

# Northfield Junior School

Falcon Road, Dronfield, S18 2ED

**Inspection dates** 27–28 January 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is good school.

- Since the last inspection, the headteacher's leadership has strengthened pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Governors are well informed about the school's performance and provide good support and challenge.
- Pupils make good progress and reach above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers plan lessons that are engaging so pupils' interest is captured well.
- Disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as their peers. This is because of the good teaching and effective additional support that they receive in class or in small groups.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for. They are happy and enjoy school, including the wide range of additional activities offered to them. They have positive attitudes to learning and behave well in class and around school.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors have ensured that good-quality training has helped to improve teaching, which in turn has improved pupils' achievement. They know what still needs to be done and work to continue to improve the school.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the presentations and meetings that are offered by staff to help them to share in their child's learning and achievements in school.
- A strength of the curriculum is the school's strong provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, where activities in art, music and physical education help to broaden pupils' horizons and aspirations.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always adapt their teaching during the course of a lesson to enable pupils to make the best progress because they do not identify the cause of pupils' misconceptions.
- Marking and feedback do not consistently show pupils what they need to do to improve and teachers do not ensure that pupils act on the advice they are given.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons, and undertook a number of shorter observations. Two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors heard pupils read, discussed reading preferences with pupils and evaluated the work in pupils' books.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, teachers, representatives of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Information from the school's website and the 41 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account. Inspectors also evaluated the 12 questionnaires received from staff.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documents. They reviewed teachers' planning and assessment records, safeguarding information, the school's systems for improving teaching and learning, reports from the local authority and records of governing body meetings.

## Inspection team

Angela Kirk, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Patrick Walsh

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Northfield is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs is average, at around 16%. A higher proportion of pupils than there is nationally are supported through a statement of special educational needs, or by an education, health and care plan.
- At around 16%, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Further improve the quality of teaching by:
  - quickly spotting pupils' misconceptions and adapting lessons so that these are addressed and pupils make the best possible progress
  - ensuring that marking and feedback is consistent in showing pupils what they need to do to improve their work, and checking that pupils act on the advice they are given.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has been the motivational force behind the improvements to pupils' achievement. Inspection questionnaires returned by staff indicate that morale is high and that all staff share the headteacher's commitment to school improvement, positive behaviour and good learning across a wide and rich curriculum. The school's self-evaluation accurately reflects its strengths and what still needs to be developed further.
- Good systems are in place for senior leaders and teachers with specific responsibilities to check on all aspects of teaching and learning. Subject leaders play an effective role and provide useful feedback to other teachers, taking account of lesson observations, scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, and interviews with pupils.
- Senior leaders have worked to ensure that teachers are accurate in their assessments. The system used by all teachers across the school ensures that, when a pupil is seen to have been struggling with a key skill or concept, additional support is provided, usually before the next lesson.
- Leaders plan carefully to make sure that the pupil premium spending is used well to support eligible pupils, both emotionally and academically, so that they make at least the same progress as their peers. The school tackles discrimination of any sort and promote positive relationships well.
- The curriculum has been redesigned to meet the changes in the new National Curriculum. The school teaches and reinforces the full range of key skills year-on-year in an interesting way. There are many activities that enrich the curriculum, including cultural links with other countries and business enterprise competitions. The school has recently been successful in winning choir competitions and horticultural awards. Through the school's assemblies, religious education, personal and social education, and the more recently introduced philosophy lessons, pupils are challenged to think about British values. For example, they consider similarities and differences between the faiths represented in Britain today. This helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- The primary physical education and sport premium has been used effectively. It has improved teachers' skills and confidence in teaching physical education and improved the knowledge of teaching assistants in supporting swimming. Increased opportunities for pupils have enabled them to use the local climbing wall regularly and increased their participation in inter-school tournaments, such as tag rugby, basketball and cross-country running.
- Parents who responded to the questionnaire and who spoke with inspectors were overwhelmingly positive about the school. Parents feel that their children are safe, achieve well and that behaviour is well managed. There has been excellent attendance at parents' information events, such as those for reading, mathematics and e-safety.
- The local authority has provided good support to this school. For example, the adviser has supported the development of subject leaders through coaching on aspects of monitoring and evaluation.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is effective. Governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school and receive a wide range of useful reports and information from senior and subject leaders. They also make regular visits, based on the school's priorities, to check up for themselves on the impact of specific actions. They have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and how well the pupils are achieving. They offer strong support to senior leaders, but are not afraid to ask challenging questions.
  - The finances of the school are carefully scrutinised. Governors are well informed about the performance management of teachers and ensure that only those who meet their targets receive pay increases. They ensure that all statutory requirements are fully met, including those for safeguarding.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are considerate, respectful and have good manners. They are happy to work and share their ideas with each other, knowing that their opinions will be valued.
- The school's records and inspectors' discussions and observations show that serious incidents are rare; there have been no exclusions in the last three years.
- Pupils' have consistently positive attitudes to learning. This is seen, for example, in their improving responses to teachers' advice in their books.
- There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to take on extra responsibilities in the school, including being a 'reading buddy' to a younger pupil.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average, reflecting the success of the school's actions to tackle the persistence absence of individual pupils and its successful reduction of term-time holidays.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for in school and all parents who completed the Parent View survey agree that the school keeps their child safe.
- Pupils confirm that bullying is rare, and misbehaviour is always dealt with promptly and fairly. The school's records of incidents confirm pupils' views.
- Pupils are helped to keep themselves safe through assemblies and lessons that help them to make good decisions to avoid putting themselves in danger; for example, when using the internet. Their awareness of different types of bullying helps them to be confident in knowing what to do should it occur in familiar or new situations.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teaching interests and engages pupils well. Steps taken by the school to improve teachers' planning have resulted in work that presents the right level of challenge in most lessons. Good teaching over time has helped to improve the achievement of most pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, as well as across the wider curriculum.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour. They help pupils to understand what they need to do to complete their work successfully and are increasingly involving them in assessing their work and that of their peers. This practice is beginning to accelerate their progress still further.
- Teachers explain new concepts and ideas carefully, making good use of well-chosen resources. This feature is particularly strong in the teaching of numeracy across the school. Consequently, pupils usually learn well and make good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- Teaching assistants teach well and provide good support. There is useful dialogue between teachers and teaching assistants before, during and after lessons to check pupils' progress and organise any necessary catch-up sessions, or changes to lesson plans.
- Reading is taught well throughout the school. Recent enhancements of the school library, as well as initiatives to improve the number, range and quality of the books pupils read at home and at school, have supported the school's drive to improve reading. The teaching of writing has improved because teachers now make sure that pupils know what they need to include to be successful in their writing.

