

Inspection of Princethorpe Junior School

Princethorpe Road, Weoley Castle, Birmingham, West Midlands B29 5QB

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

At Princethorpe Junior School leaders strive to achieve the very best for each pupil. Pupils are happy and safe. They enjoy attending school and learning new things. However, some pupils do not attend school regularly and miss important learning.

Leaders make sure that pupils behave well. They deal with any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying quickly so that it does not spread. Pupils work hard in lessons and focus on their learning. At social times, pupils are kind to one another and play well together. Leaders make sure that pupils who need additional support to behave well get the help they need.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities to develop pupils' talents and interests. These include football, dance and gymnastic clubs. Trips and visitors to school such as artists and poets help pupils to deepen their learning. Older pupils enjoy teambuilding and outdoor physical activities during outdoor residential visits.

Most parents are positive about the quality of education their children receive. One parent's comment was typical when they said, 'I am very pleased with the school and how my child has progressed.'

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils. It is clearly sequenced and informs teaching in classrooms. Leaders make sure that teachers have the subject knowledge and resources they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. Teachers present new learning clearly. They make regular checks on pupils' learning and clarify any misconceptions. However, checks on how well pupils learn and remember the curriculum in lessons and over time are variable in some subjects.

Leaders prioritise reading. They make sure that staff have the knowledge they need to teach reading well. This includes teaching phonics to those pupils who have fallen behind in their reading. Pupils are well supported to catch up, which they do. Leaders make sure that pupils have access to a wide range of books. This includes books that match the sounds pupils are learning. 'Golden tickets', 'cosy reads', reading workshops and 'storytelling thrones' help to promote reading. As a result, pupils read with increasing fluency, confidence and enjoyment.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively. Leaders make sure their needs are identified accurately and that teaching meets these needs. As a result, pupils access the full curriculum and achieve well in school.

Everybody is welcomed and valued at Princethorpe Junior School. Pupils learn about different religions, cultures and celebrations. Pupils visit places of worship such as a gurdwara and synagogue to learn about different faiths and celebrations. This helps

them to understand and respect difference and learn about the diverse society we live in. Pupils know what democracy is. They vote to elect school parliament and eco council representatives. Pupils learn about the importance of healthy food and lifestyles. They learn strategies to promote positive physical and mental health, such as mindfulness and yoga.

The school's rules help pupils to learn about right and wrong. Theatre and police workshops help pupils to understand risks when out and about in the community. Pupils learn about rights and responsibilities through the school's rights respecting work. All this enhances the curriculum offer and helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Parents and pupils value the school's work, although some pupils miss too much school.

Leaders know the school and its community well. They are clear about the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. However, their checks on how well pupils learn the curriculum in lessons and over time could be more rigorous.

Staff are positive about the support from leaders to manage their workload and well-being. Curriculum schemes of work and the school's marking policy, for example, help to keep their workload purposeful and manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise pupils' safety and welfare. They make sure that staff know how to spot and act on any concerns. Leaders take concerns that staff report seriously. They make sure pupils get the help and support they need to be safe.

Pupils learn about online safety, water safety and other risks, including those associated with gangs and knife crime. They learn about healthy, safe relationships and how to keep safe in the community.

Leaders make sure that all staff are appropriately vetted prior to working at Princethorpe Junior School.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Checks on how well pupils learn and remember the curriculum in lessons and over time are variable across subjects. This is because subject leaders have not developed sufficient routines for checking what pupils know and remember over time. Leaders should make sure that the assessments they use identify how well pupils are remembering and applying what has been taught.

- Some pupils do not attend school regularly, particularly younger pupils who have already had their early experiences restricted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These pupils miss important learning and fall behind in their learning. Leaders should work closely with families so that they understand the importance of regular school attendance.

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	146817
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10267812
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Sheldon
Executive Headteacher	Gerrard Rothwell
Website	www.princethorpe.drbignitemat.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Princethorpe Junior School is part of DRB Ignite Multi Academy Trust.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art and design, early reading, geography and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also met with subject leaders of history, languages and science to make further checks on the curriculum.

- Inspectors observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors reviewed reading resources.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation published on the school's website.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's safeguarding arrangements. This included examining the record of employment checks on school staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times during the day.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding leader, the attendance leader, curriculum leaders and representatives of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View, pupil surveys and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mark Bailie

Ofsted Inspector

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