

Falcons Primary School

George Hine House, Gipsy Lane, Leicester, Leicestershire LE5 0TA

Inspection dates

12–13 September 2017

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher is a respected, determined and skilled leader. She leads her staff effectively.
- The senior leadership team members model their high expectations for every child. They monitor closely how well pupils are learning and provide effective support to improve the quality of teaching.
- Motivated teachers, well supported by teaching assistants, deliver lessons that pupils greatly enjoy. They teach pupils consistently well and assess pupils' progress accurately.
- The governing body is confident, knowledgeable and skilled. Governors ask searching questions of senior leaders to ensure that all pupils make at least good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are at the heart of the school's work, which is outstanding in this area. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary.
- Pupils' conduct in school is excellent. They get on extremely well together, try their best and embrace the school's deeply held values.
- The school's promotion of equality and the promotion of diversity are evident in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils are kept safe. Staff know their responsibilities and are well trained to spot and report any concerns about pupils' well-being.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years because they are taught consistently well. Caring and welcoming staff ensure that children settle in quickly. They are particularly effective in promoting children's independence.
- Pupils' attendance, which was previously too low, is rising considerably. Almost all pupils are now attending regularly.
- Teachers in key stage 2 do not consistently plan and deliver lessons that ensure that boys develop sufficient confidence to make fast enough progress in their writing. Boys often do not write long enough pieces of work.
- Not all teachers in key stages 1 and 2 give the most able pupils activities that challenge them sufficiently, especially in mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress in writing of boys across key stage 2 by helping them to develop more confidence so that they can compose extended pieces of work across the curriculum.
- Ensure that the most able pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are given work in mathematics, and across the curriculum, that provides plenty of challenge and so deepens their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is a highly respected and capable professional who is uncompromising in focusing on pupils' progress, well-being and personal development. She is at the centre of a continuous and passionate drive to make the school 'a lighthouse of excellence' in Leicester.
- An effective and determined senior leadership team supports the headteacher. Senior leaders share her high expectations of every pupil and give a clear message to staff that all pupils must succeed, regardless of their needs, abilities or circumstances.
- Leaders track closely the progress of different groups of pupils through the school year. They use this information to ensure that staff adjust their teaching where this is needed. Leaders pass detailed information to the governing body so that governors are kept well informed of the school's performance.
- There are clear responsibilities for both senior and middle leaders. Everyone understands the role they must play in ensuring that pupils will be ready for the next stage of their education, both academically and in respect of their character.
- Leaders are fully aware of the areas where further improvements are needed. They ensure that staff also understand and focus upon these. The school's development plan, written with the governing body, reflects these priorities for development.
- The school's leadership ensures that the school's promotion of equality and diversity is exceptional. Leaders have very successfully created a happy and harmonious school community. All pupils, regardless of their faith, are welcomed and treated with equal and great respect.
- Leaders make regular visits to classrooms to check the quality of teaching, commending staff for their good teaching over time and assisting them to improve further. Teachers and teaching assistants alike undergo a robust appraisal process. Ambitious individual targets are linked to priorities in the school's development plan, the progress of pupils, and developing additional responsibilities where appropriate.
- Teachers who are new to the profession are supported well. They praise the support and assistance they receive from more experienced colleagues.
- Staff who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire expressed very positive views of the school's leadership, believing unanimously that the school's culture is an aspirational one that they are proud to work in. They feel that leaders treat them fairly and with respect.
- The school's curriculum is broad, balanced, and one that pupils enjoy. It is based around a series of topics such as, for example, 'Bright Lights, Big Cities' in Year 1, where pupils learn about festivals, understand capital cities and learn about the Great Fire of London. This curriculum is supported by a wide variety of very popular after-school clubs and activities, such as learning to play the sitar, and playing hockey, football and gathka. Pupils are keen to attend these because they give them additional opportunities to develop new skills.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary. For example, school corridors and classrooms show a huge variety of lifestyles, food, ceremonies and worship of different faiths. As well as having a deep understanding of cultures and religions beyond their own, pupils are kind, learning to treat all others with kindness and great respect. This aspect is at the heart of the school's values.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to express their choices and opinions. They understand that the school rules are there for the safety and protection of everyone, and they follow them impeccably. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders spend additional funding, such as the pupil premium, and the primary physical education (PE) and sports premium effectively. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress and large numbers of pupils participate enthusiastically in sports activities and clubs.
- The coordinator for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities also ensures that funding for these pupils results in them making good progress.
- A very large majority of parents who responded to Parent View, along with all those who inspectors met during the inspection, hold positive views of all aspects of the school. One parent reflected the view of many others by stating: 'Under the guidance and encouragement of the staff and the school's ethos, my daughter has quickly flourished, academically, socially and morally. The headteacher is always present, interacting and encouraging the children.'

