

# Alvaston Junior School

Elvaston Lane, Alvaston, Derby DE24 0PU

<b>Inspection date</b>	1–2 March 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The executive headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, has created a culture where staff are encouraged to work together to improve outcomes for pupils. As a result, the school has improved well since its last inspection and outcomes are at least average in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils currently in the school.
- Leaders' actions are based on thorough evaluation of outcomes and they have a clear understanding of what needs to be done next to improve teaching and raise outcomes further.
- The federated governing body uses its expertise and knowledge to question leaders closely and hold them to account. As a result, pupils' achievements are improving.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Effective training for staff continues to strengthen this.
- The new curriculum is broad and balanced and provides pupils with a range of rich and engaging experiences. The Enhanced Resource provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties is effective and these pupils achieve well.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour around the school is good. They show great consideration and respect towards adults and each other. Their attendance is good.
- Pupils are safe and say they feel safe. They are being well prepared for life in modern Britain. The pupils' social and moral development is a strength of the school.
- Standards are rising in all subjects and in all year groups. Pupils are making good progress in all subjects.
- Leaders are successfully narrowing gaps in reading, writing and mathematics for disadvantaged pupils across the school so that current pupils are making similar progress to others nationally.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In mathematics pupils do not consistently receive a good level of challenge or develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills adequately. This is especially true of the most able.
- Teaching does not develop pupils' spelling sufficiently well. As a result, not all pupils are developing the skills necessary to spell correctly.
- Middle leadership is not yet consistently effective in raising pupils' attainment because new leaders, as yet, have not implemented the full range of actions identified in their improvement plans.

## Full report

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

- Improve pupils' achievement even more by making sure that teachers:
  - use assessment information more specifically in mathematics to move pupils on to their next steps in learning quickly
  - provide all pupils, especially the most able, with opportunities to improve their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics
  - implement a more consistent approach to the teaching of spelling and track pupils' progress in spelling to ensure it is effective.
  
- Improve the quality of leadership and management further by:
  - ensuring that all middle and subject leaders, especially those new to their post, consistently implement and evaluate their identified actions to raise standards in their areas of responsibility.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Strong leadership from the executive headteacher and senior leaders has improved the quality of teaching in the school and pupils' outcomes. Rigorous checks on all aspects of the school's work have ensured that senior leaders have an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses and have prioritised and tackled the areas for improvement. As a result, this is an improving school in which standards are rising.
- Members of staff, pupils and parents share the drive for improvement. All speak enthusiastically of how the school has improved since the last inspection. Staff enjoy working at the school, and feel valued and supported.
- Leaders use the hard federation with another local primary school, together with other local learning alliances, to share expertise effectively to secure good teaching and successfully tackle weaknesses. This, together with support from the local authority, has given the school good capacity to improve further.
- The performance of teachers is well managed. Senior leaders ensure that high-quality training is available so all staff can develop their skills. Staff appreciate this development and use it to improve their practice.
- The curriculum is now broad and balanced. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across other subjects. For example, in science, pupils use their mathematical skills in their investigation work. Pupils enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs on offer, such as sport, art and technology.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress from their starting points, both in the Enhanced Resource provision and in the main school. New leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement of this provision and are well placed to bring these about.
- Leaders, including governors, keep a very close check on the impact of pupil premium funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well. The funding is used, for example, to pay for additional teachers and teaching assistants for small-group teaching. This has created effective intervention approaches which focus on individual learning needs. As a consequence, the gaps in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics for disadvantaged pupils are continuing to narrow for current pupils, compared both with others in the school and others nationally.
- Middle leaders receive a good range of support to help them in their roles. They are starting to have a positive impact in their areas of responsibility, for example by making checks on teaching and learning. These leaders are at different stages in their development and some have yet to bring about the necessary impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity well. They systematically review the progress that different groups of pupils make and ensure that swift action is taken to ensure that all have an equal chance to succeed. For example, having identified where boys were lagging behind in reading and grammar and punctuation, they quickly put actions into place to help them catch up. As a result, boys are now doing better in these subjects. The increased number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are making good progress because of the effective support they receive.
- Effective use of the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sports has enabled staff to improve their skills, subject knowledge and confidence in the teaching of PE. Opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sport have increased.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development, including their understanding of British values, is strong. For example, pupils take responsibility for a variety of jobs over lunchtime, such as manner monitors. The school has identified, and is working to increase, opportunities for cultural and spiritual development. Staff ensure that pupils have a solid understanding of the dangers of extremism and the importance of keeping safe online.
- The school has fostered good relationships with the wider community and communicates well with parents. Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own surveys of parents and parents spoken with during the inspection indicate that parents now hold the school in high regard and would recommend the school to others.
- **The governance of the school**
  - The federated structure of governance is very effective. Governors know the school well. They bring a wide range of expertise to their roles and are actively involved in driving improvements forward.

