

Inspection of a good school: Moat Farm Junior School

Brookfields Road, Oldbury, West Midlands B68 9QR

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 May 2022

Outcome

Moat Farm Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their school. They are happy and enjoy learning. Pupils say that they like their teachers because they are kind. Pupils are proud of their school and talk about the school values of optimism, achievement and acceptance. They show respect for one another. Pupils' comments included, 'It doesn't matter if you are different. Everybody's good the way they are.'

Leaders have high expectations for every pupil. They are ambitious for pupils to succeed in their learning as well as in their personal development. Pupils take part in clubs outside the school day. They also enjoy trips and outdoor activities, such as forest school. Leaders are eager to continue the Moat Farm University, which provides groups of pupils with opportunities to experience activities such as exploring the English Civil War.

Pupils behave very well. They are polite and well mannered. They understand the importance of friendship and have positive relationships with their peers and teachers.

Pupils feel safe in school. They told inspectors that they understand what bullying means and that it rarely happens. Pupils explained where they would go if they needed help. They spoke with knowledge about how to keep themselves safe online.

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

Leaders have given careful thought to the books that pupils read in class and have made sure that they represent a diverse range of authors and characters. This successfully develops pupils' love of reading. They talk enthusiastically about their favourite stories and authors and are proud of the book-inspired murals on the corridor walls.

Leaders have put together a reading curriculum that helps teachers to plan challenging lessons. Pupils are able to discuss with a great deal of understanding the texts they have

read. Where the teaching of reading is most effective, teachers allow pupils to read out loud and ask questions that encourage pupils to think.

In English, teachers spend a lot of time explaining and demonstrating the skills for writing. However, this often results in pupils not getting enough time or opportunities to write independently to practise their developing writing skills.

The mathematics curriculum is carefully sequenced. It helps pupils to remember facts and skills that they have previously been taught. Pupils use these to help them with their current learning. This year, teachers are using new teaching methods and these are helping pupils to be even better at mathematics. Teachers use specific mathematics vocabulary in their explanations to help develop pupils' correct use of mathematical words.

Leaders have identified four key themes that run through the history curriculum. These are agriculture, government, religion and trade. Teachers make sure that learning in history refers to at least one of these themes. This means that pupils can talk about key events in history and are developing a strong understanding of periods in time.

Leaders have developed their curriculum well in most subjects. Pupils' work shows that they are learning the subject-specific knowledge they need to make good progress through the curriculum, including in religious education, history, geography and science. However, in some subjects, curriculum planning is less well developed so pupils do not develop their knowledge as well they could. Leaders know this and have plans in place to ensure that all curriculum areas are developed with the same level of detail and ambition.

Leaders and teachers are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are a high proportion of pupils with SEND in school. Leaders ensure that every pupil receives teaching that is appropriate to their specific needs. This enables these pupils to achieve well in school. There are strong relationships with the infant school to help prepare pupils with SEND for the start of their journey in Year 3.

Leaders work hard to promote good attendance. They say that if 'pupils are not in school, they are not learning'. Leaders are determined that pupils understand the importance of coming to school every day and give pupils regular opportunities to analyse the school's attendance figures in mathematics. This helps pupils to practise mathematics in a real-life situation and to improve their attendance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise safeguarding in their school. All staff have received appropriate safeguarding training. Weekly quizzes ensure that staff have regular opportunities to revisit key information from safeguarding training.

Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a child and these concerns are quickly addressed by one of the named people responsible for child protection. This helps to keep pupils as safe as possible.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when using computers. This further helps pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe outside school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not planned out the curriculum as well as in other subjects. However, leaders have identified this and have plans in place to develop the curriculum planning. Leaders need to ensure that all learning is planned and structured carefully so that pupils build up their knowledge effectively in all subjects.
- On occasions, some teachers focus too much on demonstrating and explaining writing skills, which limits pupils' opportunities to practise writing. As a result, some pupils do not make as much progress in writing as they could. Leaders need to ensure that pupils have appropriate time to develop and practise their writing skills to help them make progress through the English curriculum.

Background

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

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 13 June 2013.

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	103948
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10226897
Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation School
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	482
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Hannah Massey
Headteacher	Lara Stone
Website	www.moatfarm-jun.sandwell.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	3 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher was in post at the time of the previous inspection.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, members of staff and the school improvement adviser from Sandwell local authority. Inspectors held a meeting with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Deep dives were carried out in English, mathematics and history. These included discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons and scrutiny of work. The inspectors also met with pupils to discuss their learning in these subjects and watched pupils read to a staff member. The inspectors also looked at planning and a range of pupils' work in geography, religious education and science.

- A range of documents were scrutinised, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement and curriculum plans, and the school website. Minutes of governors' meetings and reports from external advisers were also checked.
- When inspecting safeguarding, the lead inspector considered the school's procedures for recruiting staff, the quality of staff training and the school's procedures for keeping pupils safe.
- The inspectors spoke to parents and carers at the beginning of the first day of the inspection. They considered responses, including free-text comments, to the Ofsted Parent View online questionnaire. The inspector took account of responses to the staff questionnaire and responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Mel Davies, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Anne Potter

Ofsted Inspector

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