

Inspection of Dawley Brook Primary School

Dubarry Avenue, Valley Fields, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 9BP

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 March 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Children settle quickly into this happy, inclusive school from the very beginning of their time in Nursery and Reception classes. They become active members of the school community and soon embody the school motto: 'Work hard. Be kind.'

Passion for the curriculum shines through and there is a drive to have a highly bespoke curriculum, which has the rich industrial history of the local area at its heart. Whether it's winning the local schools' book quiz or becoming the 'West Midlands Champion Heritage School', ambition to succeed is high.

Governors and school staff share high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils meet these and do well in English, mathematics and across the curriculum. They become confident, motivated learners who are well prepared for their next schools and the challenges beyond.

Behaviour is a strength at this school. Pupils recognise this and as a result they feel safe and happy. They told inspectors about how fairly everyone is treated. Though rare, when conduct falls below the school's high expectations, it is addressed swiftly and effectively by staff.

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

The school has put in place a detailed curriculum which sets out precisely what will be taught in each subject. The order of lessons has been carefully considered so that pupils build on prior learning. There are high expectations of what pupils learn in all subjects. In the main, these are realised. Pupils here are enjoying, learning and remembering what they are taught. There are times, however, when key learning is not clearly identified, which leads to confusion. This also hampers teachers in establishing whether pupils are retaining the knowledge which pupils most need.

The highly inclusive culture is one of the standout features of Dawley Brook. Pupils who have struggled elsewhere thrive here. Staff identify pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and provide them with the resources and support they need to succeed. For those pupils with higher needs, including those who attended the resource base, the curriculum is adapted well. As a result, these pupils are settled and are making good progress with their learning.

Starting in Nursery class, phonics has a high priority. The school has a well-sequenced approach that ensures that pupils learn phonics systematically. Well-trained staff deliver lessons consistently and are expert at spotting when pupils fall behind. Because staff know exactly which sounds pupils know, lessons and books are very well matched to what pupils need.

Across school, pupils love reading because the school has carefully selected the books they will read or hear read. By the time they leave this school, they are well-read, independent readers who are ready to take on a world of literature.

Pupils at Dawley Brook are active partners in school life. They are listened to and feel heard and valued. They become school pupil governors and house captains. They express and argue their views confidently, showing respect for the opinions and beliefs of others, even if they differ from their own.

The early years is a happy, vibrant place of independent, confident children who are keen to learn. As with phonics, they get off to a good start with mathematics, quickly becoming competent at recognising and using numbers. The indoor learning environment is stimulating and engaging. It enables children to make choices in their learning by providing exciting, meaningful activities such as in the busy role play hospital. It is communication-rich, both in terms of labels, picture prompts, signing by adults and the high-quality adult and pupil interaction. The outdoor area is well used but the environment does not match the quality of indoor spaces. The school recognises this and plans to improve this are well under way.

The school goes to great lengths to engage and communicate with parents and carers through regular newsletters and an informative website. Parents are invited to visit the school regularly to learn alongside their children at the school's 'Inspire Workshops', at which parental attendance is high. When pupils are absent, the school quickly checks that pupils are safe and is effective in supporting families to improve attendance.

Governors and all leaders know the school well. They have a forensic approach when monitoring the school's effectiveness. Any changes they make are carefully considered and rooted in research.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in some subjects is overly complex and key learning is not clearly identified. This means that in some lessons, pupils become confused and are not learning the information they most need. The school should ensure that they identify the knowledge which is most central to future success so that pupils are taught and retain what is most important.
- Teachers do not use in-the-moment assessment strategies well enough to identify whether or not pupils understand new learning in a small number of lessons. This means that misconceptions are not recognised as soon as they could be and pupils become confused. The school should support teachers to use assessment effectively throughout lessons so that errors are identified and addressed quickly so that pupils can achieve as well as they possibly can.

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	103781
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10294496
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	216
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Jane Morgan
Headteacher	Lisa Maskell
Website	www.dawley.dudley.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school has a resource base for pupils with SEND which opened in September 2023. The base currently provides places for six pupils.
- The school runs before- and after-school care.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator.

- 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education 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.
- An inspector listened to some pupils read to members of school staff.
- An inspector held a meeting with members of the board of governors.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority and a school improvement partner.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. Inspectors also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of documents, including school improvement plans. They also reviewed the school's website.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Gareth Morgan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Zoe Thewlis

Ofsted Inspector

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