

The Park Junior School

Orchard Close, Mansfield, NG20 8JX

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Inspirational leadership from the executive headteacher and head of school have driven the excellent improvements in all areas of the school since the last inspection. School leaders, ably supported by a dedicated staff team and governors, have created a quite exceptional environment for learning where all pupils flourish.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. They start the junior school with levels of attainment that are below those typical for their age. However, they make extremely good progress to reach above-average standards at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils achieve exceptionally well because teaching is outstanding.
- All groups of pupils make outstanding progress because of the high-quality and well-timed support they receive from their teachers and other adults.
- Pupils eligible for extra support through additional government funding make the same excellent progress as other pupils.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well and are respectful towards one another as well as their teachers. They say they are well cared for and feel safe. Their very positive attitudes to learning play a significant role in the excellent progress made in lessons.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and, as a result, attendance is above average.
- The school provides outstanding training and support for its staff and is especially successful in 'growing' its own teachers and teaching assistants.
- Teachers new to the school benefit greatly from working in a school where there is so much outstanding practice.
- The governing body plays an important and successful role in supporting and challenging the school to help drive improvements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors sampled teaching in 21 lessons. Two of the lessons sampled were observed jointly with the senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors also conducted some shorter visits to lessons to look at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and observed pupils in the playground and at lunch.
- Inspectors observed assemblies and visited the breakfast club.
- Inspectors analysed a range of documentation. This included: safeguarding records and those relating to behaviour and attendance; records of pupils' achievement; records of the checks made on teaching and pupils' learning; the school's self evaluation and improvement plans; school policies and the minutes of governing body meetings.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher and head of school, the Chair of the Governing Body and nine other governors, school staff and subject leaders.
- Formal discussions were held with Year 6 pupils, as well as informal conversations during lessons and at break and lunch times.
- The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with the school's improvement partner.
- The school's website was looked at.
- Inspectors took into account the 13 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and parent discussions carried out during the inspection. The school's recent survey for parents was also looked at.
- The school's staff survey, undertaken during the week of the inspection, was analysed.

Inspection team

Michael Wintle, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Winson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized junior school.
- The school has entered into a federation with the infant school and is run by the executive headteacher in partnership with the head of school. The federation has one governing body which oversees both schools.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- Almost half of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and so are in receipt of support through the pupil premium (additional funds made available by the government to support this and other groups of pupils). The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special needs who are supported through school action is well above average as is the proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that school leaders share the school's outstanding practice even more extensively with new teachers as well as more widely with other schools.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils join Year 3 with skills below those expected for their age. They make outstanding progress so that, by the end of Year 6, standards are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2013 in reading, writing and mathematics were around two terms ahead of pupils nationally. All pupils achieved the required level in both writing and mathematics, and many exceeded this. In reading, the vast majority of pupils achieved the required standards for their age. A high proportion of pupils made the expected, and more than the expected, progress when compared to pupils nationally, especially in writing. The trend in improvement in Year 6 results over the last three years has been strongly upward.
- In lessons, pupils typically make rapid progress. For example, in a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson, pupils made great strides in their understanding of mental calculations. They were very keen to set themselves challenging tasks and knew what was expected of them from the teacher. All pupils worked with great purpose and could explain their thinking clearly, enabling them to make rapid progress.
- Standards in the school continue to improve and are already high in the current Year 5, for example, where a third of pupils have shown accelerated progress and all of them are on track to achieve much better than the expected levels of progress in all subjects. The progress in the current Year 6 books shows that pupils are on target to meet their predicted levels, which are well above the national average
- The most-able pupils are making good progress, and numbers achieving the higher levels are above average. This is because expectations are very high with all teachers, who consistently challenge the pupils and are regularly heard to say, 'Not a minute needs to be lost with our learning.' This means progress in lessons is often outstanding.
- There are no underachieving groups, as all make faster progress than normally expected. Teachers plan carefully and cater for the wide range of different abilities in their class. As a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make rapid progress. In 2013, those in Year 6 all attained the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics. This represented excellent progress.
- Pupil premium funding is imaginatively and effectively used. This includes extra staffing, such as 'apprentice assistants', so eligible pupils can be supported in small groups or given individual tuition. Consequently, those who need it get the right support quickly and make faster progress than normally expected.
- In 2013, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals made similar progress to other pupils in reading and writing, but fewer made more than expected progress in mathematics. While their attainment was much better than similar pupils nationally, it was not as high as that of other pupils in the school. Eligible pupils in Year 6 last year were half a term behind their classmates in writing, and around six months behind them in reading and mathematics. The gap is narrower for pupils currently in the school.
- Reading is a growing strength within the school. Pupils who read to inspectors were very enthusiastic about reading and demonstrated good skills and understanding, often well above age-related expectations. Sustained effort on the part of the school to raise the proportion of

pupils who read at school has been successful. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils read widely and often. It is normal practice for Year 6 pupils to take themselves off to the refurbished library and undertake their research individually or with their 'buddy'.