- Although teachers check learning in lessons – for example, by asking probing questions – they do not always identify the cause of pupils’ misconceptions and adapt their teaching accordingly. This leads to slower progress for some pupils.
- Marking and feedback have improved since the last inspection but are not yet consistent. Teachers’ comments do not always help pupils understand the improvements they need to make, and their recommendations are sometimes not acted upon by the pupils.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- By the time pupils leave the school, they have made at least good progress from their average and above-average starting points. Overall, attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average, with pupils leaving Year 6 typically two terms ahead of pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most-able pupils achieve well, with all pupils who had achieved the higher level in reading, writing or mathematics in Year 2 attaining a correspondingly higher level at Year 6 in the 2014 national tests and assessments.
- A considered and improving focus on the teaching of calculation methods in mathematics has resulted in high standards in national tests over the last two years. Assessment data show that many pupils are starting in Year 3 with lower attainment in mathematics, characterised by a lack of fluency in pupils’ basic mathematics skills; for example, many are not yet confident in their basic addition and subtraction facts. This provided a challenge for the school, which has adapted teaching in Year 3 to ensure that these skills are secure before more complex concepts and ideas are taught.
- Since the last inspection, the school has focused on raising boys’ attainment in writing. Teachers benefited from well-focused training on methods to better engage boys in literacy, and these have led to improved support for boys to accelerate their progress in writing. As a result, previous gender gaps are now closing. The training and has also contributed to improvements in boys’ reading. Pupils, including a number of boys, discuss their book choices with reference to different genres and authors, and show a clear enjoyment of reading.
- The most recent leavers in the school included few disadvantaged pupils, so it is not possible to comment on their attainment without risk of identifying individual children. Across the school, however, disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Last year, their progress in reading, writing and mathematics was better than their peers by about half a term, so achievement gaps are closing.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar good progress to their peers because work is adapted where necessary and additional support is effective. A few pupils with complex needs also make good progress in small steps from their starting points. This is because teachers, teaching assistants and external specialists work closely together to ensure that each pupil’s individual needs are met.
- Pupils’ books show that they make good progress by developing their key skills in other subjects. For example, pupils had used their literacy skills to write interesting historical accounts; and pupils in Year 6 had written formal letters to a museum, linked to their science research on evolution.

## 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>	112685
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	449576

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	155
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Thomas
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rebecca Timperley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01246 413134
<b>Fax number</b>	01246 292312
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@northfield.derbyshire.sch.uk



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