

Parks Primary School

New Parks Crescent, Leicester, LE3 9NZ

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The school's improvement is due to outstanding leadership and teaching that enable pupils to achieve exceptionally well, whatever their background or ability.
- Leaders at all levels, staff and governors have created a school where pupils are keen to succeed; pupils thrive, enjoy school very much, and their attendance levels are above average.
- Children, including those at an early stage of speaking English, get off to a great start in the Nursery and Reception.
- By the time pupils leave the school, standards are well above average in reading and broadly average in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils, keep a very close check on their learning and provide work at the right level of difficulty.
- Lessons are highly productive because staff are well organised and pupils are invariably ready and eager to learn.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make rapid progress because they receive high-quality support.
- The school makes excellent use of the pupil premium; any gaps in the attainment of eligible pupils and others are small and closing.
- Teachers mark pupils' work very effectively, so that pupils know exactly what to do to improve.
- Pupils usually behave impeccably, whether in lessons or when playing outside. They feel safe and are very supportive of each other.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness extremely well. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the school's performance and highly committed to enabling staff to provide the best for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. They heard pupils read, looked at the work in their books and attended assemblies.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, senior leaders and other staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority.
- It was not possible to analyse Parent View, the online questionnaire, because there were too few responses. However, inspectors spoke informally and formally with a number of parents and examined the school's own survey of parents' views from June 2014, to which 239 parents responded.
- Inspectors took account of the 27 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including a summary of the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, policies aimed at keeping pupils safe, and information about governance and the management of teachers' performance.

Inspection team

Keith Williams, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Leena Hussain	Additional Inspector
Tania Sanders	Additional Inspector
Andrew Clark	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This larger than average primary school is much bigger than it was when it was last inspected, with over 120 more pupils on roll.
- Children who join the Nursery (F1) attend part time. They move to full time when they join Reception (F2).
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Among other pupils, the largest groups are those of Black African, other Black heritage and other White backgrounds. An above-average proportion speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, at over a quarter, are well above the national average.
- Almost two-thirds of the pupils are eligible for the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, known as the pupil premium. This is well above average.
- The headteacher is a Local Leader of Education (LLE) and provides formal support for another school in the local authority. The inclusion manager (special educational needs coordinator) is seconded for one day each week to support other local schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These are the minimum standards expected at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics.
- The school hosts a breakfast club, which is managed by the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Work with parents to encourage more to be involved in the wider life of the school for the benefit of their own children.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. She has very high expectations of herself, other senior leaders, staff and pupils. All staff share the drive for excellence in all of the school's work and this has contributed to its outstanding effectiveness.
- Leaders keep a very close check on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning and welfare. The information they gather from watching lessons, examining pupils' books and analysing teachers' assessments enables them to agree precise areas for improvement with staff. Because staff respond so well, this invariably results in pupils making even better progress.
- Very good support is given to teachers who are new to the school, including those who are newly qualified. Teachers of all levels of experience take stock of their effectiveness systematically and strive for continual improvement.
- Subject leaders, and the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage, make a very strong and highly successful contribution to the school's development. Together, they ensure that pupils experience a wide range of exciting and stimulating experiences that prepare them well for life in modern Britain. As a result, pupils across the school make excellent progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' cultural awareness has improved considerably since the last inspection.
- Leaders have worked well with other schools to ensure readiness for the new curriculum. Those in English and mathematics, for example, have been instrumental in revising the school's approach to reading, writing and mathematics, including a more systematic approach to the teaching of grammar. They are very well placed to implement the new assessment arrangements.
- The steps taken by leaders to maintain high standards of behaviour and above-average attendance levels are highly effective. The inclusion manager, learning mentor and the family support worker provide effective support to pupils. As a result, any barriers to learning are successfully broken down.
- All pupils are fully included and able to learn, whatever their background. Discrimination, in any form, is not tolerated and pupils of all backgrounds get on well together. Safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements.
- Leaders use additional funding skilfully. The pupil premium is used extremely well to ensure that eligible pupils are fully included in school activities and achieve as well as others.
- Sports funding has been used very effectively to provide specialist physical education teaching, that is not only increasing pupils' skill and participation levels, but also improving the expertise and confidence of staff.
- The local authority has provided light-touch support for the school and regularly uses the school's expertise for the benefit of other schools.
- The school's work with parents is most successful through the very strong links with those whose children are disabled or have special educational needs, and in the steps taken to maintain good levels of attendance. Parents readily attend meetings with staff to discuss their children's progress and events at which their children perform. Many fewer attend more general events including, for example, curriculum information meetings, so opportunities are missed to find out how they can help their children's learning at home.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is highly effective. It has developed a wide range of activities, including regular, themed visits by individual governors that ensure it is very well informed about the school's performance. This information, together with detailed reports from staff, regular training and

