

Inspection of Waverley School

Yardley Green Road, Bordesley Green, Birmingham, West Midlands B9 5QA

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 September 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to come to this school. Inspectors saw how enthusiastic they are in their learning, for example in vibrant Spanish lessons, taught all through school from Reception into secondary. Pupils said they are safe in school. Those spoken to knew who to go to if they were worried or being bullied. Inspectors saw, when incidents do occur, how well leaders respond to protect pupils. Throughout their visit, they saw pupils behaving well and with positive attitudes to their work.

Learning is appropriately challenging. Many pupils said they found mathematics hard, but the school is ambitious for all its pupils to do as well as they can. Those who find learning difficult or have barriers to learning are well supported through the specialist resource base. Some of these pupils move successfully to the sixth form and beyond.

Pupils have a strong understanding of diversity, respect and tolerance, including for different family lifestyles. The school promotes this well through its relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) programme, which receives strong parental support.

Some parents raised concerns about the quality of communication and information they receive from the school, so there is more to do to ensure leaders are reaching all parents.

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

The curriculum is ambitious, designed to stretch pupils regardless of their starting points. The all-through provision enables pupils moving from primary to secondary to build on their prior learning. In most subject areas, curriculum leaders work well together cross-phase, for example in music where the curriculum is well sequenced. It is not so well sequenced from primary to secondary in history, however. Trustees and governors know their strengths and areas for development well. They have placed a high emphasis on training for staff and leadership to ensure high-quality provision.

Children start off well in early years from their very low entry points. Teachers promote a love of reading. The phonics programme in Reception is taught in a well-sequenced order. Books are matched well to the letters and sounds children know. This ensures children can decode successfully. Older pupils can read fluently or, when facing unfamiliar words, decode them using their phonics skills. On occasion, phonics is not so consistently taught in Years 1 and 2, where teachers do not always model sounds and letters correctly.

English leaders have carefully considered the right texts for each class to engage readers. For example, leaders chose David Almond texts in Year 7 to address missed

learning due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Writing is a key focus of the school; pupils had limited experience of this during COVID-19. Work in books is well presented and shows pupils have pride in their work. They have opportunities for extended writing across subjects. For example, in Year 7 French pupils were writing freely conversations based on greetings.

Leaders deliver the mathematics curriculum consistently well. It ensures pupils build on prior learning. In primary, teachers help pupils to develop their fluency, as well as problem-solving and reasoning skills. In modern foreign languages, curriculum leaders are well trained. They deliver a programme based on pupils learning and remembering new vocabulary. Pupils are confident using grammar in each language taught with accuracy.

The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is adapted well to meet their needs. Pupils are well integrated in lessons. They access a curriculum comparable to their peers and achieve well. This includes those in the resource base taught by specialist staff.

Assessment systems are well established, particularly in English, mathematics and science, early years, early reading and the sixth form. Regular monitoring ensures there is swift support for those falling behind.

There is a calm orderly environment in the early years. Children listen well to adults and to each other. Children use the wide range of resources in the classroom to build on their learning. The outdoor area is not as well planned to develop children's learning.

Leaders have developed a sixth-form curriculum to ensure the best possible outcomes for students. There is an impressive range of destinations and further study courses. Disadvantaged students and those with SEND also do well.

Pupils behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. However, some parents and a small number of pupils had mixed views of behaviour. Leaders recognise that previously it was an issue of concern. The school works successfully promoting attendance throughout the school from early years to sixth form, given the constraints of COVID-19. Staff follow up first day absence rigorously.

Leaders promote personal development well. The RSHE programme provides pupils with the relevant information they need. Pupils are well informed on local issues, such as knife crime and drugs. Drugs was a theme for assemblies and RSHE during the inspection. There are many enrichment opportunities in music, although these were disrupted by COVID-19. Careers education is strong. An external agency provides impartial advice that enables pupils to make informed decisions about their futures. During the inspection sixth formers attended a careers fair.

Most staff responding to the Ofsted survey disagreed that leaders manage workload well. However, the school's recent staff survey was more positive. A recent staffing reorganisation aimed at achieving equity in teaching load has led to some staff

working longer hours than previously. Leaders have more to do to engage with staff on this issue.

Safeguarding

Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders are well trained. They identify pupils who need early help and respond appropriately to incidents. They reflect on their practice and make changes if required. Records are secure, and referrals are made promptly to relevant agencies. Trustees and governors are highly knowledgeable. They hold leaders to account and ensure processes for safer recruitment are robust. There is a strong culture of encouraging pupils to speak up. Pupils were confident any issues would be followed up and dealt with. Staff are well trained to respond to issues of child sexual exploitation should they be reported.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A minority of parents spoken to, and those responding to surveys, expressed concerns around behaviour, communication and the information they receive. The school showed their records of their contact with every parent, including during lockdown. However, changes in the method of communication, exacerbated by face-to-face meetings cancelled due to COVID-19, meant some parents felt less involved. Leaders should engage with parents to ensure that they address their concerns.
- Many staff felt that leaders were not addressing their concerns over workload. Consequently, they felt overworked. Leaders should do more to ensure that staff feel their workload is manageable.
- Some of the phonics teaching in Years 1 and 2 is not as consistent as the best practice seen elsewhere in the school. As a result, some pupils do not use their phonics knowledge as confidently as others to decode unfamiliar words. Leaders should review their provision in these year groups to ensure it is of consistently high quality.
- Not all of the curriculum leaders liaise closely between the primary and secondary phases. As a result, the curriculum in history is not as well sequenced as in other subjects. Leaders should ensure there is consistency in curriculum planning across all subjects.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	142219
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10201030
Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,690
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	107
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of local governing body	James Sutton
Principal	Satnam Dosanjh (Co-Principal – primary) and Ann Lloyd (Co-Principal – secondary)
Website	www.waverley.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 – 29 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Both of the co-principals were recently appointed to jointly lead the school after the executive headteacher left in December 2020.
- There is a specialist resource base on the site of the school. One pupil is in registered alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

The inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors held meetings with the co-principals; other senior leaders; subject leaders; the coordinators for SEND, early years, and the sixth form and other members of staff. Curriculum leaders with responsibility for early years, early reading and primary English were absent due to COVID-19 during this inspection.
- They spoke to pupils. Inspectors spoke to parents at the gate. An inspector spoke to a parent on the telephone, met a parent at the school, and took account of a message from a parent. Inspectors met virtually in separate meetings with the chief executive officer, the chair of the trust and the chair of the local governing body.
- They took account of 17 responses to the Ofsted Parent View free-text service and 19 responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. There were 75 responses to the Ofsted pupil survey from all year groups between Year 1 and 11, and 71 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire. They also took account of 78 responses to the school's most recent staff survey conducted from July to September 2021.
- Inspectors considered information on behaviour, personal development, safeguarding and child protection.
- Inspectors focused deeply on early reading, English, mathematics, history, modern foreign languages and personal, social and health education. Inspectors visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, and spoke to subject leaders, teachers and pupils. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in music.

Inspection team

Mark Sims, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sara Arkle	Ofsted Inspector
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Graeme Rudland	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Ray	Ofsted Inspector

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