- As well as reviewing documented evidence, governors make regular, well-focused visits to probe the quality of the school’s work. As a result, they are well informed about what is working well and what needs further improvement. Governors know how well the school is doing in relation to other schools.
- Statutory responsibilities are undertaken appropriately and governors ensure that finances are well managed, including the use of pupil premium and sports funding, and performance pay for staff.
- Governors hold the executive headteacher to account effectively through their effective questioning at meetings, and through a rigorous performance management process.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are well trained and know how to report and follow up on any safeguarding concerns. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school, and parents agreed with the views of their children.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good**

- Skilled leadership and management of staff by senior leaders have continued to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection. As a result, teaching is now good across the school.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge and this is used to model learning effectively for the pupils. Pupils make good use of key vocabulary relevant to different subjects. For example, Year 4 pupils describe different types and properties of triangles with increasing confidence.
- Teachers have high expectations for learning and, as a result, pupils show consistently positive attitudes towards their learning. They are confident and keen learners. Pupils apply themselves well and work enthusiastically because teachers make the learning enjoyable. The presentation of their work is good because they take pride in what they are doing.
- The school’s marking policy is strong. Pupils routinely receive helpful written and oral feedback. Pupils value this and improve their work in response to teachers’ feedback. This contributes to the good progress pupils make.
- Teachers have a sound understanding of pupils’ knowledge, skills and understanding. Staff have made a good start at assessing pupils’ attainment and progress without levels in reading, writing and mathematics. This is effectively supported by the use of detailed success criteria which help pupils understand what they are working towards.
- Teachers systematically check pupils’ learning and ask probing questions to draw out their understanding and make them justify their answers. Some teachers settle for more superficial responses and miss opportunities to develop deeper thinking, problem-solving and reasoning skills, particularly for the most able and in mathematics.
- Pupils have the opportunity to read a wide range of texts and develop good comprehension skills. As a result, the teaching of reading has improved and standards are rising.
- Pupils make good progress in writing. They are given a wide range of opportunities to apply their writing skills, and handwriting is neat and well presented. Progress is not as rapid in grammar, punctuation and spelling, as spellings are not taught rigorously enough.
- Mathematics teaching has improved and pupils make good progress. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to solve problems and apply their reasoning skills. The use of assessment to move pupils on more quickly is not securely developed. As a result, pupils, especially the most able, are not sufficiently challenged and do not make the progress they are capable of.
- Disadvantaged pupils make more rapid progress as a consequence of targeted teaching. For example, effective use of assessment during morning activities is immediately used to regroup pupils and provide specific support in the afternoon.
- The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is effective as a result of improvements in how teaching assistants provide support to individuals and small groups. Pupils benefit from a variety of learning resources and engaging teaching suited to their abilities.
- Pupils’ skills are promoted well across different curriculum areas. For example, pupils are given opportunities to write in different subjects and use their mathematical skills to develop understanding of coordinates in geography.
- Parent View and the school’s own surveys indicate that parents believe the quality of teaching and the progress their children make are much improved. This view was also confirmed by those parents who spoke with inspectors.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils display positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy and persevere with learning, even when they find it hard.
- Pupils are welcoming and show respect towards each other and adults. Pupils are articulate and talk confidently, taking turns and respecting the views of others. They are proud of their school.
- Opportunities for social and moral development, supported by a personal, social and health education programme, are strengths of the school. Spiritual and cultural learning is not as well developed.
- Pupils experience many opportunities to develop their understanding of British values, for example through a visit to the Mayor's Parlour, a weekly British theme and the school council. The school council plays an active part in school life and has influenced change in the school environment, for example in the creation of a sheltered outdoor area.
- Pupils say they feel safe in and around school. They are well cared for and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Parents and pupils agree that incidents of racism and bullying are low. When they do occur, systems are in place to deal with them appropriately. Pupils have a good understanding of bullying and can explain the different types, including cyber-bullying.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons and at other times of the day, pupils conduct themselves well. They are courteous, well mannered and respectful of their environment. They listen attentively to their teachers and other adults.
- School leaders have improved behaviour from the start of this academic year as a result of a new behaviour policy which promotes positive behaviour. Pupils like and understand the policy and say it is used well by staff. Consequently, the number of behaviour incidents has decreased.
- Pupils take pride in their work and present it well. Low-level disruption in lessons is rare.
- The school's approach to promoting good attendance is highly effective. Attendance is at the national average. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is half the national average. Rigorous systems are in place to support the attendance of all groups of pupils.
- Parents, staff and pupils agree that behaviour is good. Parents are kept well informed about their child's behaviour. Consequently incidents of behaviour have reduced.

