

Inspection of Conway Primary School

Conway Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham, West Midlands B11 1NS

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The executive headteacher is Leanne Mahony and the headteacher of the school is Rakesh Gunchala. This school is part of the Create Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Mark Unwin, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Julian Miller.

What is it like to attend this school?

Conway Primary is a highly inclusive school where everyone is valued. Pupils and staff embody the school's values of 'ambition, resilience, respect'. Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and respectful. Pupils speak positively about the support they receive from staff and enjoy their learning. There is a strong culture of safeguarding and well-being across the school. Pupils feel safe and say they are happy in school. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school's ethos.

There is a purposeful atmosphere around the school. Pupils focus on their learning well, work hard and want to learn. Teachers speak calmly with any pupil who loses concentration and offer support to help them regain focus. During social times, pupils mix with others in a calm and orderly manner. Pupils know who to talk to about any concerns they may have.

The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about their health and well-being. Pupils say they really like the wide range of leadership roles they are given. Pupils enjoy the responsibility as class ambassadors, eco warriors and 'rights knights'. The school offers a range of enrichment clubs across the year, including the current 'multi-sports' club with Year 4 pupils.

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

Following a period of development, there have been significant and highly effective staffing changes. These include a new executive headteacher and a new head of school. The school continues to raise expectations around learning, behaviour and attendance. In all classes positive relationships between staff, pupils and parents help pupils to be confident and happy.

The school successfully identifies the key knowledge pupils need to succeed, particularly in reading, phonics and mathematics. Teachers present new subject matter clearly to pupils. However, some areas of learning are less developed than others. In mathematics, for example, the school continues to develop pupils' knowledge of problem-solving and reasoning. Some pupils are not always challenged to extend their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. This means that some pupils do not achieve and demonstrate their potential in all subjects. The school should ensure all pupils are given effective opportunities to deepen their knowledge, hence reducing gaps in their learning.

Most staff check what pupils have learned and adapt their teaching well so that pupils build on what they know and can do. However, in some cases, the school does not check on what pupils know and remember well enough. When this happens, gaps in pupils' learning may go unnoticed, leading to some pupils falling behind or missing important content. This leads to some pupils having gaps in their knowledge, which limits their progress.

In the early years, children get off to a positive start. Teachers present new learning clearly. For example, they carefully demonstrate counting objects up to five. However,

children in the early years do not have enough opportunities to practise and apply their learning when working on their own. This is because the activities provided are not fully aligned with the planned curriculum.

The school quickly and effectively identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff use precise information to adapt the learning for each pupil's individual needs. Reading is a priority at this school. Pupils become familiar with the sounds that letters make and learn how to blend these into words and sentences. Teachers give support through extra interventions where needed. All pupils have access to a wide range of books to read and enjoy. This encourages all pupils to read regularly.

The school effectively analyses trends in attendance and provides additional support for pupils who do not attend regularly. This support for pupils and their families is helping to improve the attendance of all pupils.

Pupils' well-being is at the forefront of leaders' vision, including promoting pupils' positive mental health. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum is well-planned and sequenced. Pupils learn about topics such as online safety and positive relationships well. Pupils say they welcome and appreciate the time staff give to their broader educational visits and experiences. A recent visit to Buckingham Palace helped develop pupils' awareness of being a British citizen.

All leaders, including those responsible for governance, know this school well. They understand how the local context impacts on pupils' learning and attendance. The school effectively reviews and develops all aspects, including teaching, the curriculum and pupils' well-being, with a strong focus on safeguarding. Trustees and governors support and hold them account for the decisions taken. The school has implemented a well-thought-out professional development programme, which staff appreciate. The school consults staff well on policy changes and carefully considers their workload, which staff are appreciative of.

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 does not consistently check pupils' understanding of what has been learned and what they can remember. As a result, gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified and addressed effectively, limiting their progress. The school should ensure that pupils' understanding is regularly checked and teaching is adapted to close any gaps in learning.
- Children in the early years do not have enough opportunities to practise and apply their learning when working independently. This is because activities provided are not fully

aligned with the planned curriculum, which can hinder children from consolidating key skills and deepening their understanding. The school should ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to practise and apply new learning when working independently.

- The school does not always provide enough challenge for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. As a result, some pupils do not fully reach their potential, limiting their knowledge and connections across subjects. The school should ensure that all teachers plan learning to include challenging tasks that stretch all pupils to reach their potential.

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	143086
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10344088
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	398
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Julian Miller
CEO of the trust	Mark Unwin
Headteacher	Leanne Mahony (Executive Headteacher)
Head of School	Rakesh Gunchala
Website	www.conway.bham.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Create Partnership Trust, which contains four schools.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- A new executive headteacher joined the school on 1 September 2024.
- A new head of school joined the school on 1 September 2024.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 focused on the following deep dives: early reading, history, mathematics and science. The inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited lessons, looked at pupils’ work and talked with pupils about their learning. The inspectors also looked at the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about pupils’ behaviour, attendance, the school’s curriculum and improvement planning. The school’s website was also checked.
- 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 observed informal times of the day as part of their evaluation of safeguarding and pupils’ behaviour.
- The inspectors held meetings with the CEO as the delegated person on behalf of the chair of the trust; the executive head and head of school and other senior leaders; teachers, support staff and pupils. The inspectors also talked informally to pupils, staff, parents and carers to gather information about school life.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments. The inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted’s staff survey and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

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