

Inspection of a good school: Widney Junior School

Clifton Crescent, Solihull, West Midlands B91 3LQ

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 March 2024

Outcome

Widney Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Widney Junior School welcomes everyone. There is a strong sense of community. The school works closely with parents and carers, who value what the school offers. Pupils thrive and really enjoy their learning.

The school has planned the curriculum carefully. Pupils study a wide range of subjects. Leaders are ambitious about what pupils can achieve, and pupils learn well. Arrangements to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are particularly strong.

Pupils love reading. The school uses creative ways to promote reading for pleasure. Weaker readers, including those who speak English as an additional language (EAL), benefit greatly from a structured reading programme.

Adults forge good relationships with pupils. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in classrooms and corridors. Pupils behave very well in lessons. They know there is always an adult to turn to who can resolve any issues. This helps all pupils to feel safe. Pupils attend well.

Pupils learn about different cultures and traditions. They have the opportunity to take up leadership roles, such as school councillors or house captains. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make very good use of extra-curricular clubs. These range from cheerleading to coding, and include both sports and musical activities.

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

Widney Junior School lives by its values. There is a real determination to ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable, get every chance to succeed. Everyone works together as a team. Staff believe that leaders are always ready to listen to their views.

The school provides pupils with many opportunities to develop their reading. They learn to use the different skills that readers need, such as inference and prediction. Pupils explore and reflect on their own preferences, regularly reading their chosen books in a converted bus. Most read willingly in their own time. Those pupils who are behind with their reading, or who join the school and speak EAL, catch up quickly.

Pupils study all the subjects in the national curriculum. Leaders have designed learning so that it typically builds well on what pupils already know. For each unit of work, they set out the key vocabulary for pupils to learn. Teachers plan the day-to-day activities for pupils so that they meet the school's longer-term learning aims. This is notable in mathematics, where pupils master all the smaller steps before attempting bigger calculations. For example, pupils in Year 4 were able to add and multiply lengths in different ways to calculate the perimeter of a rectangle. They think logically about different ways to approach questions, and confidently apply their knowledge to practical situations. However, in some subjects, work is not so carefully structured. Pupils sometimes find it hard to add to their knowledge because some of the more elementary learning is not secure.

Teachers check effectively on what pupils are learning. Pupils know how to improve their work. They value, in particular, time set aside with their class teacher to address any misconceptions.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND precisely and promptly. Staff are expert in ensuring that these pupils' needs are met. As a result, pupils with SEND make very good progress across the full curriculum.

The school sets high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Disruption to learning is rare. Pupils demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to their studies and take pride in their work. They are well motivated by the school's rewards, such as badges for learning their multiplication tables or a free book from the vending machine. Pupils show consideration for each other and courtesy to adults.

A range of rich experiences contribute to pupils' learning. For instance, a disabled footballer recently visited the school to describe his perseverance in competitions. Pupils benefit from a planned programme of personal and social education. They learn about different cultures and traditions, for example through the school's choice of reading texts. Pupils respect others and value diversity.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, new learning is sometimes not securely built upon what pupils already know. In these circumstances, pupils find it hard to link their learning together and remember it in the longer term. The school should ensure that in all foundation subjects, the curriculum is carefully sequenced and that teachers help pupils to connect new knowledge with what they have learned in the past.

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 May 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	104054
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10322717
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	328
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Helen Barnes
Headteacher	Joanna Bridges
Website	www.widney.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A breakfast club and an after-school club are run on the school site by another provider.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- A significant number of pupils join the school other than at normal points of transfer, many of whom speak English as an additional language.

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 school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders, with the special educational needs coordinator and with curriculum leaders. He also spoke with staff about their experience of the school.

- The chair, vice chair and one other member of the governing body met with the inspector. The inspector spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke with pupils at social times and with groups of pupils more formally.
- 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 reviewed a range of documents, including evaluations and improvement plans. He also reviewed the school's attendance and behaviour records.
- The inspector took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View. The inspector met with parents at the start of the second day of the inspection. He also reviewed some correspondence from parents.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. He also scrutinised work and spoke to pupils about some other subjects.
- The inspector listened to a sample of pupils from Years 3, 4 and 5 reading to a familiar adult.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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