

Kirby Muxloe Primary School

Barwell Road, Kirby Muxloe, Leicester LE9 2AA

Inspection dates

13–14 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and staff are ambitious for every pupil. They share a common goal of excellence for all.
- Pupils achieve well thanks to the culture of aspiration and care throughout the school. Pupils and staff enjoy coming to school each day.
- The headteacher has led the school with great skill and good judgement through a period of continued improvement. He is very well supported by an effective and determined team of senior leaders.
- Governors and trustees are effective in holding senior leaders to account. They are not complacent, and constantly seek ways to improve their performance and their understanding of the school.
- However, leaders are not precise enough in planning the next steps for school improvement. Too often, leaders measure success by the actions they have taken and not the impact of these actions on school improvement.
- Parents feel respected and play an active part of their children's education. They know that their opinions are taken seriously and value the support they receive from teachers.
- Pupils' learning benefits from an inspiring and memorable curriculum. Their appetite for learning is satisfied by lessons that are planned to capture their imagination and interest.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are outstanding. Pupils are well prepared for each new stage of their education and for life in the world beyond the school gates.
- Pupils' lunchtime behaviour is not as good as it is at other times of the school day.
- Children make an outstanding start to their school life in the early years. Excellent leadership and teaching ensure that children's learning and development progress quickly and that they achieve well.
- Pupils attain well over time. Some groups such as the least able and disadvantaged pupils make particularly good progress during their time at the school.
- Nonetheless, the teaching of phonics is not consistent. Learning tasks are not well enough matched to pupils' abilities, particularly the most able.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that senior and subject leaders and governors show greater precision and attention to detail in their assessment of what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve further.
- Improve the consistency of teaching in phonics so that all pupils, but particularly the most able, make increased rates of progress in reading and writing over time.
- Ensure that the exemplary behaviour seen during lessons is replicated during lunchtimes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders have ensured that the school has continued to improve since the last inspection of its predecessor school. The headteacher and his deputy have encouraged and empowered teachers and teaching assistants to teach with flair and imagination. Pupils' and adults' enthusiasm is tangible and makes this school an exciting place to learn.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are widely respected by staff and parents, having re-energised and reignited the spark for learning within the school community. Parents who inspectors spoke with on the school playground commented on how they felt involved in the life of the school because they believed that leaders genuinely listened to their views. Leaders have ensured that parents feel like partners in the social, emotional and academic development of their children through events such as 'Meet & Greet' and information sessions on aspects of the curriculum.
- Senior leaders have communicated the school's values, vision and ambition of 'inspiring excellence in everyone' very successfully. They have worked with teachers and teaching assistants to create the school's innovative and creative 'Learning Journey' curriculum. This approach to learning ensures that pupils have memorable experiences that enhance and embed their learning, preparing them not only for the next stages of their academic careers, but also for life as British citizens. For example, during a meeting with inspectors, pupils from Year 6 eagerly and fondly recounted their previous learning, which included their Year 4 trip to London and their Year 5 project on Islam.
- Senior and middle leaders are effective because their roles are well developed and they understand the part they play in improving the school. Leaders regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning, reflecting on what they have seen to identify next steps for school improvement. This has had a significant impact on raising outcomes for the majority of pupils and in most areas of learning over the past three years.
- Senior leaders use the school's performance management systems and procedures to promote best teaching practice and improve pupils' outcomes. External consultants assist leaders in making judgements about standards within the school and leaders seek external support and expertise when necessary. Leaders have addressed past underperformance by some staff and provided coaching and support for teachers and teaching assistants when necessary. As a result, almost all teaching in the school is of a high standard but, notably in phonics, it is less consistent, particularly in relation to the appropriateness of learning tasks in challenging the most able pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that the additional government funding from the pupil premium has been used to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders monitor the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils assiduously to ensure that they receive support according to their needs, with particular attention given to the most and least able. Leaders also use this funding to ensure that these pupils have equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life. As a result, this group of pupils achieves well by the time they leave Year 6.
- Leaders' plans for further improvement are appropriate but there is not enough

attention to detail to ensure that actions taken are fully effective. Consequently, senior and subject leaders and governors judge success by the actions that have taken place rather than the impact and outcomes of those actions on improving the school. An example of this is the assessment of the impact of the physical education and sports grant. While senior leaders and governors are clear about how this funding has been spent in the past, they are less clear about the direct impact on pupils' participation rates, or the effectiveness of training provided for school staff to improve pupils' skills in PE and sport.