## Outcomes for pupils are good

- Inspection evidence shows that pupils currently make good progress, in all year groups, in reading, writing and mathematics, and standards are rising throughout the school. Leaders accurately check pupils' starting points as they enter the school in Year 3.
- Historical information shows that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015 was broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Current pupils are attaining well. Year 6 pupils are well prepared for secondary school.
- Pupils' attainment in writing is above average. Progress in writing is broadly average but progress in pupils' accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar is less rapid. New arrangements for the assessment and teaching of spellings have just begun and have yet to be evaluated for impact.
- In 2015, attainment and progress in mathematics were below average. As a result of a new scheme of work and staff training, the quality of teaching in mathematics is improved and current pupils are making more rapid progress.
- Pupils' work in books, lesson observations and the school's own records indicate that current attainment and progress in reading are improving rapidly in all year groups.
- The most-able pupils, in 2015, did not make good progress in grammar, punctuation and spelling, and mathematics. As a result of increased tracking and support programmes, the proportion of the most-able pupils who are reaching higher levels of attainment and making accelerated progress is increasing.

- From their different starting points, the progress of pupils who are disadvantaged is continuing to improve across all year groups as a result of high-quality tracking of progress by senior leaders, effective use of pupil premium funding and support programmes. Gaps are narrowing both with other pupils nationally and others in the school.
- The small numbers of pupils who have special educational needs or disability and who learn in the Enhanced Resource provision make good progress. They benefit from well-targeted support programmes based on detailed assessment and analysis.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112743
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby City
<b>Inspection number</b>	10001861

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	344
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Karlana Deidrick
<b>Executive Headteacher</b>	Jane Green
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 571321
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.alvastonj.derby.sch.uk">www.alvastonj.derby.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@alvastonj.derby.sch.uk">admin@alvastonj.derby.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 October 2013

## Information about this school

- Alvaston is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- A large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The remaining pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- The school operates an Enhanced Resource provision for pupils with special educational needs. Currently, 12 pupils from Years 3 to 6 attend the unit. All these pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan for moderate learning difficulties.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school, since September 2013, has been part of a federation with the Village Primary School and is led by an executive headteacher, who is a national leader of education, and a single governing body.
- The school runs after-school and breakfast clubs alongside the adjoining infant school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 19 lessons, including the Enhanced Resource Unit. Several of these were observed together with the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors talked to pupils informally, listened to pupils read and attended registration time and assembly.
- Discussions were held with school staff, three groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, four other members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The 22 questionnaires completed by staff and the 32 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View were taken into account. Inspectors spoke informally with a few parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a wide range of evidence, including: the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses; the work in pupils' books; the school's own information on pupils' current progress; planning and monitoring documentation; and records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Vondra Mays, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Angela Kirk	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Lewis	Ofsted Inspector

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