

Inspection of a good school: Sawley Junior School

Wilmot Street, Sawley, Long Eaton, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG10 3DQ

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 February 2023

Outcome

Sawley Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where everyone feels safe and can be themselves. Pupils are kind to each other. One pupil explained that at this school 'the foundation is based on respect'. Pupils know that staff care for them. They trust the adults to look after them when things go wrong.

Pupils are positive about their learning. They take pride in their work. They value the help they get from staff to catch up if they need it.

Pupils' personal development is a high priority here. Pupils learn the importance of working together. They love to help and contribute to the school community as peer mediators or on the school council. Pupils can choose from a wide range of clubs and activities. Zumba, archery, gardening and vocal group are all on offer.

The school has high expectations of all pupils' work and conduct. Pupils behave well most of the time. They play happily in the playground. They enjoy using the equipment and playing games with support from the Year 6 mini leaders. Pupils said they do not worry about bullying because it hardly ever happens. When it does, staff deal with it quickly and it stops.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They have designed the curriculum to prepare pupils well for their next steps in education. They have a clear mission to give pupils a broad, rich set of experiences that help them to grow in confidence. They work well with local infant schools to make sure that pupils get off to a good start in Year 3.

Subject leaders have set out what pupils should learn and when. They have considered carefully how best to ensure that pupils can revisit and practise what they have learned before. Teachers highly value the clear guidance subject leaders provide. As a result, teachers develop good subject knowledge. They give clear explanations and set tasks that

help pupils to practise and apply new learning. Teachers check that pupils have secured the important knowledge before moving on. In the foundation subjects, they make sure pupils develop an understanding of key concepts. However, they do not always check that pupils remember key knowledge in the long term.

Leaders prioritise reading. They make sure that pupils are exposed to a wide range of different texts. Pupils enjoy choosing books at the library. They are pleased when they make progress with their reading. Pupils enjoy the annual 'Wordsmith week' when authors visit the school.

Pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read get help to catch up. Leaders use assessment well to ensure that teaching focuses on what pupils need to learn next. They make sure that books match the sounds that pupils are learning. On occasion, staff do not explain precisely enough what pupils must do. When this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders acknowledge that staff need further support to refine their phonics expertise.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from high-quality support. Skilled leaders identify ways to ensure that pupils' needs are met. They give clear guidance to staff on the best ways to support individual pupils. Leaders make sure that staff maintain high expectations of pupils. Pupils achieve well.

The school takes a positive approach to managing behaviour. Leaders have devised a clear policy that is known and understood by all pupils and staff. Pupils said they know what is expected of them. They strive to earn merits when they demonstrate the school's vision.

The provision for pupils' wider development is a strength of the school. Leaders plan the programme of clubs and activities carefully. All pupils can be physically active. All pupils learn to play the drums and the ukulele. They learn about and celebrate the history of their local area.

Staff are proud and happy to work together. They feel very well supported by leaders who are mindful of their well-being and workload. Governors share the staff team's commitment to the school and they provide effective support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff know their pupils well. Leaders make sure staff get high-quality safeguarding training. Staff have the knowledge and understanding they need to protect pupils from harm. Governors provide effective oversight of safeguarding arrangements.

The school provides effective support for pupils and their families. They work well with other safeguarding professionals. They are tenacious in ensuring that pupils get the help they need.

The school prioritises pupils' well-being. Pupils learn ways to stay mentally healthy. Pupils learn to keep themselves and others safe. For example, they learn how to stay safe online and ride their bicycles safely.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes staff do not give clear explanations when supporting pupils with phonics learning. When this is the case, pupils do not catch up as quickly as they could. Leaders must ensure that all staff get support to develop their phonics expertise so that pupils improve their phonic knowledge quickly.

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 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 higher or 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 good in October 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	141543
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10254907
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	331
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Pip Dean
Headteacher	Alison Burton
Website	www.sawleyjunior.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 and 12 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Willows Academy Trust.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and a range of staff.
- The inspector met with members of the academy governing body, including the chairperson. The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the Willows Academy Trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, history, mathematics and physical education. For these, the inspector met with subject leaders, teachers and pupils. She visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector observed pupils

reading to a familiar adult.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding, the inspector reviewed school policies, procedures and records. She met with the designated safeguarding lead. The inspector also spoke with staff, governors and pupils about the school's approach to keeping pupils safe.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff questionnaires. She spoke with parents at the school.

Inspection team

Aoife Galletly, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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