Governance of the school

- Governors, all of whom are also trustees, are ambitious for the school. They are led by the very able chair of governors, who has a good understanding of the roles and responsibilities of governors in driving and shaping school improvement. An audit of skills has enabled the governing body to identify and address the areas of expertise needed to further improve the impact of governors on developing the school into the future.
- Members of the trust and governing body have not shied away from addressing governor underperformance. Likewise, they have held senior leaders to account for any staff underperformance, monitoring staff performance bi-annually and challenging the headteacher over the awarding of pay increases.
- Governors monitor pupils' outcomes and offer both challenge and support to senior leaders when it is appropriate to do so. They understand their responsibilities in managing and overseeing the school's finances, the use of additional government funding, and the challenges that come with acting as trustees for a stand-alone academy.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. A rich vein of care runs through the school, with pupils watching out for each other and staff showing vigilance towards every pupil. Leaders ensure that all statutory requirements are met with regard to recruitment and criminal vetting, and that staff and governors receive appropriate safeguarding training on a regular basis. Documents and records are detailed and current, providing an insight into the work of the school on behalf of its most vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe in a variety of situations and, by Year 6, they have a very good understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet and the potential risks of using social media. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are virtually non-existent and the school's commitment to keeping pupils safe is recognised through the school's recent anti-bullying award.
- School staff are vigilant to the signs associated with pupils at risk of harm and leaders tenaciously pursue support for any child or their family, should the need arise. Leaders and governors know the importance of being prepared for any safeguarding eventuality, including extreme views, child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers and teaching assistants generally have high aspirations for every pupil, often making a point of highlighting this through their use of language. For example, a Year 3 teacher was heard to encourage pupils to challenge themselves by using 'university words' in their writing.
- Teachers use the school's curriculum to good effect, using themes to immerse pupils in their learning. For example, as part of the Year 2 theme on pirates, pupils in one class undertook calculations based on finding sovereign coins, with regular calls of, 'Aye, aye, captain' to be heard, often in a west country accent. In the other Year 2 class, pupils were testing their design and technology skills by setting sail boats they had made to see if they floated in the swimming pool.
- Teachers are very effective in using opportunities to link pupils' work to their prior learning, or to develop pupils' views and opinions. In a Year 6 lesson on the theme of Everest, pupils used the internet to research the culture of Sherpas, considering how this differed from their own culture and then explaining their thoughts and findings to classmates.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is generally very good and this enables them to deliver learning with confidence and accuracy. Where it is strongest, teachers identify resources and equipment that are age- and ability-appropriate, modelling good practice for pupils to follow. This was illustrated well in a Year 4 art lesson where pupils were properly equipped with brushes and materials and taught to use techniques such as stippling while they mixed watercolour paints. The lesson was enhanced through the thoughtful use of calming music in the background. Pupils were able to discuss their learning with the inspector, including their thoughts about the choice of painting technique to enable them to create certain effects.
- Teachers and teaching assistants often extend pupils' learning through the use of well thought through questions. Pupils are given time to reflect and think before giving an answer. Pupils are also encouraged to review each other's work and have high expectations of their classmates to provide constructive and meaningful feedback that will help them to improve their work. Teachers' feedback on pupils' work encourages pupils to reflect on how they could improve further, with opportunities provided to follow up on teachers' developmental comments.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed to support pupils' learning needs. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to assess pupils' learning during lessons, and are quick to identify any additional learning needs. As a result, pupils usually make good progress in lessons. Teaching assistants are effective in the delivery of a range of additional support to pupils on an individual or small group basis, often supporting the least able pupils.
- Teachers encourage pupils to use a variety of strategies to solve mathematical problems, modelling good practice, such as the use of informal jottings to support mental arithmetic calculations, seen by an inspector in a Year 5 lesson. Wherever possible and appropriate, teachers link pupils' mathematical learning to work in other areas of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils have many opportunities to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts and circumstances. This promotes their good rates of progress and their attainment in mathematics.
- Pupils' English skills are promoted through the school's learning journey curriculum. In

addition to learning grammar skills, pupils are encouraged to apply their writing skills across a range of subjects, linked together within a theme. Pupils take pride in their work and teachers insist on high standards of presentation and handwriting. Consequently, even at an early stage of the academic year, books show emerging evidence of pupils making progress.

