

Field House Infant School

Lower Whitworth Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 4LT

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior leaders have not been quick enough to deal fully with the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.
- Senior leaders' checking of standards has not been rigorous enough to identify and address pupils' underperformance. The roles of middle leaders are underdeveloped. Improvements in pupils' attainment and progress have not been rapid enough. Standards, particularly in writing, are too low.
- The governing body are not tenacious enough in holding leaders to account for pupils' progress or the impact of additional funding including the pupil premium.
- Teachers do not consistently plan lessons that meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. Too often, the least and most able do not make the progress that they should.
- The quality of teaching and learning in key stage 1 is not consistently good. Too often, teachers are not precise enough in identifying pupils' next steps in learning.
- Pupils do not make the progress they are capable of in key stage 1 in reading, mathematics and particularly writing. There are too few opportunities to develop and apply basic skills. The strong progress that children make in the early years is not continued.
- By the end of key stage 1, too few pupils make the progress they should to achieve at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not make strong enough progress to attain as well as they should.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and staff have a strong commitment to the well-being and personal development of pupils. There is an ethos of care in the school.
- Relationships are very positive. Staff are good role models.
- Pupils behave very well at all times of the school day. They are respectful and well mannered. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- Children make a good start to their education in the early years. Most pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the impact of leaders in improving pupils' progress and attainment by ensuring that:
 - they refine their analysis of the progress made by different groups of pupils and set more sharply focused targets for improvement, including in the management of teachers' performance
 - they further develop the roles of middle leaders in planning actions that will improve standards across the school
 - teaching challenges all pupils and enables them to make accelerated progress so that more pupils achieve at greater depth
 - transitions between key stages and year groups are effective so that progress is sustained as pupils move through the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to accelerate pupils' progress by ensuring that all teachers:
 - improve their accuracy in identifying the next steps in pupils' learning so that work is closely matched to the needs of all pupils, including the most and least able, and those who are disadvantaged.
 - have equally high expectations of the quality and presentation of pupils' work in different subjects
 - give greater emphasis to teaching pupils to use and apply their spelling and grammar skills more accurately to improve further the quality of their writing
 - provide more frequent opportunities for pupils in all year groups to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of governance in securing school improvement by ensuring that the governing body:
 - has the skills it needs to hold the school more stringently to account over the achievement of different groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged
 - acts rapidly upon the findings from the forthcoming review of the pupil premium to hold leaders to account more effectively for the impact of this additional funding.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management should be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have a realistic understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that need to improve. Their plans to bring these about and the actions they have taken do not focus sharply enough on the progress of different groups of pupils to help drive more rapid improvement. Standards in writing, for example, have not improved quickly enough.
- Leaders have recently put into place a range of initiatives to help raise standards, for example to develop systems for checking pupils' progress. The headteacher is developing the role of senior and middle leaders to support this work. The enthusiastic middle leaders are developing their expertise in bringing about improvements across the school. However, whole-school initiatives are not consistently applied by all teachers.
- Children make a good start in the early years. However, leaders have not ensured that progress is sustained securely through key stage 1. The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Senior leaders set targets for the performance of teachers that are linked to the school's priorities for improvement. Again, targets are not sharp or specific enough to hold staff to account and drive more rapid improvement.
- The additional funding for physical education and sports is used effectively to support the development of teachers' expertise in teaching physical education as well as to provide additional opportunities for pupils to engage in sporting activities. Leaders have not, however, carefully reviewed the impact of the funding or created focused plans to ensure that it has the maximum impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders and other staff promote pupils' personal development well. Inspectors saw evidence of leaders' and teachers' work to promote 'mindfulness' throughout the school. Pupils are taught to be reflective and understand their emotions. Several school displays show the work of staff to promote 'togetherness'. Pupils spoke of the 'Field House family'. The ethos of care and respect supports the high standards of behaviour and pupils' positive attitudes to their learning.
- The coordinator for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities ensures that additional funding is used well to support pupils' learning. The impact of the carefully targeted support is checked carefully. As a result, most pupils with SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points.
- The headteacher is outward-looking and welcomes external support to help bring about the improvements needed. She is ensuring that the school has strong links with a partner junior school to ensure that pupils' transition at the end of key stage 1 is effective. The local authority provides support which is helping to develop leadership roles as well as the school's work to improve standards in writing.
- Leaders have ensured that the school's broad and balanced curriculum, enrichment activities and extra-curricular clubs promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education effectively. School displays reflect the opportunities pupils have to develop their understanding of British heritage and culture to prepare them for their life in modern Britain.
- The very large majority of parents are positive about all aspects of the school.

