

Inspection of a good school: Village Primary Academy

Village Street, Normanton, Derby, Derbyshire DE23 8DF

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 October 2022

Outcome

Village Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They model the school values of 'respect yourself, respect others, respect the environment'. Pupils talk enthusiastically about supporting one another and celebrating difference. Pupils track their actions against the Harmony Pledge. The Pledge encourages them to be happy, healthy and active members of the community.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils develop their knowledge over time. Teachers and teaching assistants work with pupils with SEND to ensure that they can access the lessons.

Pupils say that they do not experience bullying. They tell adults on the rare occasions they have concerns. Staff resolve these concerns before they can develop into bullying. Pupils learn in calm environments. They feel safe at school. Staff and pupils have positive and trusting relationships.

Leaders take an inclusive approach to providing wider opportunities. They have arranged a whole-school trip to the pantomime. Pupils participate well in sports clubs, both at lunchtime and after school. Year 4 pupils take part in the Shakespeare Project on stage and in backstage roles. There is not yet a broad offer of clubs beyond sporting activities.

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

Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum which covers a broad range of subjects. Subject leaders have identified exactly what they want pupils to know. They share this important knowledge with parents, carers and pupils before teaching begins. Subject leaders have outlined the order in which teachers will teach certain knowledge and skills. They are working to improve how learning in the early years connects with learning across the rest of the school.

Leaders have made the teaching of reading a priority. They have established a culture in which books, authors and reading are celebrated. Pupils enjoy reading and can share the

plots of their favourite books. Many older pupils read with fluency and expression. Staff in the early years and in key stage 1 teach phonics well. They skilfully check the understanding of those pupils at the earliest stages of learning to read. Teachers identify pupils who need extra support with their reading. Some of the support these pupils receive does not always help them to become fluent readers as quickly as they should so that they can keep up with their peers.

Leaders have also prioritised the development of pupils' communication skills, including through their use of language. Teachers use subject-specific language. They explain vocabulary to the pupils so they can use it themselves. This helps pupils to become more confident in how they speak.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use this well to explain knowledge to pupils. In the nursery, for example, teachers help children to develop their understanding of number and language.

Some teachers, including in the early years, do not always check pupils' understanding well enough. Leaders have recently refined how teachers check pupils' understanding. This is well embedded in English and mathematics. However, in some other subjects, the development of how well teachers check pupils' understanding and their knowledge over time is in the early stages.

Leaders quickly identify pupils with SEND, for whom they create appropriate support plans. Teachers and teaching assistants work together to meet these pupils' needs.

Pupils focus on their learning well in lessons. They know the behaviour and rewards systems. Teachers apply these systems consistently and fairly. Leaders have carefully designed outside spaces to help pupils enjoy their break and lunchtimes and behave appropriately. There is a year 6 'campus', which includes a garden. Leaders have installed trim trails to support the physical development of pupils in the early years and in Year 6.

Leaders provide pupils with high-quality opportunities for personal development. They have ensured that pupils learn about beliefs that are different from their own. Pupils have secure knowledge of the major world religions. They visit religious buildings, including a mosque, church and gurdwara. Pupils take part in community projects, such as contributing to a food bank. They develop social and leadership skills by taking part in 'I-vengers', which focuses on online safety and junior leadership. Early years teachers help children to develop their social skills. Children ask one another politely if they can participate in games.

Staff say that workload is manageable. They appreciate the support leaders provide for their well-being and professional development. Trustees know the school's priorities. They offer challenge and support to leaders. Trustees and leaders recognise that some pupils do not attend school as well as they could.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a culture of safeguarding at the school. Leaders have designed a programme of safeguarding training that all staff complete. Staff are confident about the procedures for reporting and recording concerns. Leaders take appropriate action when necessary. They work with wider agencies effectively.

Pupils are taught about how to keep themselves safe. They talk confidently about online safety and safety outside of school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have recently introduced a new system for checking pupils' understanding in the foundation subjects. Leaders do not yet have a clear understanding about exactly what pupils know and remember over time in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that they have an accurate view of what pupils know and remember in the foundation subjects, so that they can plan for pupils' learning as pupils move through the different year groups. In turn, this will aid pupils to build effectively on their understanding in these subjects over time.
- Not all pupils attend school as well as they could. Some pupils are regularly absent. This means that pupils are not accessing the good quality of education that the school provides. Leaders should ensure that pupils who require it receive the support that they need to ensure that they attend as well as they can.

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, Village Primary School, to be good in November 2017.

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	145760
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10242249
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	649
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anne Weinstock
Principal	Lynn Thorne (Executive principal)
Website	www.village.theharmonytrust.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has joined the Harmony Trust.
- There are currently no two-year-old pupils attending the school.
- The school is in the process of establishing an enhanced resource unit for pupils with SEND.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history and physical education. As part of deep dive activities, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a known adult.

- The lead inspector met with subject leaders in geography and science and with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development and provision for pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding, inspectors read the school's relevant policies, scrutinised the single central record, and met with members of the safeguarding team.
- Inspectors met formally and informally with groups of pupils and staff.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed in Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, as well as the staff survey.

Inspection team

Matthew Fearn-Davies, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jon Brown

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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