

Inspection of Lightwoods Primary Academy

Castle Road East, Oldbury, Sandwell, West Midlands B68 9BG

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 May 2024

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

The principal of this school is Rob Matthews. This school is part of the Shireland Collegiate 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, Sir Mark Grundy, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andy Dennis.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils excel here. A calm, nurturing environment permeates throughout the school. Many pupils comment that they love their time here. Pupils are encouraged to explore the world around them and are excited to do so.

The school pays a great deal of attention to pupils' safety and well-being. Pupils, including children in the early years, build strong, positive relationships with their teachers and peers. This helps pupils to settle quickly when they first join. The warmth of these relationships means that children are happy at school and attend regularly.

Pupils' behaviour is praiseworthy. In lessons, they focus intently on their learning, making the most of every moment. Children in the early years quickly learn the routines expected of them and make strong progress. The commitment that pupils have to learning is palpable.

Pupils study a broad and rich curriculum that extends well beyond the academic. Many pupils benefit from the well-planned and resourced 'forest school' activities. Pupils take up leadership positions within the school, such as librarians, eco-warriors and school council reps. These roles help pupils develop their understanding of social and moral responsibilities to their community and beyond. Pupils know that they have a voice that is listened to.

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

The school has the highest expectations for pupils. Leaders' commitment to improving the school is profound. They take every opportunity afforded to them to ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to excel in their work. Staff value this and share leaders' ambitious vision. Staff work as one to achieve it.

The school has successfully nurtured a positive culture of reading. From the moment pupils start, they are immersed in a broad range of carefully considered texts, songs and rhymes. Pupils love reading. They speak passionately about books they read and quickly grow into avid readers.

Supporting pupils' love of reading is a well-planned phonics curriculum. Recently, the school has focused its attention on rejuvenating this. The sounds that pupils learn build successfully upon ones they already know. The school has made sure that the books pupils read are carefully matched to the sounds they know. Teachers are experts and deliver the reading curriculum with accuracy. They quickly spot those pupils who need extra support and give them the help they need. Consequently, pupils, including those in the early years, learn to read quickly and fluently.

Across all subjects, leaders have developed a challenging and engaging curriculum. They have carefully considered the precise knowledge that pupils need to know to be successful. They have made sure that the things that pupils learn build upon

what they already know. This helps pupils to make sense of their learning, and they make strong progress. For example, in mathematics, pupils gain a deep knowledge of the mathematical rules they are taught and apply these confidently in their work.

In the main, teachers use assessment well. They accurately identify children's starting points when they start Reception. Across the school, in English, mathematics and science, teachers check learning and adjust their teaching to fill any gaps in pupils' knowledge. This stops pupils from falling behind. However, in some other subjects, the school has not identified the precise things that should be assessed, or how to assess these. This means that, at times, teachers are unclear about precisely what to check. This leads to gaps in learning and misconceptions not always being addressed.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do very well. The school quickly gains a clear understanding of pupils' individual needs. It capitalises on expert advice from external providers to ensure pupils get the necessary help and support. The school provides the training and guidance needed to meet pupils' individual needs. Staff feel empowered. They provide very effective support for pupils with SEND.

The school's work to develop pupils' character and wider experiences is a real strength. It is ingrained in every aspect of school life. For example, as part of the school's 'Alumni project', pupils learn about their future potential. Images of past pupils, including Olympians, architects and museum curators sharing their career successes, adorn the school. Pupils' sense of their moral and social responsibility is profound. Pupils frequently ask their teachers to lead fundraising activities to support those less fortunate. All pupils, including those with SEND, benefit from a broad range of opportunities to develop their passions outside the classroom. Pupils benefit regularly from various residential trips that enhance their understanding of other cultures.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the foundation subjects, the school has not been clear enough about the precise knowledge that needs to be checked and how. As a result, teachers are not always clear about how well pupils have learned new curriculum content. Where this happens, occasionally, gaps in pupils' learning go unnoticed, and misconceptions persist. The school should provide clarity about precisely which knowledge ought to be assessed, and support teachers to check on this methodically so pupils achieve well across all subjects.

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	148333
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10294710
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	418
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Dennis
Principal	Rob Matthews
Website	www.lightwoodsprimary.academy
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is one of 11 schools that comprise the Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is split over two sites. One site houses children in the early years, and pupils in key stage 1, while pupils in key stage 2 attend the other school site.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education and history. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.

- Inspectors met with the principal and other senior leaders.
- 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.
- Inspectors reviewed school documentation.
- Inspectors met with a group of trustees and governors. An inspector also met with the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils at social times and in formal meetings.
- Inspectors met with staff and took account of the online staff survey.
- Inspectors reviewed Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Alexander Laney, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Heather Simpson	His Majesty's Inspector
Patrick Amieli	Ofsted Inspector

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