

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Fernvale Primary School

Somerby Road, Thurnby, Leicester, Leicestershire LE7 9PR

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Inspection dates:

26 and 27 November 2024

## Outcome

Fernvale Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Helen Cartledge-Splitt. This school is part of OWLS Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Peter Merry, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jonathan Tedds.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Fernvale Primary is a nurturing and inclusive school. Relationships between staff and pupils are caring. There are high expectations for all pupils. Pupils meet these expectations. Staff know pupils and their families very well. Pupils feel happy and safe. They have a compassionate understanding of the challenges that some pupils face. Consequently, pupils are tolerant and respectful.

Pupils understand the school's values that celebrate diversity and the individuality of every child. They make links between these school values and the wider fundamental British values they are taught.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They value the rewards they receive for working hard. On occasion when pupils struggle with their behaviour, they receive the support they need to manage their emotions. Pupils know they can go to any adult in school if they have a concern or worry. They are confident that staff will listen and help them. Pupils say bullying is rare and always dealt with.

The school provides a wide range of opportunities and experiences to support pupils' personal development. Pupils make the most of a wide range of sporting, artistic and musical clubs that develop their interests and talents. Football, dodgeball, gymnastics and dance are popular with pupils. In addition, many take part in the choir or in productions, such as 'A Miracle In Town'.

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

The school has developed suitably ambitious curriculums in most subjects. For example, in mathematics the carefully considered curriculum enables pupils to build their cumulative knowledge. In the Reception Year, children develop their understanding of mathematical concepts through counting activities and sorting shapes. By Year 6, pupils are developing fluency in mathematics and applying their reasoning skills to solve increasingly complex problems.

The school ensures that all subject curriculums enable pupils to acquire and develop subject-specific skills. For example, in science, pupils learn to hypothesise, investigate and think like scientists. Most staff have strong subject knowledge. They check pupils' learning regularly to identify any gaps in their knowledge and address any misunderstandings. However, in some subjects, the planned curriculums are not as well implemented. As a result, teaching does not sharply focus on the key knowledge pupils need to learn.

Learning to read is a priority at Fernvale. Children start learning letter sounds as soon as they begin school. All staff receive training to teach the school's phonics programme. Phonics sessions are highly structured and staff deliver these well. Teachers identify pupils who may be falling behind in their reading. These pupils receive extra support to catch up. Pupils practise reading regularly at school and at home. In key stage 2, pupils study a wide range of texts and apply what they have learned about grammar, punctuation and descriptive writing in their work.

The school has expanded the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It identifies these pupils effectively and works with external agencies to ensure they get the right support. Staff support pupils when they become anxious or have difficulty controlling their emotions. They receive training to adapt their teaching to meet these pupils' needs. For example, they break down tasks and instructions. As a result, pupils with SEND make good progress.

Children in the Reception Year have excellent opportunities to play and learn. Every activity supports purposeful learning. Staff prioritise children's personal social and emotional development. Adults engage purposefully with children to develop their speech, language and communication skills. Routines are very well established.

In subjects where provisional outcomes are below national expectations, the school has taken effective action to strengthen the curriculum. For example, staff have received support from the trust and training to improve their teaching.

The school works hard to improve pupils' attendance. There are robust systems in place to check on pupils well-being when they are not in school. The school works closely with parents to understand and remove the barriers that prevent their child from attending

school. As a result, there is an improving trend in the proportion of pupils attending school more regularly. Pupils meet the school's expectations for behaviour.

The school's offer for personal development prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. It provides opportunities for pupils to develop their character. Pupils have a good understanding of equality, diversity and British values. Pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They learn about the importance of good mental health and healthy relationships. Pupils develop their leadership skills as members of the school council and playground leaders.

Governors and members of the trust hold leaders to account for their work in improving the school. The school focuses on the right priorities, for example ensuring that there is consistency in ambition across all subjects. Staff value the opportunities for professional development, although a minority expressed concerns about workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In some foundation subjects, the planned curriculums are not well implemented. Teaching does not sharply focus on the key knowledge pupils need to learn. Consequently, some pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school should ensure that teachers have the expertise to deliver the intended curriculum in all subjects so that pupils build the knowledge they need.

## **Background**

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection

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 for overall effectiveness in March 2019.

## **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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143248
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10347627
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	340
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Jonathan Tedds
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Peter Merry
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Cartledge-Splitt
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.fernvale.leics.sch.uk">www.fernvale.leics.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Fernvale Primary School joined OWLS Academy Trust in September 2016.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The lead inspector held meetings with leaders responsible for behaviour, attendance, reading, special educational needs and personal development. The lead inspector also held discussions with school curriculum leaders.
- The lead inspector 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 listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead 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.
- The lead inspector considered pupils' behaviour at various times of day, including in lessons, around the school site and at lunchtime.
- The lead inspector took account of the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also took into consideration the online surveys for staff and parents.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the local board of governors, governors, the chief executive officer of the trust, trust leaders and representatives of the board of trustees.

## **Inspection team**

Stephen Long, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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