

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Kirk Ireton C of E Primary School

Main Street, Kirk Ireton, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 3LD

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Inspection dates:

13 June 2023

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

This is a small village school with a happy, caring atmosphere. Pupils say that they enjoy the lessons and activities that the school provides. They describe school as a 'safe place' where behaviour is usually good. Staff help pupils if they have any worries. Everyone knows the pupils very well. There is a strong focus on pupils' happiness and well-being.

Parents and carers praise the education and care their children receive. Parents who are new to the school describe it as 'supportive and welcoming'.

Pupils behave very well in lessons and around school. They listen attentively in lessons and assemblies. Pupils understand the importance of showing respect. They explain that everyone should be treated equally, even if they are 'different from me'.

For such a small school, there is an ambitious range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils. They have opportunities to further their talents and interests in areas such as sport, music, art, baking and languages. Educational trips allow pupils to experience a variety of cultural activities, such as theatre visits. Leaders ensure that these activities are open to all pupils, saying, 'Nobody ever pays for a trip at this school.' Every pupil also has the chance to take part in a subscribed residential activity, every year.

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

Since the last inspection, leaders have rewritten the curriculum. They have worked with staff across the federation of schools to create a well-sequenced curriculum that is as broad and rich as possible. This has involved careful consideration of the challenge of having all pupils based in mixed-age classes. The curriculum also addresses the needs of the youngest children in the early years. The curriculum now sets out what pupils should know, and be able to do, in all subjects.

Teachers have begun to implement the new curriculum. Some subjects, such as reading, mathematics and music, are especially strong and ambitious. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They use this to provide activities that enable pupils to apply what they already know, so that they achieve well. Pupils build an increasingly rich store of knowledge as they progress through the school. Teachers regularly check what pupils can do, and remember, so that pupils learn from their mistakes.

In a small number of subjects, there are inconsistencies in how well staff implement the curriculum, and in the quality of some pupils' work in books. Some pupils can less readily recall what they have learned in those subjects. Leaders are currently working to develop a system for assessing how well pupils are doing in subjects other than English and mathematics. The aim is to assist teachers to gain an accurate view of pupils' knowledge and skills and plan their next steps in learning.

Across the school, leaders prioritise reading. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to develop a love of books. Books are displayed around school as an invitation to browse and enjoy reading. Leaders have introduced a new, more systematic approach to teaching early reading and phonics. This new approach is popular with staff and pupils. Pupils who require extra support with reading receive regular help. They read from books that match the sounds they know. Pupils are proud of their achievements in reading. They develop well as capable readers.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to achieve as well as possible. Pupils with SEND are fully included in the life of the school. They receive strong support in lessons. For example, they are part of the phonics groups that match their needs, based on a close analysis of any gaps in their knowledge and skills.

Leaders promote pupils' broader personal development well. Through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, pupils learn how to form healthy relationships and keep themselves safe. Pupils can speak about the shared values that are important in modern British society. They take part in local community events. Pupils are developing as respectful young citizens.

Leaders and governors have a shared ambition for the school and its pupils. This is reflected in the school's Christian values and its vision for 'learning, achieving and growing together'. Governors hold leaders to account effectively. They support leaders and staff and are mindful of their workload and well-being. Staff say that they feel well supported by leaders. Staff appreciate the care shown for their well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders say that safeguarding is their top priority. Everyone knows the pupils very well in this small school. This means that staff quickly recognise when a pupil may need extra support. Records show that staff log concerns straight away on the school's safeguarding system. Leaders respond appropriately. They liaise with parents, carers and external

organisations as required. Leaders regularly review their systems and policies to make sure that the arrangements for safeguarding are robust. Leaders, staff and governors receive regular training on all aspects of safeguarding. The school's record of pre-employment checks is in line with statutory requirements.

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

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

- In a small number of foundation subjects, the curriculum implementation is not consistently strong across all parts of the school. Leaders have yet to finalise their approach to assessing how well pupils are achieving in the foundation subjects. This means that the revised curriculum is not having an equally strong impact on pupils' learning and progress in all subjects and year groups. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum enables pupils to know, remember, and be able to do more in all subjects as they progress through the school.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 outstanding in September 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112832
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10286990
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	41
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Angie Woolley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Johnston (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.kirkiretonprimary.co.uk">http://www.kirkiretonprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 and 29 September 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and other senior and curriculum leaders.
- The lead inspector met with several members of the governing body. The lead inspector also held a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, and music. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, 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 observed some pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum, and reviewed curriculum planning and samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around school.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks and holding discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Christine Watkins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Julian Scholefield

Ofsted Inspector

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