excellent use of individual governors' expertise in areas such as child protection and analysing data, is used very well to hold leaders to account. Governors contribute strongly to the school's evaluation of its work. Governors gather detailed information about the performance of teachers and they make sure that teachers' appraisals are carried out fairly and effectively. Firm links are made between teachers' performance and pay. Finances are managed very well. Governors have a detailed overview of spending and its impact, including the additional funding for the pupil premium and sport. They make sure that all statutory requirements are met, including those relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are rightly proud of their school, wear their uniform with pride and take good care of equipment, buildings and playgrounds. Pupils' high levels of enjoyment of school are reflected in above-average attendance levels and good punctuality.
- Relationships are highly positive. This begins in the Nursery, where children soon learn to share and take turns. Relationship and behaviour are excellent in the breakfast club. Almost a hundred pupils benefit greatly from this friendly, safe and calm start to the day.
- Pupils are very supportive of each other, for example, when they evaluate each other's writing or when making sure that no-one is left out from their games at break time. They treat all staff with respect, responding exceptionally well to the excellent role models they are set.
- Pupils speak highly of the behaviour of others, which contributes to their enjoyment and sense of well-being. Parents who spoke to inspectors confirmed that pupils behave well and they could approach the school should problems arise. This confidence is reflected in the school's own consultation with parents.
- Lessons invariably run smoothly and disruptions are very rare. The few pupils who have challenging behaviour are very well managed by staff. There have been no permanent exclusions. Fixed-term exclusions are used appropriately, infrequently and thoughtfully; over time, these pupils show considerable improvement in their behaviour.
- Pupils report that bullying is very rare and they are confident that it would be dealt with swiftly by staff. They have an excellent awareness of bullying in its different forms. Discrimination of any kind is not accepted and the very rare incidents are recorded carefully and dealt with effectively.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Staff, those parents who offered a view and governors agree that pupils are safe in school.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and parents are confident that the school takes its responsibilities seriously. The potential risks of school activities and those further afield are assessed conscientiously.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe in school, when out and about and when, for example, using the internet. Their outstanding moral development means that they fully understand right from wrong and observe and obey school and class rules reliably. This adds to pupils' sense of safekeeping.
- The school works very effectively with families in difficult circumstances. Some parents were very keen to recall the excellent support they and their children had received when they first moved into the area, which had enabled their children to settle quickly into their new surroundings. The work of the family support worker and other key staff is much appreciated by parents.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Outstanding teaching has been a significant factor in the school's improvement and enables pupils to achieve exceptionally well. Pupils play their part by concentrating fully and striving to succeed, even when they find the work difficult.
- Teachers keep a very close check on pupils' learning. They take excellent account of what pupils have learned previously when they plan lessons, and this means that the work is usually at the right level of difficulty for pupils of different abilities. During lessons, teachers question carefully to check pupils' understanding and they tackle any misconceptions sensitively, skilfully and swiftly.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils, who rise to the challenge. The most-able pupils are expected to think more deeply about their work and how they will tackle it. For example, in Years 5 and 6, when studying the First World War, many pupils developed a sophisticated understanding of the moral dilemmas faced by people with different beliefs, during times of conflict.
- Teachers and teaching assistants form highly effective teams, particularly to support disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and others who need extra help. Teaching assistants are careful to ensure that pupils have clear guidelines but can make choices and decisions about their work for themselves.
- Disadvantaged pupils form the majority of most classes and are the large majority in some. Teachers have a very clear awareness of their progress and ensure that they receive the same high-quality provision as other pupils. Consequently, these pupils make similar rapid progress as others.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is outstanding. Early skills are taught highly effectively in Nursery and Reception, and are built upon systematically as pupils move through the school.
- Marking is of high quality in all subjects and contributes to pupils' excellent progress. Teachers give clear pointers for improvement, and pupils take great care in responding to teachers' suggestions. Teachers review this frequently to make sure that their marking is having the desired results. Homework is set regularly and this enhances pupils' learning.

