored an inspiring curriculum that hooks pupils into learning. Teachers understand and bear in mind what motivates pupils to make lessons memorable and engaging. For instance, pupils become enthralled in the music they listen to, one commenting, 'Music makes you feel like you have a story in your head.' Pupils learn the key vocabulary in the subjects they study. Some of the youngest pupils explained confidently the meaning of pulse, tempo and pitch in music. In mathematics, teachers provide strong, clear guidance and always revisit past learning. This helps pupils to build new knowledge with greater success.

Staff are knowledgeable about supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The early identification of pupils with SEND is very effective, so they quickly receive the support that they need. Teachers skilfully adapt lessons and resources so that pupils can access the curriculum. Staff have high expectations of what all pupils will achieve. Well-trained, caring adults support pupils with high levels of need very well. The emphasis that the school puts on pupils' emotional health is an area of strength. There is a 'never give up on anyone' culture that stands out a mile.

The school uses an approach to phonics that sets out the order in which sounds are taught and how lessons are structured. This starts when children enter Nursery and Reception. Most pupils become fluent readers before they move on to their next school. However, for some weaker readers, the intended learning is not well matched to their needs. As a consequence, they struggle and find the reading material too difficult to cope with. They encounter too many sounds that they do not know and so do not develop reading fluency as quickly as they should.

The school provides a range of good opportunities for pupils' wider development which includes a well-structured personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils learn about staying safe online and in the real world. They enjoy visits and visitors that enhance the curriculum. For instance, they loved their visits to the dinosaur theatre and The National Forest. In school, pupils benefit from activities such as forest school, sports clubs and a range of activities which support their well-being.

The school enjoys positive relationships with parents. They are fully included in their children's education. They receive regular information about what their children are learning and how well they are doing.

The school works closely with parents to improve pupils' attendance. But some pupils, many of whom are disadvantaged, are still absent too often and so miss out on valuable learning. The strategies the school has adopted to improve attendance are not having the desired outcomes.

There is a shared ambition at Studley Infants' School. All staff want the very best for all pupils. They feel valued and supported by school leaders and by the trust. Every member of staff who responded to Ofsted's survey said they enjoy working at the school and are proud to do so.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some weaker readers struggle to apply their phonics knowledge when reading because the books they read are too difficult and the planned learning is not well matched to their needs. This means they have gaps in their phonics knowledge and do not develop reading fluency as quickly as they should. The school should ensure that the planned learning builds on pupils' prior knowledge and that books are carefully matched so pupils develop their fluency, comprehension and confidence.
- The attendance of some groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, is not as high as it should be. Pupils who do not attend regularly miss out on important learning. The school should implement alternative strategies with parents of pupils who attend poorly so that these pupils have good attendance and take advantage of the exciting curriculum on offer.

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 predecessor school, Studley Community Infants' School, to be good in March 2017.

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	148511
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10294719
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	172
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nick Moon
CEO of the trust	Adam Walsh
Headteacher	Beccy Merritt
Website	www.studleyinfants.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- A new headteacher joined the school in January 2024.
- The school has a resource base for pupils with communication and interaction needs.
- Since the last inspection of the predecessor school, the pupil admission number has reduced from 60 to 45 pupils per year.
- The school manages before- and after-school care.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since it became an academy.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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 inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. The inspector also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at breaktimes. He spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- The inspector heard some pupils read.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents and the school's website.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Gareth Morgan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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