Governance of the school

- Strong and very effective governance is helping to drive the school forward. The knowledgeable and ambitious governing body, led by a skilled chair, is kept fully informed of all aspects of the school's provision, including safeguarding. Documentary evidence shows that governors challenge senior leaders on any aspect of underperformance, and support staff to improve their effectiveness. Governors' work includes checking that teachers are receiving good training, and monitoring the school's budget to ensure that no unforeseen expenditure or excessive surplus arises. Governors visit the school regularly to meet with leaders and they fulfil their strategic role with competence. They collectively audit themselves to ensure that they have an increasingly higher level and wider range of skills. They take wise steps to recruit new governors of a high calibre, and to seek out new training wherever it will help them enhance their skills further.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that all staff are well trained, including in areas of recent national concern, such as radicalisation. Staff know the warning signs of different types of potential abuse of a child. They understand fully their need to be vigilant and to report any concern to the designated lead staff for safeguarding.
- Records show that leaders make brisk referrals to external agencies, including family support and social care, so that vulnerable children are protected. Leaders place good

information about online safety on the school's website and work well with parents to protect pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is effective because teachers question and probe pupils effectively to assess their understanding, and to check pupils know what to do before an activity begins.
- Staff plan imaginative lessons, and these inspire pupils to learn. For example, inspectors saw how pupils in Years 4 and 5 were recreating the Battle of Bosworth, making their own armour from paper with only minimal direction from the teacher. This meant that pupils had to think carefully for themselves how they could make good swords, scabbards and comfortable helmets.
- Teachers give good guidance for pupils on how to improve, which pupils take note of to improve the aspects or skills they need to work on. Teachers apply the school's marking and feedback policy consistently well.
- Teaching assistants are very effective in supporting pupils' learning, questioning them well so that pupils consider and discuss their own ideas. Like teachers, teaching assistants are skilled at promoting confidence for the many pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. Inspectors saw an impressive example of this when a pupil was having difficulty understanding a new skill, and a teaching assistant carefully used the pupil's home/first language to communicate with them. The pupil visibly grew in confidence and could then give their answer in English.
- Classrooms are orderly working environments. Teachers manage behaviour very successfully and ensure that pupils are engaged and busy.
- Staff assess pupils' learning accurately. Teachers check that their judgements are reliable by regularly discussing the work that their pupils have done with colleagues in other local schools.
- Homework includes 'family learning' projects, where parents and family members guide pupils to complete tasks at home. Inspectors noted how pupils had used recycled materials to construct strikingly detailed 3D models of the places of worship of different faiths from around the world. These were displayed proudly in the school hall.
- Tasks are matched well to the needs of the pupils overall. This includes instances of staff providing challenging opportunities for the most able pupils. However, highly effective provision is not consistently in place for the majority of the most able pupils. Their workbooks demonstrate that, overall, teachers in key stages 1 and 2 do not challenge these pupils sufficiently, particularly in mathematics. Inspectors also noted a considerable number of instances in pupils' topic exercise books where the most able pupils were given identical or very similar work to that given to other pupils.
- Teachers in key stage 2 do not sufficiently support boys to write so that they develop high levels of confidence, and are able to compose extended pieces of writing across different subjects. As a result, boys do not make as much progress as girls in writing.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Relationships between adults and pupils are consistently positive, caring and highly and mutually respectful. As a result, pupils love learning and talk very enthusiastically about it.
- Pupils explained how they do not mind making mistakes because these show them where they need to improve. They enjoy teachers asking them difficult questions and understand that they often need to keep trying until they get something right. They pay close attention to the skills that teachers tell them they need to improve.
- Pupils told inspectors how they feel very safe in school. They say that, if they feel upset about anything, they can approach any member of staff and know that they can trust them to help them quickly and effectively.
- Pupils are extremely confident when explaining how to stay healthy. They have an accurate understanding of which foods to eat sparingly, as well as knowing to eat lots of fresh fruit and vegetables. They greatly enjoy attending the many after-school clubs that keep them fit, and explain knowledgeably how important it is to exercise regularly.
- They have a strong understanding of healthy relationships and are confident in staying safe from exploitation. Although any form of bullying is very rare indeed at Falcons Primary, pupils know how to stay safe from it. Pupils were insistent that they would immediately tell an appropriate adult if, for example, they saw a message or image online or on a mobile phone that worried them.
- From a young age, and in an appropriate way, children are taught very well about the dangers of things such as fire, water and roads, as well as the potential risk of strangers.
- Pupils are highly reflective thinkers who are kind to others. They continually help each other in school, open doors and greet visitors courteously. They make a genuine contribution to enhancing the school community. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities, from helping to distribute the fruit in the Reception class to supporting each other through the 'playground friends' system and tidying away equipment at the end of breaktime.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- They are extremely respectful of other faiths and say it is important to understand each one, as well as talking eloquently about their own. Inspectors saw how pupils began a lunchtime with a Christian blessing, a Sikh one and a Muslim one.
- Pupils listen attentively to adults, concentrate on their work and move about the school in a consistently orderly manner. Lunchtimes are very happy social occasions where children get on very well.
- Pupils' behaviour is particularly impressive because they are almost exclusively self-

disciplined. They understand the need to control themselves and do not need anything other than the most minor and occasional reminders of the school's high expectations.

