

# Inspection of Arden Forest Infant School

Weston Lane, Bulkington, Bedworth, Warwickshire CV12 9RT

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Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Arden Forest Infant School is a welcoming and friendly place to be. Pupils say they are happy to be in school and feel safe. This is because staff support pupils well and show kindness and care for them. Pupils know there is someone to talk to if they are worried about anything.

Leaders expect all pupils to behave well and work hard. Pupils understand these expectations. They learn that it is their responsibility to follow the rules, and they take this responsibility seriously. Pupils say that bullying does sometimes happen but know that staff deal with it if it does.

Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum. Trips to places such as museums help to enrich this curriculum. Pupils remember a lot of what they have learned in subjects such as history. They were proud of their local author, George Eliott, and understood why she wrote her stories using a man's name.

Pupils are proud to have responsibilities in school, such as being a school councillor. They also enjoy a range of extra-curricular clubs such as football, multi-skills and dragon dancing. They learn about the diverse world we live in through the engaging events they experience in school.

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

Leaders, including governors, are determined to realise their vision of 'Little Learners, Big Achievers'. This ambition is being increasingly realised as pupils start to recover from the disruptions to their learning caused by staff changes and the pandemic. Leaders have created an engaging curriculum that aims to develop pupils both academically and personally. At the heart of the curriculum, is a focus on developing pupils' learning behaviours so they are ready to learn. Staff provide a lot of support for pupils' emotional well-being. This is particularly strong for some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

In many subjects, including in the early years, the curriculum clearly identifies the knowledge pupils need to know and remember to make progress. In these subjects, this has helped pupils to know and remember more. In science, for example, pupils could clearly explain what they need to do to maintain a healthy mind and body. However, in some subjects, such as art and design, curriculum thinking is at an earlier stage. Leaders have not developed the curriculum as well as in other subjects. As a result, pupils' knowledge is not as strong. For example, pupils remember artists they have studied, but not the skills they used.

Leaders make learning to read, and developing a love for reading, a key priority. All year groups have an agreed list of 50 books they will hear throughout the year. The structured phonics programme that teaches pupils to read starts at the beginning of the Reception year. There are also regular guided reading sessions. This is where

adults listen to pupils read and discuss their understanding of vocabulary. Assessment, both in lessons and at regular intervals, identifies any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders ensure that pupils get extra support to try and fill these gaps. This support has helped pupils to improve their knowledge of sounds and how to decode unknown words. However, there are still some pupils who struggle to blend the sounds together to read fluently.

In early years, learning to count and understand numbers is also a priority. Children demonstrate a good understanding of number. Pupils build on this understanding throughout key stage 1. Pupils with SEND are well supported in lessons using practical materials and having additional adult support. Staff use assessment to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge, and extra support is given to help pupils catch up.

In most lessons, pupils can learn without interruption and the school is a calm and orderly place to be. Pupils know what the expectations are, and most pupils rise to these expectations. Where some pupils find this more challenging, they are well supported so that they can continue to learn. This might sometimes be in a smaller group or quieter space outside of the classroom.

Pupils enjoy a range of experiences as part of the wider curriculum. They develop their character through focusing on learning behaviours. Pupils are proud to be a 'Stik-o-saurus' or a 'Team Rex' when they have showed they can persevere or work as part of a team. Leaders plan a range of experiences for pupils to enhance the curriculum and prepare them for life in modern Britain.

Staff say that they feel they are valued members of a team. They know that leaders, including governors, care about their well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff are trained to understand a wide range of safeguarding issues. Staff recognise the signs that a pupil might be at risk of harm. There are robust systems in place for reporting concerns. Leaders are quick to respond when this happens. They work with external agencies to ensure that the right actions are taken to keep pupils safe.

Pupils learn about how to stay safe, including when online, in an age-appropriate way.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils do not blend phonics well to read unknown words. As a result, they cannot read confidently or fluently. Leaders should ensure that these pupils receive appropriate support in phonics to improve their ability to read.
- Some subject leaders are new to role and at the early stages of developing the curriculum. As a result, not all subjects are developed to the same standard across the curriculum, and pupils' knowledge in some subjects is not as strong as in others. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders are given the time and support they need to develop their curriculum so that pupils' knowledge of all areas of the curriculum is equally strong.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130893
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211803
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	168
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Graeme Cave
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rose Gunn
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ardenforest.warwickshire.sch.uk">www.ardenforest.warwickshire.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	31 October 2007

## Information about this school

- Leaders do not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the early years leader, subject leaders, governors, including the chair of the governing body, and spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art and design. For each deep dive, the lead inspector met with

subject leaders, spoke to teachers, visited lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work from science, English, personal, social and health education, and geography.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding leader, to discuss safeguarding. Pupils' case files were reviewed. The single central record of the checks on staff's suitability to work with children was scrutinised.
- Inspectors met with staff to discuss their workload and the support they receive to carry out their roles.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about how safe they feel in school and how they learn to keep themselves safe.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, and the staff questionnaire.
- There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Helen Forrest, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sally Snooks

Ofsted Inspector

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