

Inspection of a school judged Good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Fernwood Primary School

Arleston Drive, Wollaton, Nottingham NG8 2FZ

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 February 2025

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a vibrant and joyful school where pupils are happy and safe.

Pupils benefit from the school's strong ambition for them to do well, both academically and in their personal development. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils across the school achieve well.

Behaviour is exemplary in many respects. Staff consistently instil high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond positively to clear instructions and develop warm, caring, relationships. They need few, if any, small reminders to focus on learning. They maintain a studious ethos, while finding learning fun and engaging. Pupils listen attentively and ask relevant questions because they are interested and motivated to learn.

The school invests in a wide range of high-quality enrichment to enhance the curriculum and broaden pupils' interests. Pupils are motivated and inspired by themed events. For instance, they consider possible careers with interesting visitors during the school's careers week. Pupils value the opportunity to learn from visitors with different religions and faiths.

Parents and carers praise the school's care and support for their children. Many would recommend the school to others.

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

The school's strong practice continues to improve the provision. Pupils' best interests are at the forefront of all decisions. The collegiate ethos between staff helps to sustain the improvements made. Staff benefit from high-quality professional development and

support for their workload and well-being. Governors know the school and fulfil their roles well.

The curriculum is well sequenced and interesting. The school has specified clearly the knowledge that pupils must learn. Important knowledge is revisited and developed so that pupils build on their prior learning well. For example, pupils frequently repeat and review new technical words so that they develop their understanding of ambitious vocabulary across all subjects. Staff explain new information skilfully and ask relevant questions to extend pupils' knowledge. Staff model new learning in manageable chunks. Mostly, pupils learn well and produce high-quality work. However, occasionally, staff do not provide sufficient support so that pupils can put their newly acquired knowledge into practice.

The school ensures that children in the early years get off to a strong start. This is through an engaging curriculum and a caring, nurturing ethos. Children develop a detailed knowledge of mathematics. Staff are skilled at developing pupils' communication and vocabulary through considered conversations. They encourage children to be curious and confident. Children immerse themselves fully in purposeful learning through the high-quality activities that the school provides for them.

The school's approach to teaching reading is effective. The well-considered reading curriculum begins with sounds and rhyme in the Nursery Year. Pupils build on this well during more formal phonics and specific reading instruction to help them read with fluency and understanding. Staff are skilled and knowledgeable. They use a range of strategies to ensure that pupils secure the reading skills that they need. Any pupils who need it get the right support to help them keep up.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. Staff are skilled in meeting these pupils' needs effectively, particularly in the special resource base. Pupils with SEND learn with confidence.

Pupils are courteous and kind. They know and live by the school's 'FRIEND' values and support each other. At social times, pupils engage enthusiastically with the outdoor and adventurous range of activities and large-scale equipment. They enjoy building structures, exploring and climbing responsibly. They conduct themselves well during creative play.

Support for pupils' personal development and well-being is strong. Pupils embody the school's positive ethos through their leadership roles. The school council is proud of its contributions to the life of the school and how its work improves pupils' well-being. The school ensures that by the time pupils finish their primary education, they have a comprehensive understanding about life in modern Britain. Pupils in Year 6, for instance, speak with confidence about the protected characteristics and equality. Pupils know a lot about ways they can keep themselves safe, particularly online. They understand about healthy diets and know strategies to keep a healthy mind and a positive attitude.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, staff do not ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to practise and apply the new knowledge that they have learned. This means that a small number of pupils do not always develop the depth of knowledge that they could. The school should support staff to refine the approaches they use to enable pupils to practise and apply their new knowledge securely, so that pupils deepen their understanding and achieve higher standards.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in June 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

Unique reference number	142223
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10347602
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pete Cumberland
Headteacher	Ben Waldram (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.fernwoodprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 to 20 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a separate provision for pupils with SEND. This provision has capacity for up to 10 pupils, some of whom may have education, health and care plans.
- The executive headteacher is responsible for the school, as well as the head of school.
- The school runs its own wraparound care, including a breakfast and an after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders and subject leaders. The lead inspector also met with representatives of the local governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors discussed pupils' attendance and behaviour with school leaders.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of evidence, including documents published on the school's website.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.

Inspection team

Donna Moulds, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Janis Warren

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 2025