

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Clifton Primary School

Brunswick Road, Balsall Heath, Birmingham, West Midlands B12 8NX

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 April 2025

Outcome

Clifton Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming and inclusive school where every pupil is valued and nurtured. The school is calm and purposeful. Pupils behave extremely well and try hard with their learning.

The school's values of 'respect, care and listen' are central to its work. It is a school at the heart of its community. Pupils and their families benefit from a range of events, including community planting to enhance the local environment and shared celebrations of religious festivals.

The school's motto, 'A world of learning together', exemplifies the school's vision for all pupils to grow and develop. Typically, pupils achieve well. Skilled staff are swift to support pupils who need extra help, in particular those who struggle with spoken English.

Pupils attend trips to broaden their horizons. For example, they visit museums and local areas of interest such as the Botanical Gardens and Symphony Hall for music events. There is a wealth of clubs on offer to develop pupils' talents and interests. These include a range of sports, arts and crafts. The extra-curricular offer extends out to the community at weekends and during school holiday periods to provide a safe place for pupils to play together with their peers.

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

The school has developed a well-crafted curriculum that sets out the order of what pupils will learn and how they will learn it. Teachers check that pupils have grasped a concept before moving on to new learning. This helps pupils to learn well across the curriculum.

Well-targeted phonics teaching begins as soon as pupils join the school. Ongoing professional development helps to ensure that staff are skilled at teaching pupils to read. Staff check pupils' understanding routinely to ensure that pupils are secure in the sounds they learn. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive bespoke support and soon become fluent readers. Pupils have positive attitudes to reading and most learn to read well.

Oracy and language development are a high priority as soon as children join the school in the early years. Staff make opportunities to talk to children, regularly modelling sentence construction and new vocabulary skilfully. Children gain a love of language through frequent exposure to rhymes, songs and stories. Older pupils speak eloquently about their learning. However, sometimes their written work in wider curriculum areas does not reflect the depth of their understanding. Sometimes, the methods teachers choose to support pupils with their writing limit their opportunities to explain what they know and remember.

There is a clear system in place to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff are well trained to know how best to support pupils' needs. Teaching implements precise adaptations to help pupils with SEND to overcome any barriers to learning. As a result, pupils with SEND flourish and achieve well.

The programme for personal development is highly effective. The school provides rich opportunities to enhance pupils' experiences at school. Trips and visitors help bring learning to life for pupils. Staff ensure that pupils develop skills and knowledge for later life. They learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe, for example. This includes staying safe beyond the school gates and how to stay safe online.

Pupils begin to learn about careers and older pupils take pride in the wide range of pupil leadership jobs on offer to them. These roles help them to develop their leadership skills and be role models for younger pupils. Many pupils, including those with SEND, engage in varied sports competitions to develop their talents and interests.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. In the early years, children learn swiftly to follow the rules and routines of the classroom. They sustain attention on activities well. Across the school, pupils have extremely positive attitudes. They are motivated and enthusiastic about their work.

The attendance of pupils has improved significantly in recent times. The school's family hub provides extensive pastoral support for pupils and their families. If staff have concerns about the attendance of any pupils, they put in place a wide range of support. In most cases, this contributes to pupils attending well.

Staff are proud and happy to work at the school and make a strong, supportive team. They trust that the school will take their workload and well-being into consideration when making decisions. Governors work closely with the school to ensure that they challenge, as well as support the school. They ensure that no pupil is left behind.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On some occasions, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to extend and develop their written work in wider curriculum areas. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that opportunities are planned so that the quality of pupils' written work reflects the depth of their understanding.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2019.

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	134840
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10343933
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	901
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ras Ghani
Headteacher	Sarah Allen and Nicola Hemming (co-headteachers)
Website	www.cliftonprimary.bham.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of leadership changes. Following an interim position, the current co-headteachers took up the substantive post in September 2024. A new chair of the governing body has also been appointed.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector also met representatives from the governing body.

- The lead inspector talked to representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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' interest first.
- The inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils and observed their behaviour at break and lunchtime.
- The inspectors met with groups of staff and pupils and considered the opinions expressed through the staff surveys.
- The inspectors met some parents and carers at the start of the day and had regard to the views expressed through the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Cathy Young, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Su Plant

His Majesty's Inspector

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