

Inspection of Halesowen CofE Primary School

High Street, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 3BB

Inspection dates:	17 and 18 December 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

This is an inclusive school. All pupils are welcome. Many join the school partway through their education or speak English as an additional language. They quickly make friends and participate fully in school life. The school provides additional support and resources for any pupil who finds learning challenging, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The school has high expectations of pupils. Pupils strive to live up to these. They are kind to others and try hard with their work. This endorses the school's motto of 'We care, we trust, we believe. We share, we enjoy, we achieve.' Pupils of all ages enjoy talking about their learning.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning, including in the early years. Pupils know they can talk to a member of staff if they have any worries or concerns. This helps them to feel safe in school.

Pupils are actively involved in a variety of leadership roles. These include house captains, peer mediators and collective worship monitors. This builds their confidence and independence. Additionally, pupils enjoy the range of clubs and enrichment opportunities the school offers.

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

The school has taken effective action since the previous inspection to improve the curriculum. It is well sequenced to help pupils build knowledge over time. Teachers typically have good subject knowledge. They present new information clearly. Teaching assistants provide helpful support to pupils who need it, especially those with SEND. The school also caters for pupils with emotional and mental health needs successfully. The well-equipped nurture room provides a safe space for pupils when needed.

Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. However, the school's published data for mathematics in 2024 was below the national average. A significant proportion of these pupils joined the school partway through key stage 2. Currently, most pupils have a secure grasp of mathematics, with a particular strength in their multiplication skills.

Staff regularly check pupils' understanding and offer encouragement during lessons. However, the school's approach to checking what pupils know and remember is underdeveloped in the wider curriculum. As a result, some pupils struggle to talk confidently about what they should know, leading to gaps in their knowledge.

Curriculum leadership is developing. The school has redesigned what is taught across a range of subjects to ensure that pupils' learning is relevant and builds progressively. However, most subject leaders are new to their roles. As a result, the school is still developing the skills needed to check what is working well and identifying areas for improvement to eliminate gaps in pupils' learning.

In the early years, the development of children's communication and language is a priority. Staff interact constantly with children throughout the day, checking their understanding and prompting discussion. Children enjoy the range of activities designed to develop their personal, social and physical skills. They also learn clear routines and respond positively to the high expectations for their behaviour. This prepares them well for future year groups.

The school has a clearly defined strategy for identifying and supporting pupils with SEND. It commissions external support to provide any specialist input needed. Plans for individual pupils are comprehensive and specific. Pupils learn the full curriculum and happily participate in all school activities.

There is a rigorous approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading. Pupils at the earliest stages of reading develop secure phonics knowledge. Staff provide additional support for those who struggle. Pupils read regularly to adults in school and books are suitably matched to help pupils improve.

Raising attendance is a key priority for the school. It analyses and follows up all absences. Despite these efforts, a large proportion of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND continue to miss too much school. This affects their progress as they miss vital lessons and learning opportunities.

The school provides a range of opportunities to help prepare pupils for life beyond school. Staff teach pupils how to stay healthy and safe and appreciate those with different beliefs and backgrounds from their own. Pupils know the importance of treating everyone equally and with respect. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils are aware of the different forms that bullying can take and are confident that it is dealt with swiftly when reported.

The school has responded positively to the guidance provided by the local authority and the diocese. A committed governing body also supports the school well. Governors have developed a greater awareness of their roles and a firm understanding of their statutory duties. Staff are proud to work at the school and appreciate the training and support they receive.

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's methods for checking what pupils know and can do over time are not yet firmly established. As a result, some pupils, including those in the early years, develop

gaps in their learning. The school should implement a consistent approach to checking how well pupils retain and recall their learning over time.

- Almost all foundation subject leaders are new to their roles. They have not yet had time to identify where further curriculum improvements are necessary. As a result, some pupils do not build knowledge securely over time. The school should ensure it monitors and evaluates these areas and makes the necessary adaptations to strengthen the curriculum, enabling pupils to deepen their understanding and progress confidently over time.
- Too many disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are persistently absent. This means that they miss important learning and fall behind their peers. The school should work in close partnership with parents and carers to address the specific barriers these pupils face, ensuring their attendance improves so that they can benefit from what the school has to offer and achieve well.

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	103847
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10343771
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of the governing body	Jane Price
Headteacher	Lorna Knowles
Website	www.halesowen.dudley.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 June 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school no longer offers nursery provision. Children join the school in the Reception class.
- This school is part of the Diocese of Worcester. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2017. The school's next section 48 inspection is due to take place in 2025.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provision.

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.
- 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 leaders and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also spoke to the deputy director of education for the diocese, a representative of the local authority and the manager of the alternative provision used by the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics 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 also discussed the curriculum in art, design and technology and science.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. Minutes of governing body meetings and reports from external reviews were also scrutinised.
- The inspectors looked at records of attendance and behaviour. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school and talked to them informally about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- The inspectors talked to parents at the end of the school day and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed the responses to the staff and pupil surveys and gathered the views of these groups through discussions on site.
- 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.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Amarjit Cheema

Ofsted Inspector

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