

Inspection of a good school: Moorcroft Wood Primary School

Bull Lane, Bilston, Walsall, West Midlands WV14 8NE

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 March 2024

Outcome

Moorcroft Wood Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Moorcroft Wood is a friendly school where pupils make everyone feel welcome. Class ambassadors greet visitors to lessons and give a helpful explanation of the learning that is taking place. They are keen to talk about how much they enjoy their learning and are proud of the school.

Pupils know the importance of the school's values, especially showing respect to others. They get on well with each other at social times, whether playing football or using the climbing wall. Pupils sit and chat with each other sensibly when eating their lunch together. They behave well in lessons because they want to learn and enjoy the variety of activities they experience. These high expectations are understood by pupils of all ages; even the youngest children manage themselves well and take care of the resources they use and play with.

Many pupils attend the clubs on offer. Singing is a very popular activity, with some even practising their singing on the playground. Since joining the federation, pupils have had more opportunities to learn and compete alongside other pupils their age. They enjoyed taking part in the inter-school quiz and a concert at the local arena, attended by many parents and carers.

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

There has been significant change at the school over the last eighteen months. The school has joined a new federation and there are new leaders in place. These leaders identified quickly the things that needed improving and took effective action to strengthen these areas. Through the support of the federation, the school has built capacity and stabilised leadership so that pupils receive a high-quality education at all stages of their time at the school.

The school rightly prioritised reading and mathematics as areas for development and recent changes have noticeably strengthened the curriculum for both subjects. Pupils achieve good outcomes at the end of Year 6 which sets them up well for success at secondary school.

Everyone at Moorcroft Wood knows the importance of ensuring that all pupils become confident, fluent readers. Starting with the '1,000 books' shared in the Reception cloakroom, children and parents see the value and enjoyment to be found in books. Phonics is taught well and there is timely support in place for any pupils who are struggling to keep up. The school has recently increased the amount of time spent on teaching reading in key stage 2. The positive impact of this shift is already evident.

In some subjects, the curriculum has been updated to ensure that pupils are better able to build their learning over time. Teachers deliver new learning with confidence and clarity. They regularly check that pupils have understood their learning. Pupils' knowledge is also assessed at the end of each topic. However, there are not always planned opportunities for pupils to apply, in sufficient depth, the subject skills that they have learned. Some of this is because there are not enough meaningful opportunities for them to write in subjects other than English.

Children in the early years benefit from a curriculum that focuses on laying strong foundations for later success. The development of language is a key part of all learning activities. Children are introduced to new words each week through 'Granny's basket' and are encouraged to use them in their interactions with adults. These words link to the weekly topic and book. For example, children learn about how plants grow, alongside reading 'Jack and the Beanstalk'.

Moorcroft Wood is a highly inclusive school and the school's work to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is very strong. Pupils' needs are identified effectively, and teachers are knowledgeable about how to adapt learning to meet these needs. 'The nest' offers bespoke provision that enables pupils with SEND to learn well and also spend time with their classmates. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

The school has worked hard to improve pupils' behaviour and attendance. Pupils enjoy having afternoon tea with the senior leadership team when they demonstrate the school's values through their behaviour. There has been success in helping more pupils attend school regularly through close working with families and rewards such as walking Sonny, the mentor dog. However, the strategy to improve attendance is not as effective for all pupils. There remains a number of pupils who continue to be persistently absent and are missing out on important learning.

Pupils talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe. They are prepared well for their next steps in school and beyond. They learn how to be positive members of society. The school sets them up well for life.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not ensured that pupils have enough opportunities across the curriculum to develop their writing skills beyond English. This means that pupils are not fully enabled to show the depth of their learning and apply key skills learned in each subject. The school should ensure that the curriculum supports pupils becoming confident, skilled writers in all subjects.
- Some pupils are absent from school too often. These pupils develop gaps in their learning and miss out on important social and personal development opportunities. The school should ensure there is an effective strategy in place to reduce persistent absence.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2014.

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	135016
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10322814
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	255
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Adam Hicken
Headteacher	Ann Adair (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.moorcroftwood.net
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined the Lighthouse Federation in May 2023. There are nine schools in the federation.
- The head of school is Jennifer Wakelam. There is also an executive headteacher, Ann Adair, who took up post in September 2023. The executive headteacher is responsible for this school and one other.
- The school has a Nursery, including provision for two-year-olds.
- The school runs before- and after-school provision on site.
- The school does not make use of 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 their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, other school leaders, the federation chief operations officer, federation and local governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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 inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult and visited other lessons, including those in the early years.
- 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 the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including comments submitted via the free-text facility, and spoke to some parents in person.

Inspection team

Nicola Beech, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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