

Inspection of William Ford CofE Junior School

Ford Road, Dagenham, Essex RM10 9JS

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 July 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils here are happy and safe. The school has high expectations for all pupils' behaviour and of their attitudes to learning. Pupils are kind. The school makes sure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to participate in all that the school has to offer. For example, in physical education all pupils learn to play paralympic sports. All pupils participate regularly in clubs, including multi-sports, and arts and crafts. Pupils in the radio station club across all year groups host and present a live radio show that is broadcast throughout the school at lunchtime.

Leaders encourage pupils to 'thrive, not survive' here. Pupils enjoy the many exciting experiences that the school organises, including themed days, many educational visits and unique experiences, including visits to foreign countries. Pupils rate highly the many opportunities that the school organises within and beyond the curriculum.

Leaders have recently modified the writing curriculum so that pupils have more opportunities to revise, edit and improve their work. These changes, alongside recent changes to the teaching of the reading curriculum, have led to improvements in the quality of pupils' work. These changes are not reflected in the historical academic outcomes of the school.

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

The school has a well-structured and broad curriculum. Leaders place equal importance on all subjects, including sport and the arts. Leaders have identified the key knowledge that pupils need to know and remember across all subjects. In subjects including mathematics, key knowledge is regularly revisited over time so that pupils can recall it for future learning. Sometimes, however, the knowledge that the school has outlined is not revisited as frequently as it could be to help pupils to recall it in their long-term memory.

Upon entry to the school, any pupils that require support to improve their reading are identified quickly. The school provides regular support to help them to learn and remember new phonics and to improve their reading fluency and confidence.

Staff are highly supportive of the school. They feel that their workload and well-being are taken into account and that leaders are approachable. Members of the governing body understand their duties and hold accurate views of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement.

Teaching typically presents subject matter clearly and checks that pupils understand what they have been taught. For example, in science, teaching successfully checked that pupils understood fully the conditions that plants need to grow before introducing new information. However, occasionally teaching activities do not support pupils to understand and remember the planned curriculum as effectively as they could. As a result, sometimes pupils cannot recall, understand and apply this knowledge when attempting more complex work.

The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is strong. Systems ensure that these pupils are swiftly identified and given the support that they need to follow the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders have put in place appropriate specialist support where necessary for pupils with more specific SEND needs.

The school's approach to managing pupils' behaviour is clear and well understood by staff and pupils. This contributes to a respectful school environment where pupils are polite and respectful in class and during breaktimes. Pupils are excited by what they have learned and how this connects to the real world.

Leaders have identified attendance as a priority and put in place very effective measures to improve attendance rates. For example, leaders ensure that pupils are highly engaged in their learning in class and in extra-curricular activities that they can choose to do before, during and after school. As a result of this successful work, attendance has improved significantly over the last year.

The personal development curriculum extends well beyond the academic. Pupils make regular use of the wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. The school arranges 11 'experiences' that all pupils take part in during Years 3 to 6. These include visits to the theatre, learning to cook a meal and contributing to the local community. Careers information is integrated into lessons, throughout all year groups.

The school organises many pupil leadership opportunities. The democratically elected learning council helped to design a new library, and the eco-council is helping to design a new outside learning classroom.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teaching does not reflect leaders' ambitious intentions of the curriculum. Occasionally, the activities that pupils undertake do not support pupils to learn and remember the intended curriculum as effectively as they could. At other times key knowledge and skills that pupils need to remember for future learning is not revisited as frequently as it could be. This means that sometimes pupils do not develop the deep knowledge of the curriculum that is required in preparation for future learning. The school should ensure that across the curriculum, learning activities routinely support pupils to learn and remember the planned curriculum.

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	101234
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10327639
Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	338
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Robert Riach
Headteacher	David Huntingford
Website	www.williamfordschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 March 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses no alternative providers.
- Many members of the school's governing body are new and have been appointed in the last 18 months.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character was carried out in April 2023. It is due for its next section 48 inspection in 2028.

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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, behaviour, attendance and pupils' wider development.
- The inspectors met with representatives from the governing body, and had discussions with the school improvement partner and a representative from the diocese.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and physical education. 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.
- The inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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 respective responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Guy Forbat, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Daniel Burton	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Neary	Ofsted Inspector

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