

Inspection of a good school: Larkfields Infant School

Coronation Road, Nuthall, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG16 1EP

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 March 2023

Outcome

Larkfields Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have a real sense of belonging at this welcoming infant school. They say that it feels 'like one big family'. Pupils feel safe and are happy. They enjoy coming to school. Pupils know they should follow the school values to become a 'Larkfields star'. They all know that the values are 'being safe, being a team player, being an active learner and showing respect'. All pupils, no matter what year group, know the importance of fulfilling these values.

There are high expectations for all pupils to achieve well. Pupils enjoy learning and can talk enthusiastically about their favourite subjects. They say teachers make learning 'fun'.

Pupils are proud of their school. Their positive behaviour is clear to see at all times. Pupils are polite and kind to each other and to adults. There is a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. When it does happen, leaders act quickly to stop it.

The whole school community, from parents and carers to the trustees, wants pupils to be the best they can be. A parent commented, typical of many, that, 'The school is friendly and welcoming and allows children to fulfil their potential whilst enjoying their learning.'

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

Leaders have designed a well-planned curriculum that builds pupils' knowledge from Reception to Year 2. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders identify and assess the needs of pupils with SEND well. Staff support these pupils to take part in all lessons. Teachers adapt how they teach and the resources they use so that pupils with SEND can access the same knowledge as their peers.

Teachers receive regular training to ensure they have up-to date subject knowledge. They use this knowledge well when teaching pupils new concepts. Teachers regularly check what pupils know. They use this information to plan questions at the start of every lesson.

These questions help pupils to reflect on what they have previously learned. Teachers ensure that pupils understand key concepts before moving on to new learning. This helps pupils to remember what leaders want them to learn. Pupils can easily recall their prior learning in geography, for example, including the world's continents.

Pupils do not always receive sufficient time to be able to practise writing at length. This limits how accurately and confidently some pupils, including children in the early years, can write. Teachers do not always provide the support that pupils need to help them to write with greater fluency.

Leaders ensure that children begin to learn to read as soon as they start school in Reception. Teachers and staff have regular training to teach the phonics programme. Although the scheme is relatively new, teachers have the expertise to teach phonics well. They check pupils' understanding. If anyone falls behind, support is provided to help them catch up. Pupils enjoy reading and understand how important reading is to help them succeed. Teachers promote the love of reading to pupils by reading to them every day.

Children in the early years follow a well-established routine. They are ready to learn. They enjoy learning and playing together in the vibrant provision. Not all children's writing is as accurate or precise as it could be. They do not have opportunities to write at length.

Pupils have a good work ethic. Their learning is not disrupted by others. They listen carefully to their teachers and have a thirst for learning. Pupils say that they like learning about geography, for example, because they 'like learning about our world'.

Leaders enhance pupils' learning experiences through planning outdoor learning on the allotment. Pupils enjoy learning about how their food grows. Leaders invite people into school to share their own experiences and to raise pupils' aspirations. For example, the representatives of the emergency services come in to talk about their work.

Pupils have a good understanding of British values and other faiths. They know the importance of having rights and the ability to be able to make their own choices. Pupils understand why it is important to respect those who are different to them.

Leaders have built strong relationships with staff and parents. All staff are proud to work at this school. They feel supported with their workload. They say leaders are mindful of their well-being. Staff see the value in collaborative working with other schools across the trust.

Leaders receive appropriate support and challenge from the local governing body. Leaders know the strengths of their school and what they need to do to further improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular updates and training to help keep pupils safe. Staff know how to spot any

pupils who may be at risk of harm. Staff follow the systems and processes for reporting concerns. Leaders act quickly to help pupils and their families access the support they need. Leaders work well with external agencies.

Leaders know the importance of teaching pupils how to stay safe, both in and out of school. Pupils know who to talk to if they have a worry. They know how to stay safe when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all pupils have the opportunity to write at length. Some pupils' writing is not as precise or accurate as it should be. Leaders should ensure that all teachers know how best to teach writing effectively and provide pupils with the opportunities and support to be able to write at length and with fluency.

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 school to be good in July 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	145827
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10254881
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	173
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Hindmarsh
Headteacher	Nichola Irwin
Website	www.larkfields-inf.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Larkfields Infant School converted to become an academy school in November 2018. When its predecessor school, with the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the leaders and the chief executive officer of the trust, and members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.

- The inspector completed deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. The inspector met with subject leaders, teachers and groups of pupils. She visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding procedures, including the single central record and child protection and safeguarding policies. She met with the designated lead for safeguarding.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online parental survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector considered the views of staff gathered through meetings with groups of staff and through responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for school staff.
- The inspector observed behaviour in lessons and during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspector met with pupils both formally and informally.
- The inspector looked at documents relating to self-evaluation, school improvement, attendance and behaviour, the curriculum and governance.

Inspection team

Anita Denman, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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