

# Hallam Fields Junior School

Longfield Lane, Ilkeston, DE7 4DB

**Inspection dates** 27–28 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They have a highly developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are well mannered and enjoy learning. Pupils' attitudes towards their teachers, school responsibilities and their classmates are exemplary.
- Achievement has improved significantly this academic year, especially in writing and mathematics. By the time pupils leave Year 6, standards are above average in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is typically good. It is improving, and some is outstanding.
- The majority of teachers plan lessons that interest and engage pupils, and help them to improve their skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are meticulous and well organised in their planning. Together with a very able senior leadership team, committed staff and knowledgeable governors, they ensure that teaching and learning are continuously improving.
- The overwhelming majority of parents are happy with all aspects of their child's education. They are supportive and value all the opportunities they have to be involved in the life of the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always challenge pupils, especially the most able, to learn as much as they can.
- The expertise of outstanding teachers is not yet shared widely enough to raise the quality of teaching further so that achievement is outstanding.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to think about what they are learning, or to develop their independence by working on their own and finding things out for themselves.
- Not all pupils know how well they are doing, or what they need to do to improve their work.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons as well as small-group activities, parts of lessons, two assemblies and the teaching of phonics (the links between letters and the sounds they make).
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, and held discussions with two groups of pupils from across the school.
- Pupils' work was reviewed with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 26 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the school's own surveys of parents' views. Questionnaires completed by 14 members of staff were taken into account.
- Various school documents were examined. These included monitoring records of the quality of teaching, school data on pupils' progress, records of governing body meetings, development plans, external school evaluation reports, records of pupils' attendance and behaviour, and safeguarding documentation.

## Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Nicola Harwood

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than average junior school.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, have a parent in the armed services, or are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since its last inspection, the school's senior leadership team and governing body have been restructured. A new headteacher, deputy headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body have been appointed, as well as four new teachers.

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

- Make more teaching outstanding, and so raise achievement in English and mathematics, by:
  - sharing the best practice in lesson planning across the school so all lessons challenge and engage pupils of all abilities, but particularly the most able pupils
  - giving pupils as many opportunities as possible to think about what they are learning, work more independently and find things out for themselves
  - making sure that all pupils know how well they are doing, and what they need to do in order to improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join Year 3 with skills and abilities which are broadly in line with those expected for their age, though their attainment in writing and mathematics is not as good as in reading. Achievement has significantly improved this year. Pupils are now making good progress throughout each year group, and by the end of Year 6 their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. This is due to good-quality teaching, regular meetings to assess how well pupils are learning and well-directed support for any pupils who may be at risk of falling behind.
- Good training, observations of good practice in other schools and regular monitoring of pupils' performance have ensured that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. They reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are higher than those achieved by similar groups of pupils nationally.
- The school's monitoring and fine-tuning of one-to-one and small-group teaching activities developed for pupils entitled to support through pupil premium funding is good. They make good progress and their performance this academic year has been improved in reading, writing and mathematics. They are currently on average one term behind their classmates. The gap has reduced since 2012, when test results showed that eligible Year 6 pupils were around four and a half terms behind their classmates in English, and almost five terms behind in mathematics
- The overall achievement of both boys and girls is good. Teachers ensure equality of opportunity, and the significant gaps that previously existed between boys and girls, especially in writing, have been closed.
- The school has very few pupils from minority ethnic groups, or who speak English as an additional language. Pupils in these groups achieve to at least the same standards as their classmates. This is because school leaders are careful to ensure that the performance of all pupils is regularly monitored, and they are given additional support when necessary.
- Reading has been a school strength for a number of years. Pupils read widely and often, at home and in school. The vast majority of those who read for inspectors said that they were members of their local library. Pupils use their skills in phonics exceptionally well. Less confident readers benefit from regular small-group support, which they say has helped to improve their reading.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in the vast majority of lessons observed during the inspection was good, and some was outstanding. A review of pupils' books showed that teaching is typically good over time.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are very strong, planning within year groups is well developed, and teaching assistants provide very effective support to pupils. In the best lessons teachers make learning as exciting and engaging as possible.
- Where teaching is most effective, lessons move along at a swift pace, ensuring that all pupils are engaged. In an outstanding Year 3 mathematics lesson, a teacher showed tremendous skill and effective planning as she worked together with two teaching assistants to tackle misconceptions about fractions, and added extra challenges to ensure that every minute of the lesson was

utilised. In a large class of pupils with a wide range of abilities, all made at least good progress.

