

# Inspection of Ladycross Infant School

Victoria Road, Sandiacre, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG10 5JD

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Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires Improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

'We are like a whole family because everyone cares about each other' is how pupils describe life at Ladycross infant school. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They enjoy being with their friends and play well together. The behaviour of pupils in school is orderly and calm. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school because adults will help them to understand their emotions and resolve any issues quickly. Pupils understand how falling out with your friends was not the same as bullying.

However, although expectations of behaviour are high, the quality of education needs some further development.

Pupils enjoy singing at the local retirement home and collecting money for charity, and relish the opportunities to take part in school performances. Pupils enjoy the weekly assembly that celebrates characteristics such as 'perseverance' and 'determination'. They know that these will help them to be an effective learner. Pupils learn to celebrate their 'magic mistakes'. However, pupils' knowledge of other faiths and cultures is not as well developed.

Most parents and carers feel that staff are 'friendly' and 'nurturing'. They appreciate the extra help their children receive. However, a significant minority of parents have concerns around school staff turnover impacting their children's education.

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

The school is going through a period of change. Leaders have rightly prioritised the school's curriculum. However, these changes are still at the early stages of development. In most subjects, leaders have not sufficiently broken down the key knowledge that pupils need to know. The content of the curriculum and the order in which knowledge is taught have not been considered carefully enough in most subjects.

The school's early reading programme, although recent, is well established. Teachers make checks to ensure pupils are remembering sounds. Where more help is needed, pupils are given additional support quickly. Books are well matched to the sounds pupils know. Pupils have opportunities to read regularly. They enjoy the daily story time sessions. They talk about their favourite authors and books. Children in the early years hear familiar stories regularly to help them to understand language patterns and structures.

In some subjects, such as mathematics, leaders have started to check whether pupils remember what they have been taught. Leaders have adjusted plans to ensure that key knowledge is broken down into small steps to help pupils to know more and remember more over time. However, this is not consistent across all subjects. Many subject leaders are new to leadership and lack the necessary

knowledge and expertise to drive the improvements needed in the school's curriculum. Checks on how well the school's curriculum is being taught and learned by pupils are in their infancy in most subjects.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is well led and managed across the school. Teachers make sure that pupils with SEND get the help they need. Pupils who need additional support for their emotional well-being are provided with extra support. This aspect of the school's work is well developed.

Relationships between staff, children and parents are strong in the early years. Children in the Nursery get off to a good start to their education. Adults focus well on children's communication and language and early self-help skills. For example, children learn how to pour drinks for snack time and play cooperatively. Adults model how to take turns in conversations. However, when pupils in the early years work independently, they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their knowledge in all areas of learning. Too many activities for children who are working on their own do not help them to know more of the school's curriculum.

Pupils enjoy the different roles and responsibilities they are given in school. They understand this helps them to have a voice in how the school runs. As one pupil said, 'Pupil parliament is like little governors.' Pupils enjoy the range of clubs on offer, including multi sports, music and cooking.

Governors are developing their expertise to ensure that they challenge leaders on the development of the school. They understand that the school is going through a period of transition. Governors have prioritised the developments in the curriculum and leadership within the school.

Leaders are mindful of staff workload and well-being. Staff appreciate the support they receive and can see how leaders' actions are supporting the school to improve. They understand that they will require additional knowledge and support to ensure that they fulfil their different roles.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff understand how to record, report, and check that the concerns they have are acted on. Leaders look for patterns and trends around pupil absence and punctuality that may indicate a child is at risk. Where needed, leaders involve and challenge external agencies to ensure pupils are safe.

Leaders are enhancing school systems to ensure that all aspects of safeguarding are reviewed regularly, including staff training and site security.

Pupils learn how to stay safe online. They understand not to share passwords or personal details. They learn about healthy relationships and know how to report anything that might make them feel uncomfortable.

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

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

- The school's curriculum for the foundation subjects is not yet coherent or sequenced well. This hinders teachers in identifying the small steps of knowledge needed to help pupils to remember more over time. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum plans for all subjects show teachers the knowledge that pupils should know and when they should know it.
- Some subject leaders are new to their roles and are inexperienced. They do not have the knowledge or expertise to make checks on how well pupils are remembering the subject or how to support teachers with the delivery of subject curriculums. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders have the appropriate support, knowledge and expertise so that they fulfil their roles effectively.
- Independent activities for children in the early years do not support them to know and remember more in all areas of learning. This means that pupils, particularly those who are the most disadvantaged, do not receive a curriculum that will help them to be well prepared for their next stage in education. Leaders should ensure that independent activities in the early years helps children know more of the school's curriculum.
- Pupils do not know enough about cultures, communities, and religions different from their own. This does not prepare them sufficiently well for next stage in education or for beyond their immediate community. Leaders have put plans into place to address this, but they must continue to review this work to ensure that pupils have opportunities to develop the knowledge they need to prepare them for life in modern Britain.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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>	112614
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10229023
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	232
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mark MacMillan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kathryn McKinley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ladycross-school.co.uk">www.ladycross-school.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19 June 2008, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has seen significant changes in leadership. The chair of governors took up the position in September 2021. The headteacher was appointed in April 2020. A deputy headteacher position was created to increase capacity in the leadership team. This member of staff started in April 2022. There have also been significant changes in staffing.
- The school does not make use of any alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, including the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and the early years leaders.

- The lead inspector spoke to three representatives from the local governing body. A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Deep dives were completed in early reading, mathematics, computing and geography. This involved talking about the curriculum with leaders, visiting lessons, speaking with pupils and sampling their work. Aspects of the school's personal, social, health and economic education programme, science and the religious education curriculum were also sampled.
- The school's single central record of vetting checks was scrutinised. Inspectors examined a range of documentation, including that related to the safeguarding of pupils, attendance and behaviour. They discussed the arrangements for safeguarding with senior leaders.
- A range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to governance was examined.
- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils. This included discussions around the school's curriculum, behaviour and personal development. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lesson times, around school and over lunchtime.
- Inspectors also visited the school's breakfast and after-school club.
- The views of staff and parents were considered through the Ofsted surveys. Inspectors also spoke to parents while onsite during the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Shaheen Hussain, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Luella Manssen

Ofsted Inspector

Rakesh Patel

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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