

Inspection of Nelson Mandela School

Colville Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham, West Midlands B12 8EH

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 July 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 15 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.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a 'Rights Respecting School'. This means the school places pupils' rights at the heart of its ethos and curriculum. The award underpins and validates the high level of respect that adults and pupils afford one another. The school is a community school in every sense of the word. It works in close collaboration with parents and carers, and pupils are actively involved in supporting community events. These include litter picking and supporting a food bank.

The school has high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Pupils meet these expectations. Presentation in their books is excellent. Pupils understand and follow the behaviour systems in place. They show positive attitudes to learning and enjoy talking about what they are doing. Pupils feel safe at school. They know they can talk to a trusted adult and that they will be listened to.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of events, visits and visitors. These include exciting activities such as performing Shakespeare plays with the Royal Shakespeare Company, meeting an England cricketer and visiting local museums. The school has achieved a number of prestigious curriculum awards, including art, science and physical education (PE). These awards broaden and enhance the opportunities pupils receive.

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

The school has ensured that there is a well-thought-out curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff receive suitable subject training to ensure they deliver the curriculum as intended. The school invests heavily in support staff so that all pupils get the attention and support they need in lessons.

In reading, writing and mathematics, the school has established robust and effective systems to check pupils' understanding and ability, and track their progress. As a result, pupils achieve well in these subjects and outcomes are rising and close to, or above the national average at the end of each key stage. However, in some other subjects, assessment systems are variable and less well developed. This means staff do not consistently identify where gaps in knowledge exist to inform future planning.

Many children in the early years have limited communication and language skills on entry. The school has invested in speech and language support and places the development of early language and vocabulary at the heart of the early years curriculum. Children's physical and personal development are well catered for, and most achieve well in literacy and mathematics. However, other areas of learning, particularly knowledge and understanding of the world, are less well designed and implemented. Many activities lack a focus and there is insufficient coherence in building children's knowledge and skills sequentially.

Provision for pupils with SEND is a strength within the school. Effective systems are in place to identify pupils' needs accurately. Well-trained staff provide support and make suitable adaptations in lessons so that all pupils, including those with physical difficulties, can access the full curriculum. This includes pupils in wheelchairs in PE.

Reading is front and centre in the school's curriculum. Books are everywhere in school and high-quality displays show the importance placed on literature and encourage a love of reading. The school works closely with the Royal Shakespeare Company, so pupils have an excellent knowledge of classical theatre. Well-trained staff ensure that there is a consistent approach to phonics teaching and how children learn to read. The school makes sure that those who struggle to read get the extra help they need to catch up quickly. Most do, including pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Most pupils enjoy school. However, the number of pupils who are persistently absent is too high, especially in the early years and Year 1. The prime reason for this is due to extended family holidays. The school does not authorise these holidays. They work extra hard to help children who miss important lessons to catch up.

Pupils have a good understanding of other faiths and cultures. They have a strong sense of tolerance and respect and know the importance of treating everyone equally. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated in this school. Pupils develop their confidence and resilience through the many activities and events the school hosts. They readily take on additional roles such as peer mediators, art councillors and librarians to develop their leadership skills.

Governors are astute and well informed. They use their range of expertise skilfully to support and challenge leaders and staff at the right level. They know the school well because they meet with staff and monitor different year groups as link governors. Staff are proud to work at Nelson Mandela. Their workload and well-being are sympathetically managed by the school.

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 is still shaping its approach to assessment in the foundation subjects. This limits teachers' ability to identify where provision could be further strengthened. The school should ensure that teachers are suitably equipped to check where gaps in pupils' knowledge exist in order to inform future planning.
- The early years curriculum is not coherently designed and implemented across all seven areas of learning, especially in knowledge and understanding of the world. Activities lack a focus and do not build children's knowledge in some areas to

prepare them well enough for Year 1. The school should ensure that the early years curriculum is well sequenced and progressive in all areas of learning, and that there is a suitable balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

- The number of pupils who are persistently absent is too high, particularly in the early years and Year 1. This means that younger pupils miss important lessons and do not develop the foundation skills needed to be successful learners year-on-year. The school should focus its attention on helping parents understand the importance of regular attendance, especially for younger pupils, in order to reduce persistent absenteeism in the school.

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	103384
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10242269
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	461
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Angela Brown
Headteacher	Amy Lassman
Website	www.nelsonmandelaschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 September 2008 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in February 2021, having formerly been the deputy headteacher at the school.
- The school has resourced provision for up to six pupils with physical disabilities. Pupils are fully integrated and taught alongside their peers.
- The school does not use any 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 judgment 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.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also had telephone discussions with an educational consultant commissioned by the governing body, and the local authority school improvement adviser.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, reading, mathematics, PE and religious education. For each deep dive, they held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors met with teaching staff to talk about the curriculum, staff workload, and the behaviour and personal development of pupils. They also met with groups of pupils to talk about their learning and well-being.
- The lead inspector observed a selection of pupils reading to members of staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: checked the school's single central record; spoke to senior leaders about safeguarding procedures; took account of the views of 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 a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. Records of attendance and behaviour incidents were checked.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and talked to them about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- The inspectors talked to parents before and after school and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, the online survey. They gathered the views of pupils and staff on site through discussion with these groups and from their online survey responses.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Linda Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Onyon	Ofsted Inspector

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