

# Field House Infant School

Lower Whitworth Road, Ilkeston, DE7 4LT

**Inspection dates** 27–28 February 2013

|                                |                      |              |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good         | 2        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good         | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Outstanding  | 1        |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good         | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. Children's good progress in Nursery and Reception is built on successfully in Key Stage 1. Attainment has risen in all year-groups.
- Nearly all teaching is good. Teachers now guide pupils' learning in lessons very effectively and marking has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers use interesting resources and topics to plan lessons which pupils greatly enjoy.
- Classroom relationships are exceptional, promoting consistently enthusiastic attitudes to learning by pupils.
- The excellent strides which children in Nursery and Reception take in their personal and social development lay firm foundations for their strong work ethic, growing self-confidence and maturity in Key Stage 1.
- Staff provide a high standard of pastoral care. Pupils feel safe and know they are valued. Their attendance, while remaining above average, is improving steadily.
- The school is well led by highly experienced senior leaders. The governing body is strongly involved in promoting successful improvement in the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although teaching has improved since the previous inspection, there is no outstanding teaching. Teachers need to ensure that all tasks are sufficiently demanding for pupils, especially the more able.
- Some opportunities to reinforce and extend Nursery and Reception children's skills whilst in the outdoor area are missed.
- Pupils' achievement is good rather than outstanding. More attention needs to be given to developing children's skills in forming letters correctly, and to pupils' handwriting and presentation skills in order to raise further their achievement in writing.
- Pupils do not have enough planned opportunities to use computers to practise and extend their basic skills and to carry out independent research.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 14 lessons taught by eight teachers. Two of these lessons were observed together with the headteacher.
- Samples of Year 2 pupils' work in English and mathematics were analysed. An inspector listened to some Year 2 pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with school staff, groups of pupils, governors and a school improvement adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 24 questionnaires completed by staff and the 32 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). An inspector also spoke informally to some parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the work in pupils' books; monitoring records; the school's own data on pupils' progress; and policies, procedures and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Derek Aitken, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Malcolm Johnstone

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Field House is a two-form entry school. It is similar in size to most other primary schools.
- Nearly all pupils are White British.
- Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is slightly below average. Currently, there are no children in local authority care and no children of service families attending the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of these pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two part-time Nursery classes and two Reception classes.
- Three teachers have joined the school since the previous inspection.
- A before- and after-school club, Whitworth Kids Club, operates on the school site. This is privately run and is subject to a separate inspection.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching in the school to outstanding and further improve pupils' achievement by making sure:
  - teachers plan the outdoor curriculum for Nursery and Reception children more tightly to enable children to build effectively on the good gains they make in the indoor area
  - all tasks planned by teachers are sufficiently demanding to help pupils reach higher levels of attainment, especially the more able
  - more attention is given to improving pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work
  - pupils have more opportunities to use computers to apply their basic skills and to carry out independent research.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children's skills and knowledge on entry to Nursery are mainly below national expectations in all areas of learning, especially in literacy. They make good progress, especially in their personal and social development, as staff are deployed flexibly to meet their needs. Resources in the indoor area and topics are carefully chosen to ensure children have well-planned opportunities to practise new learning. The outdoor area is not always used purposefully to enable all children to reinforce and extend their skills.
- Children's attainment has risen in the last three years and is now above national expectations by the time they join Year 1. Boys and girls achieve equally well in all areas of learning except writing where girls perform better than boys. This gap is starting to close as a result of teachers making the curriculum more interesting for boys.
- Children have a good grasp of phonics (the sounds that letters make). They demonstrate this in paired talk, songs and nursery rhymes. They sometimes confuse letters when writing them down, especially those which have some similarities in their formation. In the 2012 phonics checks at the end of Year 1 pupils performed less well than in most schools. However, this does not reflect the current situation and is inconsistent with school data. Weaknesses in the handwriting and presentation of their work of some older pupils hold back their achievement in writing.
- Pupil's attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has risen in the past two years. By the end of Year 2 pupils are working at above-average levels overall, although more pupils are capable of achieving the higher Level 3. They recall facts accurately and do particularly well in mathematics because they have interesting opportunities to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in investigative tasks. Pupils' above-average attainment combined with their strong work ethic prepares them well for starting junior school.
- Pupils are keen readers. They understand how information is presented in the contents section and the glossaries. Less-able readers know how to 'sound out' words correctly. On a few occasions they confuse letters and this affects their pronunciation.
- The attainment of all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is higher than their national counterparts. The starting-points of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and consequently eligible for the pupil premium funding, are often lower than their class-mates. This additional funding is spent, for example on providing additional in-class support for these pupils. While their attainment still remains lower at the end of Year 2, gaps are closing. Their attainment is in line with that of all pupils nationally and is considerably higher than that of similar pupils in other schools.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Almost all teaching is good although no outstanding teaching was observed during the inspection. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage them exceptionally well. This promotes excellent attitudes and, in several lessons, a real liveliness to learning was seen. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson pupils were excited by drawing and researching facts about plants in the playground area.
- Teachers value pupils' experiences and use these very effectively in follow-up questions. They

make sure all pupils listen carefully, stay alert and have equal chances to provide answers and to contribute their ideas.

