

Inspection of Rowley Hall Primary School

Windsor Road, Sandwell, Rowley Regis, West Midlands B65 9HU

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 July 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy going to school. They like how well everyone gets on with each other. Pupils demonstrate an impressively inclusive attitude towards others. Older pupils treat younger pupils kindly.

Behaviour around the school is calm and orderly as pupils show their understanding of the 'smart walking' expectations. They are prompt at putting their belongings in their lockers and settling quickly to learning. Pupils are attentive in lessons and enjoy getting involved in the many opportunities they have to discuss their learning. However, because of variation in the quality of their learning experiences, many do not achieve all they are capable of.

The school places importance on pupils knowing their rights and responsibilities. Pupils know they will be listened to. This helps to foster a culture of warmth and trust between staff and pupils. They also know they can contribute their thoughts and ideas about the school via the school council and other committees.

Pupils value the different clubs and activities on offer to them. They enjoy the many opportunities to perform, for example in the recent brass concert and the 'Star Warts' production. They talk confidently and knowledgeably about how to keep themselves safe and healthy.

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

The school has made many improvements since the previous inspection.

The early years provision helps children get off to a strong start. Children quickly learn how to manage themselves and take responsibility for their belongings and the environment. They know how to work and learn together. Learning activities help to bring the key reading texts to life. These activities help children to use the new language they have learned and reinforce their mathematical and phonics learning. Most staff skilfully support the development of children's language and communication.

The school has prioritised reading, and it is taught well. Children are introduced to sounds and stories in Nursery. The phonics scheme is delivered with consistency. The vast majority of pupils leave key stage 1 as secure, confident readers. Any who are not reading at an age-appropriate level are well supported. There is an effective process in place to identify any pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils with more complex needs benefit from the calm learning environment of 'the nest'.

The broad curriculum is now sequenced in a way that builds learning over time. This is consistent across different subjects. There is a shared focus on vocabulary development, and pupils use subject language well when discussing their learning. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of trips, which also support pupils' cultural

and social development. These include visits to a living history museum and the beach.

However, the implementation of the curriculum still requires improvement. There is too much variation in how well the curriculum is taught. Some staff have not yet developed the subject knowledge they need to deliver the intended curriculum effectively. Sometimes they do not have a strong enough understanding of how best to teach different aspects of the curriculum. A key area of inconsistent practice is how well learning is adapted to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Some pupils struggle to secure the key learning they need. Others are not enabled to demonstrate the depth of their knowledge and skill development.

Because pupils do not learn the curriculum to a consistently high standard, many do not achieve well in the end of key stage 2 tests. This includes a significant proportion of disadvantaged pupils. The school is working to address this, but outcomes are not improving quickly enough.

The pastoral support pupils receive is strong. The team knows its pupils well and ensures that vulnerable pupils receive the support they need. The focus on positive relationships has resulted in a climate where pupils behave well and show respect. More serious consequences only need to be used infrequently. This focused work with pupils and families also means attendance has improved and persistent absence has reduced. However, there is more to be done to ensure that attendance is in line with national averages.

There have been changes to school leadership and governance since the previous inspection. Leaders are working hard to help the school improve further. However, they are not all working toward a common vision or using consistent approaches. This means that there is not the clarity needed for improvements to happen quickly enough. Parents, carers and staff talk positively about the changes that have taken place in the last year. Most staff feel as cared for as the pupils do.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is inconsistency in how well the curriculum is implemented. Some staff do not have the secure subject knowledge and pedagogical understanding to deliver the curriculum well. This means some pupils do not secure the key knowledge needed for success. The school should ensure that all staff are supported in delivering the curriculum effectively.
- Learning is not adapted effectively to meet the differing needs of pupils. Some pupils are following a curriculum intended for younger pupils. Some activities do

not support pupils who are finding some of the learning difficult effectively. Other tasks do not enable all pupils to fully demonstrate the depth of knowledge and subject-specific skills they have acquired. As a result, many pupils are not making the progress they should. The school should ensure that all staff are able to make appropriate teaching adaptations for different groups of pupils.

- There are a significant number of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, who are absent too often. These pupils miss out on key learning and wider development experiences. They do not achieve as well as other pupils. The school should ensure there is a more strategic approach to reducing absence and extend its work to strengthen everyone's understanding of the importance of good attendance.
- Leaders are not always working in a consistent and cohesive way to support rapid school improvement. Improvements in pupils' outcomes are not happening quickly enough. Leaders at all levels should ensure that there is greater cohesion and consistency across their work so that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in helping the school improve.

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	103955
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10322713
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	614
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tim Coleman
Headteacher	Matt Whiteley
Website	www.rowleyhall.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 July 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has taken up post since the previous graded inspection.
- The school has a Nursery.
- The school runs before- and after-school provision on site.
- The school does not make use of 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 judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued 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, other school leaders and the chair of the governing board. They also met a representative from the local authority.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, art and design, English and science. For each deep dive, the inspectors 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 inspectors 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 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. 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
Gill Turner	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Maybank	Ofsted Inspector
Donna Wright	Ofsted Inspector

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