- Leaders and teachers place a high priority on the development of reading skills, with parents and pupils knowing that there is an expectation that pupils will read regularly at home. Pupils are keen to have their home-school diaries completed by parents to ensure that they are rewarded with house points.
- Almost all teachers encourage the most able readers to challenge themselves with more demanding texts and to use their well-developed comprehension skills to help their understanding. However, the teaching of phonics is not consistently good. Where this is the case, teachers' subject knowledge is not secure and they do not teach pupils the correct, pure sounds for single letters and collections of letters. Where the teaching of phonics is less strong, pupils' inaccuracies are not addressed immediately and misconceptions are not eliminated as a result. Pupils become fidgety and disengaged from their learning where teaching is not well matched to their needs. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils. While the least able readers apply a range of phonic strategies to help them read, these are not always as well developed as they could be and sometimes books are not well matched to their ability.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The curriculum effectively promotes not only pupils' understanding of their roles as future citizens but also that of other cultures and different religions, with an emphasis on knowledge, tolerance and understanding. This was illustrated well during two excellent and uplifting singing assemblies that were observed by inspectors. Pupils of all ages gave their undivided attention to, and participated enthusiastically in, a harvest samba that was accompanied with opportunities to participate in and practise sign language.
- From their entry into early years, pupils are taught to respect each other and their school environment. This is evident in the care that pupils take in the presentation of their work and the condition of the school building. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are able to express opinions and ideas that go beyond their learning of facts. Often this includes the capacity to empathise with others from different backgrounds, countries, cultures or religious beliefs. As a result, pupils are well equipped for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders, teachers and teaching assistants take every opportunity to show their high aspirations for each pupil in a practical manner. They encourage pupils to be optimistic about the choices they make and to be open-minded to new ideas. This equips pupils to enjoy their successes and to show resilience when things don't go so well. As a result, pupils relish the challenges set for them through, for example, the fortnightly 'quests' which encourage home-based learning which is then presented by pupils in a manner or medium of their choosing.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Attendance is above the national average, with pupils arriving punctually and ready for the day ahead. They take pride in their appearance and display very strong attitudes to their learning, which waiver only when teaching is not well matched to their abilities.
- Pupils are courteous to each other and to staff and visitors. From the early years, they are inquisitive, polite and confident, with an eagerness to involve others in their learning. They relish roles of responsibility and take these seriously, trusting others to act on their behalf.
- Behaviour is not consistently good at all times of the school day. Lunchtimes are not as well organised as other times of the day. As a result, while pupils' behaviour is exemplary when supervised by teaching staff, at lunchtime the dining hall is very noisy and pupils do not respond to the requests of lunchtime staff to modify their behaviour. Leaders and teachers do not intervene in these situations to model or insist upon better, more appropriate behaviours.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Over time, the majority of pupils make progress that is at least good. As a result, most pupils attain well, leaving each key stage well equipped for the next stage of their education. Leaders monitor specific groups of pupils, particularly where they may be at risk of underperformance, for example pupils who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders follow the performance of each of these pupils closely, including termly meetings with teachers to ensure that any dip in a pupil's progress is quickly addressed. However, leaders and teachers have been less sharp in addressing the progress of the most able pupils, which has been lower than that of other groups of pupils.
- From broadly typical starting points, most children make good progress and achieve well in the early years. After a period where the outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check were in decline and had slipped below the national average, 2016 outcomes showed an improvement, with the proportion of pupils achieving the standard exceeding the national average.
- Leaders have worked with over 30 partner schools to develop an assessment system for all year groups, comparing each school's assessment information to create a benchmark standard for progress and attainment. Information for the last academic year shows that the majority of pupils across all year groups made progress that was at least good.
- By the end of key stage 1, in 2015, pupils' attainment at the standard expected for their age exceeded the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion attaining at levels higher than that expected were broadly in line with the national average in writing, above in reading and well above in mathematics.
- By the end of key stage 2, in 2015, the proportions of pupils attaining at expected or above expected levels exceeded the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Nonetheless, published and internal assessment information shows that, while the most able pupils attain the higher standards expected at key stages 1 and 2 in reading,

writing and mathematics, the progress they make is often less than that of other groups in the school. As a result, in 2015, none of the most able made more than expected progress over time, or achieved the highest levels of attainment in reading and writing by the time they left key stage 2.

