

# Inspection of a good school: Fairfield Primary Academy

Toton Lane, Stapleford, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG9 7HB

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Inspection dates: 29–30 June 2021

## Outcome

Fairfield Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, parents and staff speak warmly about the school. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy school and feel safe. They know they can tell a teacher or a friend if they have any worries. Pupils understand the meaning of bullying. They know that staff will sort it out if any bullying happens.

Pupils said that behaviour is good because there is lots to keep them busy and active at playtimes. They enjoy using the obstacle course, the tyre area and sports equipment. Pupils behave well in lessons. They listen carefully to instructions and show positive attitudes to learning.

Parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey praised the school's provision for remote education. Some also praised how well staff help pupils settle when they first join the school. A typical comment was, 'The staff are very approachable.'

Staff encourage pupils to develop their talents and interests beyond the classroom. Many pupils enjoy their roles as curriculum champions or 'transformer partners'. All can join the wide range of lunchtime clubs available, such as chess, art, drama, or sports. These opportunities help pupils to develop as well-rounded individuals.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders and staff have worked together to establish a well-designed curriculum. Leaders say it is important that their curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Curriculum plans set out what pupils should know, and be able to do, in subjects other than history. Curriculum leaders work effectively in teams to ensure that they have a well-rounded overview of their subjects.

The history curriculum does not provide pupils in key stage 1 with the subject content that is appropriate to their age. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 currently study complex themes

that are designed for older pupils. In lessons visited by inspectors, pupils struggled to read or understand the resources they were given. They have missed the essential building blocks of knowledge in this subject that are appropriate to their stage of learning. Older pupils learn with greater success in history because the curriculum more closely matches their age and understanding.

The mathematics curriculum is well planned. It contains the important knowledge and skills that pupils should gain, from the early years to Year 6. Pupils with SEND benefit from good support from staff or from their transformer partner. This means that pupils know and remember more in mathematics as they progress through the school.

Many pupils make a good start in learning to read. Staff in the early years begin teaching phonics as soon as children join the school. Across the early years and Year 1 classes, staff use a consistent approach in the daily phonics sessions. Pupils in these sessions are eager, attentive learners. However, when an inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult, the majority struggled to apply phonics knowledge when reading unfamiliar words. In those cases, the books were not well matched to pupils' needs. They were too hard.

Leaders and staff promote pupils' wider development well. Pupils welcome responsibilities such as becoming reading champions. These opportunities are open to all pupils, including pupils with SEND. This means that pupils with SEND are fully included in the life of the school. Staff continue to provide interesting experiences under the current restrictions, for example through 'virtual' visits. Pupils learn how to follow healthy lifestyles. Older pupils complete the 'daily mile' in the school grounds. Pupils learn about the importance of treating everyone equally. A pupil expressed this thoughtfully, saying, 'Being different makes the world a more interesting place.' They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff who responded to Ofsted's online survey and who spoke with inspectors said that leaders and governors are considerate of their workload and well-being. All said that they enjoy working at the school.

In discussion with the principal, it was agreed that early reading and phonics and the improvement of the history curriculum may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff who spoke with inspectors said they feel confident in the school's systems for reporting concerns. They said that leaders respond immediately because they 'always put safeguarding first'. Leaders have made sure that staff safeguarding training is up to date. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at school and know how to keep themselves safe online. Leaders are aware of local safeguarding issues and work with external agencies to protect pupils. Staff carry out prompt daily attendance checks to make sure any absentees are safe. The school's pre-employment checks meet statutory requirements.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read struggle to remember and apply what they have been taught when reading unfamiliar words. Books do not consistently match the sounds that pupils have learned. Those pupils do not quickly develop the knowledge and skills necessary to become successful readers. Leaders should ensure that the early reading curriculum enables pupils to read with fluency and accuracy.
- The history curriculum does not provide pupils in key stage 1 with the essential knowledge and skills that are appropriate to their age. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 currently learn subject content designed for older pupils. They struggle to understand concepts and read resources intended for older pupils. Leaders should ensure that the history curriculum sets out what pupils should know and remember in each year group, particularly so that younger pupils are well prepared for their further studies in key stage 2.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Fairfield Primary School, to be good on 18 and 19 September 2012.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for published performance information about the [school](#).

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140071
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire County Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10198459
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	629
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Donna Kinderman
<b>Principal</b>	Shamara Sadler
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.fairfield.notts.sch.uk">www.fairfield.notts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 July 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There have been some changes in leadership since the last inspection. The principal was appointed in June 2019.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and other senior and curriculum leaders. The lead inspector spoke with a group of governors and three representatives of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors looked closely at the quality of education in reading, mathematics and history. This involved speaking with leaders, staff and pupils, visiting lessons and reviewing curriculum plans and samples of pupils' work. An inspector observed pupils who are in the early stages of reading read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks and other documents relating to safeguarding. The lead inspector met with the designated senior leader for safeguarding and other leaders to

discuss the school's policies and procedures. Inspectors spoke with pupils and staff to evaluate the school's safeguarding culture.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.

### **Inspection team**

Christine Watkins, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kirsty Norbury

Her Majesty's Inspector

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