- Improvements in standards and the rates at which all pupils make progress clearly show the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teachers have very high expectations of all pupils and plan lessons which provide just the right amount of challenge.
- Typical characteristics of teaching include:
 - searching questions which at all times draw out pupils' understanding and extend their learning
 - well-motivated pupils because their teachers always expect them to do their very best
 - high-quality marking, consistent across the school, that provides a careful balance between praise and useful suggestions to all pupils on how to improve their work
 - excellent relationships so that pupils' personal development is fostered effectively and behaviour managed expertly
 - outstanding classrooms that are exciting and encourage pupils' curiosity
 - opportunities for pupils to find information out for themselves or with a friend.
- Teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing and fully involve all pupils in interesting tasks and activities. Pupils know how well they are doing and the progress they have made so far. One pupil in a literacy lesson said to the inspector, 'I'm proud of my writing because it's improved the most. That's because its expected in my class.'
- Teachers' subject knowledge is impressive. This, coupled with their in-depth knowledge of pupils' current learning, enables them to provide work that is set at the right level of difficulty for the pupils in their classes. Teachers find the time in lessons to provide high-quality guidance to individual pupils in order to steer their thinking and help them to develop deeper understanding of their work. This makes a significant contribution to the rapid progress all pupils make.
- Teaching assistants support pupils well and are very skilful in asking searching questions and demonstrating to pupils how they should tackle their work or solve problems so that they can complete these for themselves. This means that all groups of pupils are making rapid progress and are, at the same time, developing confidence.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Behaviour in lessons and around school is typically exemplary.
- One of the notable features of this school is pupils' very positive attitude to their lessons. They respond with enthusiasm when given work that makes them think and they show outstanding perseverance to get it done. Pupils respect their teachers and want to excel. Pupils also support and encourage each other very effectively.
- Spiritual, social, moral and cultural provision is outstanding across the school. Older pupils provide outstanding role models for younger pupils. Pupils have many opportunities to take on

responsible roles, such as being active in the Pupil Management Team. This team prepared, delivered and led an outstanding assembly on 'Pride' without any support from adults. Behaviour was outstanding. The whole school listened attentively, actively took part in the singing and prayers and made this an extremely memorable event for all pupils.

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and say they are proud to be a pupil there. As a result, attendance is above average and pupils are generally on time for their lessons.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Throughout their lessons and assemblies, pupils are taught the skills they need to manage everyday risks for themselves; for example, safe use of the internet, road safety and dealing with bullying.
- All pupils said that bullying is extremely rare and that there is always an adult to speak to if they have any worries or concerns. One pupil said, 'Teachers always take care of us. Any problem is sorted straight away.'
- Parents and carers say their children are safe, happy and well behaved. The staff are equally positive, and some commented on how behaviour has been transformed over the last few years.
- Pupils have a very good knowledge on how to keep safe, both in and out of school. Pupils were unanimous about feeling safe in school.

The leadership and management is outstanding

- The executive headteacher and head of school provide outstanding leadership in all areas of school life. The executive headteacher's passion and unwavering commitment to school improvement are very clearly communicated to the wider school and local community.
- Senior leaders know their school extremely well. Teaching performance is managed outstandingly well. Leaders know precisely what makes teaching outstanding and use this knowledge effectively to drive improvement. Monitoring by leaders of the quality of teaching is almost a daily occurrence.
- Senior and subject leaders make regular checks to find out how well pupils are achieving. All staff use data well to track the progress pupils make and ensure that they are meeting their challenging targets.
- The school goes to great lengths to ensure that pupils enjoy school by making learning exciting and interesting. It provides an inspiring programme of study and a wide range of enrichment activities. For example, the Year 5 and Year 6 pupils attended an outward-bound residential course at Caythorpe Court where they were involved in raft building, abseiling and high ropes. Months after the event, pupils were enthusiastically retelling their adventures of having breakfast in their pyjamas.
- The federation provides many opportunities for collaborative working that are highly appreciated by the staff. Staff morale in school is very high. Cross-school working parties have been very effective in developing shared practice in English and mathematics and in checking the accuracy of assessment of pupils' work. An example of this is the highly effective partnership between the subject leaders in English and mathematics.
- Newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school are supported effectively so they develop their practice and quickly become highly effective practitioners. Leaders are becoming

increasingly aware that, very occasionally, there is potential to accelerate the development of these teachers even more through further sharing of the outstanding practice in the school. Leaders have started to consider how they might also share their best practice with other schools.

- The pupil premium funding is used extremely well to employ extra staff and implement specific support leading to an immediate and positive impact on standards for eligible pupils. The primary school sport funding is being carefully used to involve more pupils in sport and to set up an increasing number of sports clubs such as gymnastics and badminton.
- The local authority provides only light-touch support.
- The school is highly successful at promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils and ensures that all groups of pupils achieve outstandingly well. Parent View and talking to parents confirms that parents appreciate the work of the staff.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and have been involved in deciding on which areas of development the school now needs to focus on. They have been both challenging and supportive of the senior leadership team, often on a daily basis. Governors have tackled weaker teaching robustly and have not been afraid to make difficult decisions relating to pay-related performance, tying teachers' pay rises to the progress of their pupils. They know about the progress of all pupils, based on secure analysis of school data. Governors are a visible presence in the school. They ensure that the pupil premium funding is spent appropriately and they are well informed about the impact this funding is having. This, together with their good knowledge of the quality of teaching across the federated schools, enables them to make informed decisions based on clear evidence. Governors have benefited from training and are in a good position to ensure that they raise the school's profile both locally and nationally so that other schools can benefit from their school's expertise. Governors ensure that pupils are kept safe from harm. They have undertaken relevant safeguarding training enabling them to ensure that the school's systems meet current guidelines.

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

Unique reference number	112682
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	440521

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 8 deemed section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marian Stockdale
Executive Headteacher	Steven James Hewitt-Richards
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2011
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