

# Kirk Ireton C of E Primary School

Main Street, Kirk Ireton, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 3LD

## Inspection dates

28–29 September 2017

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Outstanding</b> |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Outstanding</b> |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Outstanding</b> |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Outstanding</b> |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Good</b>        |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Outstanding</b> |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | 12 October 2006    |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The distinctive character and spirit of the school and its values are exceptionally strong. They inform and characterise everything that the staff do. It is for this reason that the school, justifiably, enjoys a very high level of confidence among the parents.
- The headteacher, governing body, and the staff demonstrate drive and determination to improve constantly. Together, they have sustained significant strengths identified at the previous inspection over a long period of time.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is highly effective.
- The teaching is planned with close attention to pupils' learning needs. The teachers exploit the opportunities afforded by the school's small size to work flexibly in each key stage to meet the actual learning needs.
- The pupils' behaviour is consistently very good. They are respectful, polite and well mannered. They develop very positive attitudes to life and to learning and reflect very well the school's constantly reinforced values.
- The pupils thrive at the school, something that begins as soon as they join it, be that in the early years, or at a later point.
- The quality of the provision in the early years reflects that of the school generally. The staff ensure that the distinctive and particular learning needs of this age group are met diligently.
- Typically, the pupils have made strong progress. Since 2016, their progress has been more good than outstanding because the school had not adapted its teaching sufficiently for the pupils to meet some of the demands of the new national curriculum for literacy and mathematics. Swift action by the leaders has resulted in significant improvement, but the task is not completed.

## **Full report**

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

- Ensure that the teaching allows the pupils to meet all of the demands of the new national curriculum for writing and mathematics, so that they are able fully to demonstrate their abilities in the end-of-key-stage tests.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The headteacher has established very firmly an uncompromising vision for the school, rooted in steadfastly expressed values that permeate the school and a deep sense of the school's place in the local community. He has ensured that the needs of the pupils are known fully and that the expectations of the parents are met very substantially.
- With the full support of the school's staff and the governing body, the headteacher makes a reality of his stated intention that the school should never be less than good every day. The cumulative effect of the school's work is better than good because of the high level of consistency that has been achieved and which is maintained throughout.
- The senior leaders evaluate the impact of the school's work rigorously. They take action quickly to rectify any things that they discover have not been as effective as required. They are highly reflective and very outward looking, including in providing the staff with training and development opportunities, so that the school is in no way insular and never complacent.
- For example, the senior leaders' analysis of the factors that led to a very untypical set of key stage 2 results in 2016 indicated that they needed to change some aspects of the teaching, in order to ensure that the pupils are able fully to meet the demands of the new national curriculum. They took action that has led to sizeable improvements in the pupils' progress since then, although the work is not completed. Though good and improving securely, the pupils' progress is not currently at the school's historically high levels.
- The very broad and well-balanced curriculum is designed with considerable care and maintained with iron determination. The pupils are given many and varied opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy, but not at the expense of other aspects of learning.
- The pupils benefit from educational visits to places of local historical interest connected with topics that they are studying, such as The Great Plague. All of them learn to play a musical instrument. They take part in a variety of after-school clubs, from sports clubs, to creative and craft activities, such as 'shell club' and 'quilling'.
- The physical education and sport premium is used well. It assists the school in providing a broad range of opportunities for the pupils to participate in, for example, sporting tournaments and 'multi-skills' sessions, the latter supported by people from a local professional football club. The pupils express considerable liking for such things.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- The school's ways of working reflect fully its values and are embedded deeply into its day-to-day routines. That leads to a very high level of consistent practice in teaching and very strong relationships with and between the pupils. It results in self-confident and self-aware pupils, who know well what is expected of them and respond accordingly.

## **Governance of the school**

- The governing body maintains thorough and careful oversight of all aspects of the school's work. It asks pertinent questions about the progress of the different groups of pupils at the school and is prepared to challenge the senior leaders. It is influential in steering the strategic development of the school, ensuring, for example, that the exceptionally strong ethos and values have been sustained, but also pointing out very occasionally when the leaders' development priorities have not reflected its own analyses of information about the pupils' progress, leading to changes in the priorities. It ensures that pay progression for all of the staff reflects evidence of successful performance. It has ensured that the pupil premium funding and funding for special educational needs, when the school has received any, have been used to good effect.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The welfare and wellbeing of the pupils are at the very heart of the school's ethos. The staff are vigilant and make full use of the school's straightforward procedures for reporting any concerns.
- As in other matters, the needs and circumstances of each pupil are known in detail. The leaders are alert to possible areas of concern, as identified in the latest government guidance, ensuring that the staff are informed about and trained in such matters, even when they do not appear to be major issues within the local context of the school. Here also, the school demonstrates that it is not complacent.
- The school works closely with external agencies when the pupils need any additional support and does not let matters go, if obtaining support proves to be difficult.

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

## **Outstanding**

- The teachers and teaching assistants, operating as a closely-knit team, exploit very skilfully the opportunities that come from having the pupils in multi-age classes. They ensure that the particular needs of each year group are provided for fully. At the same time, they build in occasions when the pupils are able to work at a level beyond their age, when it is clear that they are capable of doing so. Alternatively, the pupils are able to carry on with particular learning, when they need to catch up, or have not grasped something, even though they may have moved into a different year group.
- The staff are able to do this because the teaching is planned scrupulously and thoroughly.
- The teaching assistants augment the work of the teachers very effectively, in particular when supporting the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, they spot quickly when a pupil is not taking part fully in a group activity, ease those pupils gently into the larger group and, once there, the teachers are quick to follow up and draw the pupils in fully to the learning that is taking place.

