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

Main Street, North Muskham, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 6HD

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 June 2025

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

At Muskham Primary School, pupils feel a strong sense of community and belonging. Pupils enjoy school because everyone treats each other with kindness, empathy and respect.

Pupils behave impeccably. They live up to the school's 'enabler' values, such as optimism and perseverance, which permeate throughout the school. These help to shape their personal growth. Visitors to the school, such as sportspeople, help to demonstrate these values in practice. Pupils learn to pursue their dreams with resilience and determination.

Playtimes are joyful and harmonious. Pupils appreciate that they have a lovely outdoors, with great facilities. Everyone plays together happily. Pupils who are 'playground helpers' organise activities and ensure everyone has something to do. They 'spot' and celebrate pupils who are playing together especially well or who are looking after others.

Pupils learn about responsibility, including looking after things like the playground equipment and each other. They proudly take on roles, such as school councillors, so they can actively support their community. After lunch, the 'Take 5 Ambassadors' lead breathing exercises to settle everyone back into focused learning.

The school is ambitious for pupils and provides an engaging curriculum that enables pupils to achieve well and thrive. Pupils are especially proud to become talented writers. They develop broader interests through an array of clubs, like fishing, choir, gymnastics, football and gardening.

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

Reading is the utmost priority. The school has strengthened its approach to the teaching of reading. Well-trained staff ensure pupils get off to a strong start through the effective delivery of the phonics programme. Staff check pupils' progress rigorously to spot when any pupil falls behind. The school has developed a very clear process for helping pupils to catch up quickly. With regular practise, pupils soon become confident and skilled readers. They talk knowledgeably about their favourite novels and authors. The school considers the content of the library carefully. Pupils enjoy the 'recommended reads', which provide insights into the diversity of modern life, alongside an enjoyment of childhood favourites.

The school has carefully crafted an ambitious and engaging curriculum. The strengths of the curriculum have led to pupils achieving consistently well in end of key stage 2 assessments for reading, writing and mathematics. Improvements reflect the recent change to the school's new mixed-age classes. This review of the curriculum is ensuring pupils continue to build on their knowledge successfully over time.

In most subjects, the school has identified clearly the key knowledge and important vocabulary pupils should learn right from the early years. In these subjects, teachers explain knowledge well and provide appropriate learning activities. Staff check pupils' understanding routinely and adjust teaching to address any misconceptions or gaps in pupils' knowledge. However, this is not the case across all subjects. While most pupils learn well and gain a secure understanding of the curriculum, where key knowledge and vocabulary has not been identified clearly, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

The school is inclusive and identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Staff adapt the curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of these pupils most of the time. At times, staff do not make sufficient or appropriate adaptations for pupils with SEND, including those at the earlier stages of learning to read. This hinders these pupils from building knowledge successfully.

Pupils' behaviour around the school and in the classroom is calm and focused. Pupils understand the school's consistently high expectations well. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Starting in the early years, the school supports pupils with clear routines. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect across school.

The school prepares pupils well for life beyond school and their village community. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe on their bicycles, on the road or by the local river. They have a secure understanding of how to stay safe when they are online. The school ensures pupils develop a sound understanding of fundamental British values and the protected characteristics. Pupils know that this important knowledge will help them make respectful choices in their future life.

The school aims for high standards in all aspects of its work. Leaders are sharply focused on ensuring that pupils thrive, both personally and academically. The astute governing body is equally determined, providing effective challenge and support. Since the last

inspection, staff have played a greater part in leading and evaluating the curriculum. They feel well supported and are proud to be part of the school's success.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the school has not identified clearly enough the important knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to learn. In these subjects, the delivery of the curriculum and the activities pupils are provided with do not help them to achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that the curriculum in all subjects clearly identifies the key knowledge and vocabulary pupils should learn, so that they can achieve consistently well.
- At times, the school does not adapt learning sufficiently or appropriately enough to meet the needs of pupils with SEND, including those at the earlier stages of learning to read. This means that, sometimes, these pupils do not build on their knowledge successfully or achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to adapt teaching and activities effectively for pupils to meet their needs.

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 January 2016.

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	122663
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10347474
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	148
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anne Allsop
Headteacher	Amanda Crossland
Website	www.muskham.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a registered nursery provision for children aged three to four years old. However, there are currently no children of this age on roll.
- 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 is the first routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body and spoke to a representative from the local authority.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. She also listened as pupils read to a familiar adult.
- 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.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site during breaktime.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils and staff. She spoke to parents and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils and for staff.

Inspection team

Claire Stylianides, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector

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