

Inspection of a good school: Overdale Junior School

Eastcourt Road, Knighton, Leicester, Leicestershire LE2 3YA

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 September 2022

Outcome

Overdale Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is an inclusive and caring school. Pupils are proud of their culturally diverse school. They appreciate their helpful teachers. Leaders are ambitious about what every pupil can achieve.

Pupils enjoy residential trips and visits to interesting places. Pupils appreciate opportunities to learn musical instruments and play different sports. They learn to respect the natural world in outdoor activities. They learn about healthy choices in cookery classes. They care about others and have opportunities to fundraise for charities. These activities enrich their learning.

Pupils behave well. They want to do their best. They proudly tell their parents and carers about the rewards they earn. Pupils say that bullying is rare. They trust staff to help them resolve any worries fairly. Pupils feel safe and happy. They are confident to share their views and they feel listened to.

Pupils are keen to learn and achieve well. They enjoy reading a variety of books. They are confident to solve problems in mathematics. They learn complex vocabulary that helps them to discuss interesting ideas. They relish remembering and building on what they have learned before. Sometimes, pupils do not receive the support they need to keep up in all lessons.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that sets out the knowledge they want pupils to learn. They have planned opportunities for pupils to think about their learning in complex ways. Pupils use precise vocabulary to explain their ideas. For example, in geography, older pupils explain the features that influence worldwide trade. Teachers regularly check what pupils remember and understand. This enables them to plan the next steps in pupils' learning and identify any extra support that pupils may need.

All leaders and staff strive to give every pupil a good education. Leaders have created an environment in which learning can take place effectively. Curriculum leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their subjects. They work with trust colleagues and receive training about subject leadership. However, leaders have not yet made sure that all teachers deliver the curriculum consistently well.

Leaders make sure that reading lies at the heart of the curriculum. Leaders select appropriate books for each year group, including poetry, stories and non-fiction. Teachers ensure that pupils understand the complex language they encounter in books. They teach pupils the necessary knowledge to understand increasingly demanding books. Teachers nurture a love of reading. They read to pupils every day. Pupils talk about the books they choose to read and why.

In mathematics, teachers follow an ambitious and logically organised curriculum. Teachers know the subject well. This enables them to spot pupils' errors or misconceptions quickly. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding. They identify any mathematical knowledge that pupils need to revisit. They use practical resources well to help pupils solve problems.

Leaders are quick to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are met. Sometimes, this involves using the expertise of outside agencies. Leaders prioritise pupils' phonics knowledge from the beginning of their junior school experience. They help some pupils with less secure knowledge to catch up. However, leaders do not check that all pupils receive the precise support they need. Therefore, some pupils do not progress as quickly as they could.

Leaders prioritise pupils' mental and physical well-being. Pupils are encouraged to be resilient. They learn from their mistakes and how to improve to achieve their goals. They understand the importance of being respectful. They learn about and appreciate different beliefs and family structures. They learn useful strategies to help them work through difficult issues.

School and trust leaders work together to develop their staff as well as their pupils. Staff appreciate the strong team ethos. New staff receive careful induction to quickly become a confident team member. Leaders are considerate of the well-being of all staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding underpins everything at Overdale Juniors. Staff know pupils well. Safeguarding records are detailed and fit for purpose. Well-trained staff know how to share even the smallest of concerns with leaders. Leaders work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the support that they need. Leaders make appropriate checks on all adults working in the school.

Pupils feel safe. Pupils say that they trust adults in school to listen and help with any worries. They know how to stay safe online. They learn about respectful relationships and personal space.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders identify pupils who have additional needs promptly. Programmes of support are put in place. However, leaders do not measure precisely enough the effectiveness of this support. They cannot be sure that it is having the best possible impact for pupils. Leaders should evaluate thoroughly the effectiveness of any adaptations, additional help and programmes of support to ensure that pupils' needs are met in the best possible way.
- Senior leaders and the trust have worked hard to develop staff's subject and pedagogical knowledge. They have put in place detailed plans for all subjects. Curriculum leaders do not yet help all teachers to consistently improve their delivery of the subjects they teach. This means that pupils do not always develop their knowledge over time as securely as they could. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the necessary knowledge and strategies to deliver subject curriculums effectively.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Overdale Junior School, to be good in September 2013.

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.

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

Unique reference number	145618
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10240097
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	474
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ross Ian Grant
Headteacher	Matt Evans
Website	www.overdale-jun.leicester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 and 12 September 2013

Information about this school

- The current headteacher has been in post since August 2020. There have been several staff changes in the past 12 months, including two acting deputy headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator and six teachers.
- The school joined the Oak Multi Academy Trust in April 2018.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the acting deputy headteachers and other leaders.
- The inspector met with the chair of the board of trustees and the chair of the governing body. She also met with the chief executive officer, and the head of quality assurance and school improvement for the Oak Multi Academy Trust.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and geography. This included meeting with subject leaders, visiting lessons and speaking with teachers and pupils. The inspector listened to pupils reading to adults, considered leaders' curriculum plans and scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also looked at curriculum documentation for some other subjects.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils. She also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school, including at lunchtime.
- The inspector considered a range of documents, including school policies.
- The single central record was scrutinised as part of the inspection of safeguarding. The inspectors met with safeguarding leaders, spoke with a range of staff and pupils, and considered safeguarding records.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the end of the school day. Inspectors reviewed the staff and parental responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Mandy Wilding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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