Governance of the school

- The governing body are not as effective as they should be in holding leaders to account for the progress made by different groups of pupils or the use and impact of additional funding including the pupil premium and the funding for physical education and sports. They have not ensured that the school publishes the required information about these funds on the school website.
- The new chair of the governing body is committed to improving the effectiveness of the governing body and understands the strengths and the areas in which it needs to improve. Leaders have organised an external review of the pupil premium.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and other staff have developed a strong culture of safeguarding which is woven into the school ethos. Pupils and parents speak highly of how the school keep pupils safe.
- All checks for the recruitment of staff are in place. Some points in relation to the single central record were clarified during the inspection. Recruitment checks are thorough.
- Staff, including the designated leaders for safeguarding, have received relevant training, including in relation to the 'Prevent' duty.
- Leaders carefully record any concerns raised and the actions they take. They are tenacious in rapidly securing the involvement of outside agencies where this is relevant. Leaders check and follow up absences carefully.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers do not match work consistently well to the abilities of different pupils. Too often, pupils work at tasks at the same level, regardless of their starting points or abilities. Some of the work set is too easy for the most able, yet too hard for the least able. As a result, over time, the progress of too many pupils is not as good as it could be.
- Teachers are not sufficiently adept at using their understanding of pupils' learning to identify the next steps in pupils' learning. Pupils' work shows that teachers do not consistently ensure that new skills are consolidated. Consequently, errors and misconceptions are not eliminated over time because pupils' understanding has not been secured before they move on to something new.
- Work in pupils' books is not consistently well presented in all classes or subjects. Teachers' expectations are not equally high. Pupils' mathematics books show that teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities to record their mathematical thinking or plan regular opportunities for pupils to develop and show their problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are proficient at teaching phonics. Pupils of different abilities are confident in using their phonic knowledge to read fluently. Pupils have positive attitudes to reading.

- Teachers and teaching assistants encourage pupils of all abilities and backgrounds by praising their best efforts. Pupils are enthusiastic, keen to learn and want to do their best. The positive school ethos creates a positive and purposeful atmosphere that encourages pupils' learning and celebrates their work.
- Some teachers use their good subject knowledge to ask probing questions to check pupils' understanding or extend their thinking. This was effective in a Year 1 lesson when the teacher asked probing questions to promote pupils' curiosity and reasoning skills in mathematics.
- As part of the whole-school approach to improving spelling, grammar and punctuation skills, teachers place emphasis on developing pupils' vocabulary and spelling. They provide prompts and resources in the classroom, which effectively support pupils' independent learning skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils develop positive attitudes towards their learning and each other. The work of staff to promote 'mindfulness' helps pupils to be self-aware and respectful of each other. One pupil in Year 2 said, 'People are kind here. When you fall over, they come and help you.'
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Bullying is very rare. Pupils understand what bullying is and are confident that staff will quickly resolve any concerns they might have.
- From the early years, teachers ensure that pupils value and celebrate each other's similarities and differences. The school's curriculum has recently been developed to enhance pupils' personal, social and emotional development further. Pupils are taught about different faiths through the curriculum and assemblies. Some pupils in Year 2, however, were not confident in explaining their learning about different religions.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. There is little disruption in classrooms even when the work teachers set is not at the appropriate level for the pupils' abilities. Pupils' conduct around the school and at different times of the day is very good. They are polite, respectful and well mannered. Pupils have a good understanding of the expectations of behaviour and know why school rules are important. One pupil said that it was important to tell the truth because if you did not, 'the people you lie to would be upset'.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and generally take pride in their work and presentation. However, teachers' expectations are not consistent in all classes or subjects.
- Last year, leaders introduced a school 'nurture group'. This initiative provides effective personalised support for pupils' personal, social, emotional development or specific behaviour needs.

- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance was lower than the national average at the end of 2017, but leaders presented compelling evidence that a significant illness adversely affected figures last year. Attendance, including that of disadvantaged pupils, was above the national figures for the previous three years. Current attendance figures are also above the national average. Leaders take attendance seriously. They employ a range of robust actions to promote high attendance as well as work with families whose children have persistent absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress and attainment in key stage 1 are variable. Too many pupils do not make the progress they should because teachers do not consistently set work that is matched well enough to pupils' abilities. Pupils of all abilities are often given the same work, with little adaptation to meet their needs.
- By the time they leave key stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is low compared to that seen nationally. Standards have been well below the national average for the last two years, particularly in writing. From their starting points, too few pupils make the progress necessary to propel them to the higher levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. While pupils' current work shows evidence of some improvement, this is not rapid enough.
- Leaders and other staff have not been effective in targeting the progress of specific groups of pupils. The differences in the attainment of boys and girls are greater than seen nationally, particularly in writing. The pupil premium is not used effectively to secure the accelerated progress of disadvantaged pupils. Too often, their progress and attainment are lower than other pupils in the school and also when compared to other pupils nationally.
- The quality of pupils' writing is inconsistent. Teachers ensure that pupils have increasing opportunities to write at length. Pupils often use adventurous vocabulary in their work. The often high-quality content of their work is sometimes let down, however, by inaccurate use of spelling, grammar and punctuation. The quality of handwriting is also inconsistent and some pupils' work does not show rapid enough improvement.
- Teachers provide pupils with too few opportunities to develop their recording, problem-solving and reasoning skills. As a result, some pupils, particularly the least and most able, do not make the progress that they should.
- The majority of pupils in the early years make good progress from their starting points. The proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been close to or above the national average for the last two years as a result of effective phonics teaching.
- Leaders have identified the need to improve pupils' progress and attainment in key stage 1. They review samples of pupils' work and standardise judgements about the pupils' attainment in different year groups and subjects. As a result, leaders are satisfied that teachers' assessments are increasingly accurate.
- The school's new and developing assessment systems are enabling leaders and teachers to identify pupils who need to catch up more quickly. Staff are becoming more effective at intervening to ensure that pupils are taught what they need.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make a good start to their education in the early years. They are lively and inquisitive learners who are keen to talk about their work. The children adapt quickly to effective routines that promote their learning and development.
- The leader of the early years has a clear vision and understanding of good early years practice. Together with teachers and other staff, she has secured improvements, particularly in developing outdoor learning opportunities.
- The early years leader has a detailed understanding of the progress and development of children in the early years. Analysis of the progress made by different groups of children is not as sharp as it could be when planning provision across the early years as a whole. Consequently, children's progress could be improved even further.
- The majority of children join the school or start the Reception Year with skills that are broadly average and sometimes lower than is expected for their age. While below the national average, in 2017, the majority achieved a good level of development. Most children made good progress from their different starting points, regardless of their different abilities and backgrounds. The majority are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Teachers and staff promote children's learning well. Teaching is often enthusiastic and staff use questioning well to support children's learning. Teachers provide well-planned activities that engage children. Many activities were linked to themes. In a Reception class, for example, children's writing, and other tasks, linked to the book 'Stick Man'. This provided a stimulating context for children's learning.
- The teaching of phonics is effective overall and teachers deploy other adults well to support pupils of differing abilities and developmental stages. Occasionally, however, adults are not precise in teaching children to use pure sounds.
- Children behave well and enjoy their learning. Routines are well established and children follow instructions well. Children collaborate well. They show concentration and perseverance. Children in nursery were observed, for example, carefully exploring how clothes pegs worked and carefully attaching them to a fence. In a Reception class, a group of children were happily role-playing together and planning a 'picnic in a forest'. Staff ensure that children have positive attitudes to learning.
- Staff are developing partnerships with parents. Parents are encouraged to send information into school in relation to children's achievements and development at home. This information is increasingly being used to inform the learning journey records of children's learning and development.
- The safeguarding and welfare requirements in the early years are met.

School details

Unique reference number	112574
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10031276

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	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Croft
Headteacher	Denise Wells
Telephone number	01159 324526
Website	www.fieldhouse.derbyshire.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@fieldhouse.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 February 2013

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website about the use of the pupil premium and the additional funding for physical education and sports.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has appointed two assistant headteachers in place of a deputy headteacher post. The chair of governors was appointed in September 2017.
- Field House Infant School is a smaller than average-sized school.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language are below the national averages.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is similar to the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is lower than the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups. Sixteen lessons were observed, some jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors looked at pupils' work, observed the teaching of early reading skills, listened to pupils read and spoke with them to evaluate the quality of their learning. They scrutinised a variety of documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, pupils' attainment and progress, and staff performance. Plans for improvement were evaluated as well as the school's self-evaluation of its own performance and documents relating to the work of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day. They took account of the 20 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. There were no responses to the pupil and staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, middle leaders and the coordinator for the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, who is also the headteacher. Meetings were also held with the chair of the governing body and representatives from the local authority. Discussions explored a wide range of subjects, including safeguarding arrangements.

Inspection team

John Lawson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Liz Moore	Ofsted Inspector
Pete Strauss	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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