- In a well-taught Year 6 English lesson, having watched extracts from the film *Castaway*, pupils took great delight working together to consider how different objects might help them survive on a desert island. They were captivated when their teacher opened a box containing ice-skates, and asked them to discuss how these might be used on their island.
- Although the best teaching gives pupils the opportunity to demonstrate their skills, learn independently and find things out for themselves, these features are not consistently seen throughout the school.
- Pupils skilfully mark each other's work and are given many opportunities to comment on what their teachers have to say about their work, especially in mathematics. At its best, marking encourages a detailed and continuous dialogue between teachers and pupils, which clearly charts progress. Not all marking is of this high standard, however. That means that pupils do not always know what they need to do to improve their work.
- In a small number of lessons, teachers do not always set work that challenges and engages pupils of all abilities, particularly the more-able pupils.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school, at play and when learning, is exemplary. They are fully conversant with school rules and make it their business to stick to them. Pupils say that behaviour is almost always good and that incidents of bullying are very rare. The school's behaviour logs confirm that incidents of bad behaviour are extremely rare, and are always dealt with to the satisfaction of parents.
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning are exemplary. They work well together in pairs and in small groups, and listen carefully to each other and to their teachers.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, derive enormous pleasure from the school's 'big fields', think of each other as 'polite and well mannered', and say that their teachers help and care about them.
- Pupils enjoy having responsibilities. Having gained the school's second green flag for its ecological work, eco-warriors say that it is their ambition to 'save the world from pollution'.
- Pupils respect each other, and enjoy sharing in each other's achievements. This was evident in a celebration assembly where pupils whole-heartedly cheered a 'star of the week' from each class before listening in mesmerised silence to their 'special visitor' playing the didgeridoo.
- The overwhelming majority of parents who completed Parent View, and all staff who completed the inspection questionnaire, indicated that behaviour is usually good and often outstanding. A larger sample of parents who completed the school's own questionnaire indicated that they thought behaviour was outstanding and that their children were safe.
- Younger pupils say that they feel safe because the school grounds are well protected and there are always adults and playground 'buddies' around. They are very careful as they move around the school, which has several different levels.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of safe and unsafe situations. The school ensures that pupils learn about staying safe through their lessons and through regular visits from, for

example, members of the police service who talk to pupils about their work.

- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe while using the internet, and know that cyber-bullying can happen online and through hand-held devices such as mobile phones. They know they should never give personal details to strangers.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have initiated a number of changes which have led to marked improvements in teaching and learning. Pupils have made rapid progress in writing and mathematics this academic year. This is because all teachers are now set challenging targets, participate in training in order to improve their skills, and attend half-termly pupil progress meetings to identify how well pupils are doing.
- All staff and governors have a clear, shared understanding of the school's vision for success, and their respective roles in helping the school to achieve its aims.
- Teachers say they are well supported and appreciate the increasing opportunities to further develop their skills, and to learn from good and outstanding practice in other schools. However, they have too few opportunities to share the best practice within the school.
- The curriculum includes many memorable experiences for pupils. Those who spoke to inspectors said that one of the best things about their school was 'the learning'. They were especially excited about their forthcoming visit to Carsington Water and to linking their topic on minibeasts to what they saw when they got there. Year 4 were eager to share what they had learned about Vikings on Viking Day, and particularly enjoyed dressing up and finding out about how Vikings lived.
- The school ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is continuously developing. Its support for school children in Gambia has helped pupils to develop their understanding of world communities. Deeply moved by the school's work, individual pupils have shown exemplary care and empathy in deciding to raise money through their own initiatives beyond school. An annual multicultural week helps to develop pupils' understanding of cultural diversity in Britain.
- Senior leaders and governors carefully monitor the quality of teaching. All staff are set specific performance targets, all of which relate to the school's plans for driving up standards. All targets must be fully met before any pay awards are considered.
- The school makes sure that pupils develop good skills in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology across all year groups. It is able to do this because all staff use information about pupils effectively to make sure all have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Leaders and managers ensure that the school maintains good relationships with parents, who regularly come into school to have lunch with pupils and meet teachers. The school has recently established a twice-termly parents' forum.
- The school works with the local authority in a number of areas. Recent work has included support in monitoring the quality of teaching, and the performance of pupils in mathematics.

**■ The governance of the school:**

- The governors know exactly where the school's strengths lie, and what needs to be done in order for it to improve further. Governors know that pupils' performance has improved, especially in writing and mathematics, and that levels of attainment are now above average. They know this because they receive regular reports from key members of staff and challenge all staff to continuously improve their practice. Governors come into school regularly for parent lunches, achievement meetings, talks with staff and the school council members, and to listen to pupils read. All have subject responsibilities.
- Governors keep their training up to date. They know teaching is good and say that they are aiming for it to be outstanding. Governors recognise the commitment and hard work of teachers, who are only ever awarded pay increases after they have achieved very challenging targets. Governors are aware of the many ways in which the school uses its pupil premium funding and know, for example, that small-group support for reading, writing and mathematics is raising levels of achievement for eligible pupils.
- The governing body makes sure that safeguarding policies and practices meet current national requirements.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112572
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	412031

This inspection of the school 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>	237
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Judith Donovan
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Brown
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 May 2006
<b>Telephone number</b>	0115 932 2568
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