

Inspection of a good school: Claregate Primary School

Chester Avenue, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV6 9JU

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2021

Outcome

Claregate Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is welcoming and caring. Pupils come from many of different backgrounds and cultures. They get on well with each other and with their teachers. Pupils enjoy being at school. They feel safe because they know that all the adults at the school will look after them well.

The school's aim is for all pupils to be successful. Pupils learn a wide range of subjects. They can develop their interests in sports, music, or art in lessons and at after-school clubs. Teachers and support staff make sure that pupils have a positive experience in lessons. Pupils respond well to this approach. They enjoy learning and appreciate the way teachers help them when they find work difficult. Pupils make good progress.

The atmosphere of the school is pleasant and orderly. Pupils behave well in lessons. They also behave well when they play and socialise at break and lunchtime. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem. They know that teachers will intervene when it happens. During the inspection, parents confirmed that the school is a harmonious community. Many mentioned that the headteacher, teachers, and staff in general, are friendly and approachable.

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

Leaders and teachers work hard to make sure that pupils have a well-rounded education. The curriculum's structure helps pupils progress from Nursery Year to Year 6. Children in Nursery and Reception Years have a good start to their education. They follow a curriculum that prepares them well for key stage 1. Pupils study a wide range of subjects from Year 1. In each subject, teachers plan activities for pupils to build up their knowledge and be ready for the next stage of learning.

Teachers make sure that pupils remember what they learn. For example, in mathematics, lessons start with problems to solve using previous learning. In religious education, teachers ask questions about topics they taught before. All lesson activities include a main

task that all pupils must do, tasks that most pupils may do, and tasks that only some may do. This method is popular with pupils. They say it encourages them to work harder.

Teachers regularly check pupils' work and correct their mistakes. Teachers make sure they know what pupils have learned.

Staff introduce children to books and stories in Nursery Year. Formal phonics teaching starts at the beginning of Nursery Year. Most pupils reach the required standard of reading by the end of Year 1. Pupils who still have difficulties with reading beyond Year 1 have extra phonics lessons that help them to catch up.

The school has recently changed the scheme it uses to teach phonics. Some staff still need to complete the training for the new scheme. Leaders know that they must do this as a priority to maintain the standard of phonics teaching across all groups.

Too many pupils do not have neat handwriting. The quality of handwriting suffered during the periods of national lockdowns when pupils studied online. The presentation of work varies between pupils because of this. Teachers know they must address this as a matter of urgency.

Assemblies are about key aspects of life in modern Britain. During the inspection, there were assemblies and classroom activities about Black History Month. Trips and visits are a full part of pupils' learning experience. The pandemic put a stop to some of those, but pupils are looking forward to restarting routine enrichment activities this year.

Teachers make sure that lessons benefit all pupils. The school's special educational needs coordinator works with teachers and support staff to make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn well and enjoy all aspects of the school life.

Attendance figures are lower than they should be. COVID-19 still causes many absences. But leaders know that they must act to ensure that pupils do not develop poor attendance habits following the disruptive pandemic period.

Staff say that they enjoy working at the school. Teachers say that leaders support them well and make sure that their workload is manageable.

Governors know the school well and work well with leaders to sustain the good quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All adults at the school are aware of their duty to keep children safe. They have regular training. They know what to do if a child needs help. Leaders have effective systems in place to act when children are at risk. Their systems cover recruitment of staff and potential allegations of misconduct. They work well with external agencies to support children and their families when problems are serious.

Pupils learn how to stay safe. For example, they learn about how to stay safe online. They also learn to respect others and to avoid inappropriate language and attitudes.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school is currently implementing a new scheme for teaching phonics. As teachers and teaching assistants have only started to teach the new scheme this term, there are variations in the way pupils are taught phonics. Leaders need to ensure that the programme of training, planned as part of the introduction of the scheme, addresses these variations.
- Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the school had made improving handwriting a development plan priority. Because of the national lockdowns that happened since, pupils were taught remotely for long periods of time and did not have opportunities to practise handwriting. As a result, the handwriting of many pupils, especially in key stage 1, but also for some older pupils, needs to improve. Leaders should continue to implement strategies to improve handwriting across all age groups.
- The school's records show that attendance is still affected by COVID-19. There is a risk that attitudes to attendance may have been affected, especially among pupils who were previously absent too frequently. Leaders should consider how they can adapt their strategies to ensure that attendance returns to high levels for all groups of pupils.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2016.

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	104310
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10199851
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	390
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stephanie Sherwood
Headteacher	Mick Murphy
Website	www.claregateprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language has increased over the last few years.

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 their evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the inclusion lead, who is also the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), and the special educational needs coordinator. The inspector also spoke with the chair of the governing body and four other governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, religious education, and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector checked safeguarding arrangements and school records. The inspector discussed safeguarding policies and case studies with DSLs. He talked to teachers and

other staff about the safeguarding training they had received and how they put this training into practice.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. He talked to parents at the start and end of the school day.
- The inspector considered responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online inspection questionnaire, including written responses. He also considered responses from staff to their online inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Patrick Amieli, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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