

Inspection of a good school: Leys Junior School

Flowery Leys Lane, Leys Junior School, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 7HA

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

Outcome

Leys Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where staff care for pupils and want the very best for them. Leaders, including governors, have a strong vision. They have ensured that values, including ambition and independence, are woven through every aspect of school life. Pupils and staff together form a happy community. Parents and carers value the work of staff. One parent's comment captured the views of many as they shared, 'The school is like one big family that I am happy to be part of.'

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They behave well in lessons. Disruption in lessons is extremely rare and dealt with effectively. Pupils get along well together. Leaders make sure that there is lots to do to at break and lunchtime, such as the 'imagination station'. Bullying is rare and dealt with well.

Pupils enjoy the many clubs and activities that the school offers. These include cartoon drawing, singing and cooking. The school has a strong tradition of sports and physical activities, including dodgeball, basketball and athletics. Most pupils have represented the school in sports or arts activities.

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

Leaders have created a curriculum that identifies what pupils should learn and when. They have ensured that pupils study a broad range of subjects. Leaders in most subjects ensure that staff have the information and strategies they need to teach. In some subjects, leaders have not made sure that teachers consistently help pupils to revisit previous learning.

Most teachers use their secure subject knowledge to model thinking. They provide pupils with work that helps them to learn the planned curriculum. Teachers make lessons engaging and enjoyable.

Most teachers regularly check that pupils have remembered important knowledge. In most lessons, they identify misconceptions and help pupils to address them. Teachers introduce some pupils to key knowledge before lessons to ensure that they will understand the lesson and do not fall behind. In some lessons, teachers do not always correct misunderstanding.

Leaders give a high priority to reading. They encourage pupils to read independently and for pleasure. All classes read and analyse texts together every day. Pupils who need extra support have daily sessions to practise their phonics skills. However, not all pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge receive this support. Leaders share strategies with parents and carers to support their children when reading at home.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) study the same curriculum as their peers. Teachers make adaptations when necessary. Leaders provide staff with training so they know how to help pupils with SEND build their knowledge. Teaching assistants support pupils well in lessons. Pupils enjoy and benefit from the extra support they receive in 'the tree house', the school's learning support room. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Staff have worked hard to address the gaps in pupils' learning created by the COVID-19 pandemic. This work is now paying off. Pupils enjoy learning. They take pride in their work. Pupils like learning new skills together with their peers and teachers. For example, they have regular opportunities to learn how to cook healthy meals together.

Leaders have put a range of strategies in place to improve pupil attendance. Attendance is now rising. A small number of pupils are educated in alternative provision. Leaders ensure that these pupils study a curriculum matched to their needs. They carry out regular welfare and progress checks with providers.

Pupils' personal development is the centre of the school's work. Pupils learn how to be active citizens in the modern world. The pupil parliament takes part in decision-making in the school, and teaches pupils about democracy in action.

Teachers feel well supported by leaders. They enjoy working at the school and receive good opportunities to develop their skills through training. Leaders consider staff well-being and workload when introducing new policies.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders responsible for safeguarding have established systems for reporting and tracking concerns that are thorough and robust. Staff receive timely and effective training. They understand their responsibilities and report concerns, no matter how small. Leaders ensure that staff are subject to appropriate checks before starting to work at the school.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know who to go to if they have a worry or concern. Pupils are confident that staff will listen to them and take them seriously. They learn about dangers and risks, including how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Although additional reading interventions take place for the weakest readers, there are a small number of pupils who sometimes struggle to decode unfamiliar words accurately. This inhibits their ability to read accurately and independently, and could lead to pupils finding it more difficult to access other areas of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that all members of staff can implement agreed strategies to address gaps in pupils' reading knowledge and help them to quickly become accurate and speedy readers.
- In some subjects, leaders have not ensured that all teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to revisit and embed prior knowledge. This means that, on occasion, gaps in some pupils' understanding arise. Leaders should ensure that teachers make use of effective strategies to help pupils remember what they have been taught in all subjects.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2014.

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	112492
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10268866
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Wendy Sharp
Headteacher	Nichola Way
Website	www.leysjuniorschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses the services of one registered alternative provider.
- The school is federated with Copthorne Community Infant School.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in three subjects: reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, the inspector 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 inspector met with a wide range of senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator and leaders responsible for behaviour and personal development.
- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body.
- The inspector looked at information about behaviour and attendance.

- The inspector spoke to a range of staff.
- The inspector talked to leaders in charge of safeguarding arrangements, met with staff and pupils, and looked at documentation to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding practices and procedures.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Dr Paul Heery, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023