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children join the Nursery with skills and abilities that are generally below those typical of this age. They are particularly low in communication and mathematics. Children make outstanding progress in the Nursery and Reception. Many reach a good level of development by the end of Reception and they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups and those speaking English as an additional language, continue to make rapid progress in Key Stage 1. They use their knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics) very well and, in Year 1 last year, a larger proportion reached the expected standard in the phonics check than was the case nationally. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average, reflecting excellent achievement in relation to the pupils' starting points.
- Standards are average and above by the end of Year 6. They are well above average in reading. This is as a direct result of systematic teaching, the careful checking of pupils' progress and the imaginative promotion of reading for pleasure. As a result, pupils read widely and often, and use their skills successfully to help their learning in other subjects.
- From their different starting points, the proportions of pupils making and exceeding expected progress are high. The school is particularly successful at enabling pupils of all abilities to make much more progress than might be expected. Disadvantaged pupils cover the full ability range and they make similar outstanding progress to others in the school, whatever their starting points.
- Last year, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils, when they left Year 6, was similar to that of other

pupils in the school in reading and writing. In mathematics, it was about two terms behind their peers. The school's assessments show that, across the school, this gap is closing this year. Their attainment was similar to other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics last year and was about a term ahead of others nationally in reading.

- The most-able pupils achieve exceptionally well. In Year 2, the proportion of these pupils reaching the higher Level 3 is rising, although it is still lower than that found nationally. In Year 6, last year, a larger proportion of pupils reached the higher Level 5 in reading, writing and mathematics than was found nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress from their different starting points. This is because every step is taken to ensure that they have high-quality support. Many go on to reach nationally expected levels by the time they leave.

The early years provision is outstanding

- Children make excellent progress because they are able to learn in a calm, vibrant and stimulating environment. Those new to speaking English soon gain confidence in using and understanding the language and they quickly learn to join in with rhymes, songs and class routines. Consequently, children of all abilities and backgrounds are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Very strong leadership ensures that all adults are like-minded in their approaches. A consistently high priority is placed on promoting speaking and listening through skilful questioning and by encouraging children to extend what they say.
- Teaching is outstanding. Staff keep a very close check on children's all-round learning. Assessments are accurate and staff use their observations very effectively to plan new work and to create very helpful 'learning journeys'. As a result, children make rapid gains in their learning and personal development.
- Teachers plan carefully so that they cover all areas of learning in the classrooms and outdoors. The outdoor area for the Nursery is small but very well used, and Nursery children have regular access to the climbing equipment in the Reception outdoor area. Plans are well in hand to improve and extend the outdoor facilities for the Nursery.
- Children's behaviour and safety are outstanding. They quickly learn to share and play together and, increasingly, are able to concentrate for longer periods. They develop a thirst for learning. Excellent support is given to disabled children and those who have special educational needs. This enables them to achieve as well as their classmates.

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	120088
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	448676

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bernie Walker
Headteacher	Cas Evans
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2009
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