- Basic skills are taught well. Teachers have an expert knowledge of their subjects and build well on pupils' prior learning. Their interesting topic-based lessons keep pupils busy and help them develop their speaking and memorising skills. For example, expert use of flashcards helped Nursery children to practise carefully the pronunciation of individual sounds made by different animals and insects. This new learning was swiftly reinforced by the teachers through songs and nursery rhymes, which the children quickly mastered.
- Teachers' clear guidance and good questioning skills ensure pupils know what they are expected to learn and enable them to remember and explain what they have learnt confidently and accurately. Teachers make good use of new technology to present information and engage pupils' interest. They usually check closely on how well different groups of pupils are progressing during lessons and their effective lesson summaries help pupils judge how well they have understood new learning. However, they do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills using computers and to carry out independent research.
- Teachers sometimes make less-good use of time, for example by not ensuring that all activities are hard enough for all groups of pupils, especially the more able. On these occasions pupils do not have enough opportunities to extend and apply their knowledge in suitably challenging tasks.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are helped to learn well. Teachers ensure they are fully involved in lessons and teaching assistants use resources, such as photographs and pictures, skilfully to develop the speaking skills of pupils who have communication difficulties.
- Teachers' marking has improved since the previous inspection. It provides clear feedback to pupils on how well they have completed a piece of work and useful 'next-steps' guidance.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Nursery and Reception children are exceptionally happy and secure in their well-organised classrooms. They know the routines very well, take responsibility for tidying up and comply immediately with staff's requests. Children know that they are well cared for and warm, trusting relationships are fully established.
- Children demonstrate a real eagerness to learn and a growing self-esteem. They select resources independently, show initiative indoors in trying to find out things for themselves and concentrate hard. They work and converse well with each other and take evident pleasure in sharing their ideas and thoughts with adults. Pupils' enjoyment of learning underpins their good progress. They are keen to please and to do their best for themselves and staff.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and in public areas is consistently good and is usually excellent. They say that bullying very rarely happens and that their lessons are rarely disturbed by inappropriate behaviour. Pupils have a strong regard for healthy eating, delight in physical exercise and keeping fit, for example during 'Wake and Shake' activities and at playtimes.
- Pupils' self-confidence and community spirit are exceptionally well promoted in assemblies where pupils' achievements are celebrated. Pupils not only 'show off' examples of their creative work but share them during question and answer sessions with their curious fellow pupils who

applaud their efforts. Pupils place high value in being recognised and rewarded for thoughtful behaviour, effort and high standards of work.

- Pupils benefit from many opportunities to take on leadership roles, for example as school councillors, lunch-time buddies and monitors. No-one is missed out as classroom leaders are rotated daily and this fosters a strong sense of responsibility, self-discipline and, relative to their young age, remarkable maturity.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and are well informed about 'stranger danger', aspects of road safety and appropriate use of social media. The school's comprehensive records and good links with external agencies ensure that 'at-risk' pupils are well looked after.
- The rise over the last three years in pupils' rates of attendance to above-average levels has contributed to their improved achievement.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The school is well led by highly experienced senior leaders. Pastoral leadership is especially effective. Staff have detailed knowledge of their pupils and work exceptionally well as a team to ensure all safeguarding requirements are met and pupils flourish in their personal and social development.
- The school's self-evaluation and plans for future development are accurate and well-focused. Key priority areas identified at the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. This has led to several improvements including a rising trend in achievement in all year-groups. Targets for pupils' progress are appropriately challenging and are regularly met.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning by senior leaders has been effective in promoting consistency, particularly in the application of teaching methods and in the quality of guidance pupils receive in lessons and through marking. Training opportunities have been used well to improve pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics.
- Targets for staff to improve the effectiveness of their work are linked closely to the priorities outlined in the whole-school development plan and have been used successfully to help pupils learn at a faster rate.
- Leaders use tracking information effectively to direct resources, guide teaching and pinpoint pupils who need extra support. Leaders have recently set up an extra class to accelerate the progress of the more-able pupils in Year 2, but it is too early to judge fully how effective this measure will be.
- The extra funding the school receives for the pupil premium has been allocated carefully and the school can show clear evidence of impact on raising the attainment and attendance of this group of pupils across the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well. Pupils acquire a real thirst for learning and the SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) programme is carefully threaded through the curriculum to support their well-being in school. The school promotes equal opportunities well and, through its actions, ensures no discrimination is allowed.
- The local authority provides the school with useful support, for example in setting up visits to other schools where leaders have picked up good ideas to improve teaching.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors know how well the school is doing and play an important role in development planning. They review data on pupils' performance carefully and visit the school regularly to monitor the impact of changes they have ratified. They know what needs to be done to further raise the achievement of all groups. Most governors have seen a lesson taught. They are fully involved in devising targets for staff's performance and follow up-to-date guidance in checking how well staff are achieving these targets. They ensure a clear link between pay increase and effective performance.

## What inspection judgements mean

| School  |                      |  |
|---------|----------------------|--|
| Grade   | Judgement            | Description  |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding          | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
| Grade 2 | Good                 | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.   |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate           | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |



## School details

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 112574     |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Derbyshire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 405400     |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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|--|--|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Infant                                 |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                              |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–7                                    |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 228                                    |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                     |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Bridget Jones                          |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Denise Wells                           |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 8 February 2011                        |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 0115 9324526                           |
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