- Pupils wear their uniform smartly and say they are very proud to be part of their school. They complete their work neatly and to a high standard.
- The weakest aspect of pupils' behaviour is their attendance. Persistent absence was, until the last school year, in the highest 10% of all schools nationally. The headteacher and her staff have continually emphasised to parents the need for all children to attend regularly and they refuse to approve absences unless in the most exceptional circumstances. As a result, attendance has improved considerably, and this has improved pupils' progress. Persistent absence has been cut by two thirds.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Until this current academic year, a large majority of children have entered the school in the Reception Year with skills that are below, or well below, those typical for their age. They get off to a good start in the early years and, by the time they leave this setting, around two thirds have attained a good level of development. Teacher assessments show that this year, a much greater proportion of pupils have begun at the school with typical skills.
- Because phonics is taught consistently well, pupils learn to read well from an early age. The proportion achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has improved consistently over the last three years. In 2017, nine out of 10 pupils met or exceeded the expected standard.
- The proportions of pupils who reach the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics are in line with the national averages. The proportions of pupils who exceeded the expected standards are also in line with the national averages.
- By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, they are well prepared for key stage 2. Last year, overall attainment was a little lower than in the past due to the high numbers of pupils who left, or joined, this year group during key stage 1.
- School performance information and work in books show that, across most year groups and subjects, a clear majority of pupils are reaching the standards expected for their age. Pupils are making at least the progress expected of them, and in some cases considerably more than this.
- Progress information shows that the longer pupils attend the school, the greater their progress and the higher their attainment is. For example, pupils who have been on roll since the school's opening in October 2014 are making strong progress. This positive picture includes all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils make particularly good progress in science. Pupils' exercise books show that, from an early age, pupils learn to think scientifically for themselves and record increasingly accurate predictions and results in their investigations.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good gains from their starting points. They benefit from teaching and activities that are matched well to their individual needs.

- The many pupils who enter the school with low levels of skills are given effective support to improve. A flexible programme of teaching helps these pupils catch up and enables them, over time, to make clear gains in their knowledge and skills, including in their ability to communicate effectively.
- Although the most able pupils make good overall gains, not all teachers ensure that they consistently give them work that makes them think deeply. As a result, the progress of the most able pupils is not yet rapid across the school.

Early years provision

Good

- The head of the early years is a capable and enthusiastic teacher who is keen to take on responsibility and who leads her team well. She ensures that the early years environment is a bright, positive and welcoming place for children to learn.
- The early years leader and her staff choose good resources that encourage children to learn, and to make good progress from their starting points. For example, the outdoor area has attractive equipment so that pupils can learn to count and recognise letters, as well as using apparatus to balance. Staff have wisely also used the development of the adjacent new housing estate to show children the world of adult work, with children seeing for themselves how homes are constructed over time.
- Staff emphasise the skill of developing independence to children from their first days in the Reception Year. Materials and equipment are readily available so that children do not need adult support to access them. For example, children learn to help each other to put on their painting aprons.
- Very friendly staff ensure that they model good manners and communicate clearly. As a result, children settle in quickly, feel very safe and behave very well. They move about the early years area sensibly and line up smartly when waiting for their snack.
- Children cooperate together and are motivated to succeed. They are also keen to explain to adults and visitors what they have done. For example, one child enthusiastically described a picture of an aeroplane he had made, and counted out the number of sides on a triangle.
- Leaders ensure that parents are kept well informed about how their children are progressing. As part of this process, staff use the school's secure online system of recording children's progress effectively, inviting parents to upload information, photographs and video clips of the things their children have learned to do at home. Staff use the information parents give them to help plan the next steps for each child.
- As a result of consistently good teaching, children make good progress throughout the year and leave ready to start Year 1. Staff from both year groups meet to ensure a detailed exchange of information, which in turn ensures a smooth transition for children.
- Staff ensure that additional funding is used well to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or who are disadvantaged. As a result, these children make good gains in the early years.
- The most able children make strong progress. Around one in five children, in 2017, exceeded the expected standard in mathematics and writing, and more than one in three for understanding, self-confidence and self-awareness.

School details

Unique reference number	141011
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10036064

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	253
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Gurinder Singh Josan
Headteacher	Jasbir Mann
Telephone number	0116 4510050
Website	www.falconsprimary.org
Email address	head@falconsprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school was opened in October 2014 by the Akaal Education Trust. The school is of a Sikh denomination but at least half of its places are available for non-Sikh children.
- It is a rapidly growing school and is now of an average size compared to schools of a similar type. Currently, the oldest pupils on roll are in Year 5. There is no provision for two-year-olds.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is broadly average.
- Almost all the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Most pupils are of an Indian background.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in all classes of the school. Two observations took place accompanied by the headteacher. In total, 14 lessons, or parts of lessons, were observed. The inspectors also scrutinised many examples of pupils' work.
- The inspection team held meetings with senior leaders, subject leaders, representatives of the governing body and pupils. They analysed 48 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, studied the free-text comments, and took note of two emails regarding the school from parents which were received during the inspection. Inspectors also met with parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's development plan and self-evaluation, policies and records relating to safeguarding, records of pupils' behaviour, the school's information about pupils' outcomes and attendance, and records of the governing body.

Inspection team

Roary Pownall, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gerry Crofts	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Walsh	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017