

# Inspection of a good school: Spire Nursery and Infant School

Derby Road, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 2EU

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Inspection dates:

3 and 4 July 2023

## **Outcome**

Spire Nursery and Infant School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils love coming to school. They are polite and greet visitors in a friendly way. The 'Aspire' values shine through. Pupils are independent, resilient and have high aspirations. They are happy and get along well with each other. One pupil described the school as, 'A family, we are all special. No matter who you are, we are all part of this school.'

Pupils feel safe. They say that bullying does not happen often. When it does, they know that adults will sort it quickly. Pupils know that if they have any worries, there are adults that they can talk to. They behave well in lessons and during social times. There is a culture of respect at this school.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils live up to these expectations. They work hard, entering school each day with a smile and a thirst for learning.

Pupils actively participate in school life. Some pupils hold responsibilities in school. These include animal carers, who look after the school chickens and the two school goats, Bert and Gizmo. Pupils are behaviour officers, helping younger pupils to behave and play nicely. The school council and first aiders are proud of their responsibilities.

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

Leaders' ambition for all pupils to receive a high-quality education shines through. This is a highly inclusive school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. In the SEND assessment resource base, pupils thrive. Adults are skilled and provide a bespoke education for the pupils. The nurture support helps some pupils to build confidence and manage their feelings. Pupils with SEND are successful and happy learners.

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils should learn. They ensure that pupils' learning is sequenced so that they build their knowledge over time. Leaders identify the

specific content and vocabulary that they want pupils to learn. In a few subjects, curriculum plans are new. The systems for checking pupils' knowledge are developing.

Staff are skilled at reminding pupils what they have learned previously and how this links to current learning. Pupils enjoy explaining what they have learned. They can recall prior learning and how it links with their most recent learning.

Reading is a top priority in school. Pupils read widely and often, which helps them to become confident and fluent readers. Pupils listen to high-quality texts. Children in the Reception Year start learning to read as soon as they start school. Children in Nursery love to sing songs and listen to stories. Staff skilfully teach sounds and model how to say them. Leaders know exactly which sounds individual pupils need help with. For pupils who need extra help, support is timely and effective.

Resources in the early years offer stimulation and support for children. The skilful care provided throughout early years encourages both independence and collaboration. Strong early reading and mathematics teaching ensure that pupils start Year 1 with secure knowledge and blossoming confidence.

Pupils behave well in lessons and during the social times of the school day. Children in early years learn the rules and routines quickly. Pupils record how they are feeling each day. This ensures that staff know who needs an extra 'check-in'.

Leaders carefully consider pupils' personal development. The personal, social and health education fully prepares pupils for their next steps. Pupils know how to keep physically and mentally healthy. They show respect for difference and diversity. The nurture and pastoral support they receive from staff helps them to thrive.

Leaders, including governors, prioritise staff well-being. All staff are proud to work at the school. Early career teachers receive effective support. Leaders' work to develop subject leadership is in progress. At present, senior leaders have many responsibilities.

Governors are clear about the school's strengths and are proud of the school. They are knowledgeable and dedicated. They share leaders' aspirations to ensure that every pupil is safe, happy and given an exciting learning journey.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are tenacious in their approach to keeping pupils safe. Staff receive regular training. They know how to identify risks and report them. Leaders keep detailed records and find crucial help for families. Leaders and the family support worker provide valuable support for parents and carers and for pupils.

Recruitment practice is secure. Leaders ensure that the right checks are made when new staff start at the school.

Governors ensure that all necessary safeguarding checks are in place, and they monitor these often. They meet their duties with diligence to ensure that safeguarding practice remains strong.

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

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

- Recent changes to the curriculum development for some subjects are still new, and therefore the full impact on attainment is not yet realised. Leaders should continue with their ambitious curriculum plans in their entirety and monitor the impact developments have on improving pupils' knowledge over time.
- Senior leaders have many subjects to lead. Some subject leaders are new to the role and have not benefited from training to develop their understanding of subject leadership. Leaders should continue to support subject leaders, to ensure that they have the appropriate skills and knowledge to successfully monitor, develop and evaluate the effectiveness of their subject areas.

## **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 October 2011.

## **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>	112660
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211596
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	215
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Chris Power
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kelly Hill
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.spire-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk">www.spire-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school currently uses no alternative provision.
- There is a morning and after-school club for pupils attending the school, which is run by school staff and managed by school leaders.
- The school has Nursery provision for two-year-olds.

## 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 has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the SEND coordinator and a range of other staff. The inspector met with representatives of the local governing body and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding, the inspector reviewed school policies, procedures and records. The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and spoke with staff, governors and pupils about the school's approach to keeping pupils safe.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, spoke with teachers and spoke with pupils about their learning. The inspector visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. They considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspector met with groups of staff and pupils and considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Kirsty Norbury, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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