- In 2015, the proportions of key stage 2 pupils making the progress expected for their age exceeded the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. A much larger than average proportion of previously low- and middle-attaining pupils made more than the progress expected in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The small numbers of disadvantaged pupils in each cohort make at least good progress over time and this enables them to attain at least as well as pupils who are not disadvantaged by the end of key stage 2. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and attain well in relation to their starting points.
- The school's approach to the curriculum enables teachers and leaders to judge pupils' progress and attainment in a range of subjects beyond English and mathematics. As a result of this and the high aspirations of teachers, pupils achieve well across a range of subjects.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Provision in the early years is outstanding as result of dynamic leadership and excellent teaching. Children thrive because teachers and teaching assistants have a very good understanding of children's individual development needs. Children make very strong progress and are well equipped for the next stage of their education.
- Staff work very effectively as a team because the early years leader communicates her vision of high-quality learning environment so well. As a result, children are safe, well supported in their learning and able to perform at their best in all areas of their development.
- The early years leader evaluates all aspects of provision accurately. She identifies the professional development needs of teachers and teaching assistants incisively. Consequently, staff assess children's learning needs accurately and promptly, and ensure that learning opportunities for children enhance their physical and academic development.
- Staff in the early years are excellent role models for the children. Children are well behaved and follow instructions quickly, enabling them to maximise their learning opportunities. Children and their parents benefit from a comprehensive induction programme that includes home visits and this helps children to settle quickly. Consequently, after only a short time in school, children understand the class routines and display caring attitudes towards each other.
- The learning spaces that are inside and outside are well planned and resourced. Equipment and resources are easily accessible and well organised. Well-planned learning activities enable children to explore and learn independently, often selecting their own resources for a specific activity.
- The curriculum in the early years is rich, exciting and imaginative. Children apply themselves to their learning for extended periods of time because teachers plan activities that cater for the children's varied interests. They are enthusiastic learners who confidently share their work and ideas with each other and adults.

- Teaching is outstanding. Activities are stimulating and capture children's imagination. Their enthusiasm was evident during an activity to design shoes for a book character, 'Pete the Cat'. Children could not contain their excitement and pride in their work, encouraging the inspector to join in their activity.
- Staff monitor pupils' progress closely and ensure that judgements are secure through regular discussions and reviewing children's work. They are quick to identify and address gaps in children's learning and development. Teachers and teaching assistants have a very good understanding of the learning needs of the children who are more able. Leaders have targeted resources, such as the pupil premium, effectively. As a result, the most able pupils and those who are disadvantaged make excellent progress. The school belongs to a large learning network and uses this to moderate their assessments.
- The early years team provide a comprehensive induction programme, as well as home visits, so that children have the best start to their school career. Children arrive in the early years from a range of nursery settings, with the majority at levels of development that are typical for their age. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has increased annually and is now well above the national figure.
- Parents place great value on the positive and secure systems used to communicate with families. The home-link book provides a range of learning activities to try at home, as well as a continuous dialogue between parents and the early years staff. Parents and carers are encouraged to 'stay and read' with their children once a week and receive regular newsletters that keep them in touch with what is going on in the classroom.

School details

Unique reference number	140315
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10019118

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	405
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Thomas
Headteacher	Elliot Howles
Telephone number	01162 393410
Website	www.kmprimary.leics.sch.uk
Email address	admin@kmprimary.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Kirby Muxloe Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school and serves a semi-rural village. It is a stand-alone academy, having converted in 2013. Its predecessor school, with the same name, was judged to be good when inspected in 2012.
- Pupils are taught in single-age classes, including children in the early years, who attend full time.
- The vast majority of children of pupils are of White British heritage and there are very small numbers of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is significantly below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.

- In 2015 the school met the national floor standards for pupil achievement.
- The school complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups. They observed the teaching of early reading skills and listened to pupils reading. Inspectors talked to pupils about their school and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, subject leaders and representatives of the governing body, who are also trustees of the academy.
- Inspectors spoke to parents informally at the start of the school day. They took account of the 43 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including: the school's own self-evaluation of current performance and plans for improvement; the school's most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils; information relating to the safeguarding of pupils; and the school's most recent information relating to the attendance of pupils.

Inspection team

Stephen McMullan, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Emma Nuttall	Her Majesty's Inspector
Harkireet Sohel	Ofsted Inspector
Emma Hollis-Brown	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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