

Inspection of a good school: Northfield Junior School

Falcon Road, Dronfield, Derbyshire S18 2ED

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 February 2024

Outcome

Northfield Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Northfield Junior School is a 'warm and caring learning environment'. It is a place where pupils' needs are nurtured. They relish the social times they share with their friends. As one parent commented: 'I love that my child is seen as an individual.'

Every pupil is known by all staff. Pupils know that adults will listen to their ideas and opinions. They trust adults will take good care of them. Albie, the school therapy dog, is on hand to help pupils to talk about emotions and feelings.

The many roles and responsibilities pupils hold help them to understand and prepare for potential risks they may face. Pupil 'online safety champions' inform fellow pupils and parents and carers about how to stay safe online. The health ambassadors run mindfulness activities. The school councillors proudly present badges to peers who have lived up to the school's values. Everyone has a role to make the school the best it can be.

Pupils enjoy the well-considered range of clubs and visits that the school offers. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) enjoy West End theatre visits and take part in residential alongside their peers.

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

The school is ambitious for all its pupils, regardless of their starting points. Every pupil, including those with SEND, receives a broad and balanced curriculum that goes beyond just the academic. Pupils typically achieve well.

The school's curriculum is logical, ambitious and well sequenced. It ensures that pupils can recall key knowledge in an ordered way. Staff receive training to develop their expertise to deliver this curriculum. For example, after considering Ofsted's subject report for geography, staff received further training on the fieldwork aspect of the subject. Teachers use a variety of checks to help pupils to recall the school's curriculum.

Occasionally, some activities that pupils are asked to complete, or resources staff use, do not help pupils to recall the key knowledge that the school intends.

Every lesson starts with pupils remembering and recalling information and knowledge. It provides teachers the opportunity to check for any misconceptions. This helps to ensure the foundations of learning are secure in readiness for the next lesson and beyond.

Reading is at the centre of the school's curriculum. Most lessons require pupils to read and infer meaning from the text. The school ensures that pupils who are at the early stages of reading are provided with regular support to bridge any gaps in their reading development. For pupils with SEND, this key knowledge is broken down further into small, manageable steps. This enables them to overlearn key skills such as sounding out unknown words. Most pupils receive reading books that are well matched to their level of development.

The school has worked hard to ensure that pupils develop a love of learning. This helps pupils to foster positive attitudes towards schooling and education. Rates of attendance are high. The school strives to support families that may need help to get their child to school.

The school's culture for behaviour is built on its values. It is an integral part of the curriculum. Lessons are calm and orderly. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

The school's wider personal development provision is well considered. It includes, but extends beyond, sports and the arts. There is a strong focus on pupils' mental health. Links established with local universities have presented the school with clubs that promote science and technology. Pupils enjoy writing letters to international schools in Bangladesh and Kenya. Visits and visitors are closely linked to the school's curriculum. Occasionally, pupils do not demonstrate a clear understanding of language relating to a range of world faiths and religions.

Governors and staff are proud of their school. They feel that the school has a strong 'culture of support'. Staff appreciate the opportunities they receive to develop their professional knowledge. Governors provide timely support and challenge for the school. The majority of parents who expressed a view through the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, would recommend the school to others.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, activities or resources teachers use do not help pupils to recall more of the subject. When this happens, it slows learning. The school should ensure that the activities pupils are asked to complete help them to recall the essential key knowledge.
- Sometimes, pupils do not demonstrate a clear understanding of language relating to a range of world faiths and religions. This means they are not as well prepared for modern British society as they could be. The school must continue its work to ensure that all pupils have a meaningful and secure understanding of different religions and faiths in modern Britain. The school must ensure that pupils are able to use accurate and appropriate language when talking about religion and faith.

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 2015.

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' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	112685
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10324063
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dr Alan Thomas
Headteacher	Rebecca Timperley and Victoria Jones (Co-headteachers)
Website	www.northfield.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

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

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgment about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- During the inspection, the inspector held conversations with the school's headteachers. A meeting was also held with representatives of the school's governing body.
- The inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about 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 inspectors also discussed the school's curriculum for history, science and art and design. The inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspector 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.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation and improvement plans.

Inspection team

Shaheen Hussain, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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