

Inspection of an outstanding school: Smith's Wood Primary Academy

Burton's Way, Smith's Wood, Birmingham, West Midlands B36 0SZ

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2023

Outcome

Smith's Wood Primary Academy continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Smith's Wood Primary Academy lives up to its motto of being 'more than a school'. Leaders, staff and pupils demonstrate the school values in every aspect of school life. 'Respect, friendship, responsibility, honesty, perseverance and determination' are visible in everything they do. Pupils are taught how to be excellent citizens of the future exceptionally well. They demonstrate that excellence around school.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. They are respectful, kind and polite. They have wonderful manners and are supportive of each other. Pupils understand that some of their friends find behaviour more difficult and need extra help. Well-being warriors and peer listeners are on hand to provide extra support for any pupil that needs it. Pupils feel safe in school because it is calm and orderly. The beautiful environment inside and out is very well cared for and respected by all.

Leaders have aspirational ambitions for each pupil. In turn, pupils have high ambitions for themselves. Leaders are determined that 'no child should fall behind'. The bespoke approach to the curriculum ensures that this is a reality. Highly skilled teachers adapt the carefully designed curriculum so that every pupil achieves extremely well. The aspirational curriculum, alongside leaders' character education programme, empowers pupils to believe they can be whatever they want to be.

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

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading right from the start. The early years is rich with opportunities for children to develop their communication and language skills. This ensures that no time is wasted in children starting to learn to read. Adults are highly skilled teachers of phonics and have expert subject knowledge. They provide effective, tailored support for those pupils at risk of falling behind. Pupils read books that are well matched to the sounds that they are learning. They quickly become fluent, confident readers. Pupils enjoy visiting the well-stocked school library. They enjoy listening to stories and reading regularly to teachers.

Pupils relish the chance to choose a book from the 'golden bookshelf'. This helps pupils to develop a real love of reading.

Pupils engage well with learning and demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning. The curriculum is delivered in a way that ensures pupils remember what they are taught. The bespoke curriculum fully prepares pupils for the next stage of their education, starting in the early years. Leaders arrange for many inspirational visitors to speak to pupils. They explain how what they learn in different subjects will help them in future careers.

Pupils are kind and caring to each other. Leaders and teachers model this kindness in everything they do. They are excellent role models for every pupil who attends this exceptional school. Adults have taught pupils to be tolerant and accepting of the needs of others. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve exceptionally well because of this inspirational approach.

Leaders and teachers support pupils with SEND very well. Their needs are quickly and accurately identified. Staff adapt learning and extra-curricular activities so that pupils with SEND can access them all. They make strong progress and participate fully in school life.

Leaders' approach to pupils' personal development is inspirational. Pupils benefit from an extensive range of opportunities outside of the curriculum to further embed their belief in themselves and the possibilities available to them. Staff promote positive personal development through the curriculum, assemblies, and extra-curricular activities. Leaders provide exciting opportunities for pupils to experience the world of work. This includes providing 'voice overs' for children's television programmes and recording music in a London music studio. They experience exciting trips and residential. This includes trips to Paris. Pupils also get the opportunity to climb Snowdon. Pupils said, 'One of our values is to be determined so we all made it to the top. We made links to life in school. We know that if we work hard, we will get a good outcome.'

Pupils have many highly effective opportunities to develop their character and understanding of the world around them. The well-thought-out character education programme further develops the whole child. Leaders prioritise the promotion of diversity, tolerance, understanding of relationships and democracy. It is exceptional. It leads to pupils developing an excellent awareness of British values.

Leaders have developed excellent support for staff's professional development. This has created a highly effective and dedicated staff team. Leaders take staff workload into consideration when implementing the continuous drive for improvement. Staff always put the pupils first and are proud to work at Smith's Wood Primary.

Governors are very well informed and committed. They provide highly effective challenge and support to leaders to help make the school the successful place it is.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff take safeguarding very seriously. Leaders provide training for staff and governors that ensures they understand their role in keeping pupils safe. They know pupils well and are alert to any signs that pupils may have a problem. Staff know how to report their concerns. Leaders record these accurately and act swiftly. Leaders have effective links with a wide range of external agencies that they use to support pupils in the best possible way. This ensures that families receive the help they need. Pupils learn how to keep safe, including when online. They are confident and know they can talk to adults if they are worried. They know that all staff would act quickly to help them.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in May 2017.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	140923
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10256951
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	449
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Neil Henderson
Headteacher	Danielle Givens
Website	www.smithswoodpri.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 and 4 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not presently make use of alternative provision.
- The school is a stand-alone academy.
- The school runs its own morning breakfast club and after-school club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement. They reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- The lead inspector carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics, and modern foreign languages.

- The lead inspector looked at curriculum plans for these subjects with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector looked at curriculum documents and pupils' work in history, geography, and design and technology.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and a governor with responsibility for the standards committee.
- The lead inspector discussed with leaders and staff the school's approach to safeguarding pupils.
- The lead inspector checked the single central record.
- The lead inspector reviewed records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Checks were made on staff's training and safeguarding procedures.
- The views of pupils, parents, and staff, as gathered through discussions and Ofsted's surveys, were considered.

Inspection team

Keri Baylis, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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