- The staff use well-chosen resources and carefully planned activities to stimulate and to sustain the pupils' interest. As a result, the classrooms are busy and very productive places.
- The staff's flexible approach to teaching results in the pupils acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding securely. Also, it promotes the pupils' personal development very well.
- The teachers check carefully, frequently and systematically on how well the pupils are doing. They use the information expertly to identify each pupil's particular learning needs and then devise approaches to teaching, for example to fill any gaps in learning. They do not move the pupils on until they have evidence that the current learning is secure. This work is a cornerstone of the school's approach.
- The pupils learn rapidly to identify mistakes for themselves and to correct them. This is not accidental and results in a level of understanding by the pupils that contributes significantly to the security of their learning and progress. They have not been provided with all of the vocabulary and awareness required to enable them to demonstrate their learning fully in the recently revised national tests and assessments.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote the pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The attractive and stimulating school grounds have been developed specifically to contribute to the development of the pupils' attitudes and wellbeing. The pupils make full use of the opportunities that the grounds afford for learning and for physical and emotional development.
- The school is characterised by strong relationships, between the staff, with the pupils and between the pupils. This has resulted in high levels of trust among the pupils and contributes importantly to the pupils' very positive attitudes to learning.
- The pupils enjoy conversing on a wide range of subjects. They develop mature attitudes and carefully balanced views. For example, the inspector enjoyed a very meaningful discussion with a group of pupils that began by considering which artists the pupils liked. It moved on to a discussion of the work of 'Banksy', then to their reflections on the difference between such art and graffiti, the pupils themselves identifying the latter as vandalism. It was followed by a discussion about the importance of looking after the environment and how things such as vandalism made them feel.
- The pupils' attendance is above average. Variations for the different groups are affected markedly by very small group sizes.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are very well mannered and personify the school's values of respect and tolerance for others. The older pupils look out for and

look after the younger ones in the playground, spotting if someone is unhappy, or has no one with whom to play, and taking action to help.

- The pupils look smart in their uniforms and arrive at the school 'fired up' for learning. Many show excitement in lessons and even those who are less effusive 'knuckle down' very well.
- The inspection found almost no evidence of anything beyond the most minor of misbehaviour, which the pupils say is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Anyone, the pupils say, who is told off by the headteacher, the ultimate sanction, does not repeat what they have done.
- Lessons flow, free from disruption, with changes between activities managed efficiently by the staff and assisted by the rapid response of the pupils to instructions. The pupils know and understand fully the value of the school's rules.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- The pupils' progress has been strong over several years and in all key stages since the last inspection.
- In key stage 2 more recently, it has been good, rather than outstanding, affected in 2016 by a range of factors, including small group sizes and the extent to which the school grasped the demands of the revised national curriculum implemented that year.
- The pupils' progress in key stage 2 is now improving rapidly once again, though not quite back at the historical levels.
- At key stage 1, the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard and achieving greater depth are at or above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. They make good progress from their different starting points.
- In all year groups, the pupils at the school currently are making securely good progress, as the teachers have got to grips with the curriculum changes.
- The pupils make solid and secure gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. For example, in literacy, they use punctuation accurately. They use increasingly sophisticated language in a variety of contexts, such as science lessons.
- Recent developments in the school's approach to teaching mathematics mean that the pupils must now demonstrate fully that they have grasped the learning, before they are moved on to the next thing. As a result, the gains in their knowledge and understanding are secure.
- The pupils draw readily on their knowledge of phonics to help them when reading. They learn to deal with difficult, or unfamiliar words and can identify real words and nonsense words at an early age. They read widely and often, fluently and with confidence. They demonstrate as much understanding of how they need to improve their skills and ability to identify and to correct their own errors as they do with other aspects of their work.
- The differences between the progress of different groups, including disadvantaged pupils, the most able, and the pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not wide, although the groups are very small in size, which affects the

statistical results considerably. The additional support paid for using the pupil premium is an important factor in securing the good progress of the eligible pupils.

- Typically, the pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The school follows up to find out how well the pupils have done, even in terms ultimately of university or employment, and can show how the experience at Kirk Ireton laid solid foundations for later success.

## Early years provision

## Outstanding

- The early years leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the provision very well. Strengths identified at the previous inspection have been sustained over a long period. The leaders have taken concerted action to bring about improvements, for example, in the use of outdoor learning.
- The children's learning needs are identified rapidly through a combination of very effective work with other early years providers and with parents and through accurate and detailed assessments of the children shortly after they join Kirk Ireton. This results in no time being wasted. The staff maintain a high level of contact with parents thereafter.
- The learning activities are well conceived and designed carefully to meet the clearly identified needs of the children. They grab the children's interest. The staff remain very alert to what the children are doing. They act swiftly to divert any child who appears to be losing focus, or subtly to extract meaningful learning from play activities.
- The staff identify any shortfalls in the pupils' learning through frequent and accurate assessments, and take appropriate action. The action leads to rapid progress in the areas concerned, though the children do not always reach the full level of development expected for their age in some areas, when their starting points have been low.
- The staff use the opportunities for the children to work with the pupils in key stage 1 very skilfully. That contributes to the children's excellent personal social and emotional development. It makes the transition into Year 1 effectively seamless.
- The children develop a strong awareness of the world and the people around them quickly. They learn very well to identify risks and to manage those risks sensibly, for example, in the playground.
- Typically, the children's progress is at least good and sometimes better.
- The children acquire a good grounding in phonics quickly, including the children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, they are able, three weeks into a new academic year, to distinguish between real and nonsense words accurately and still to read correctly those that are nonsense, again including the children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The children's behaviour is every bit as good as it is in the main school, something that is supported by the frequent contact with their older peers, but only because of the skill with which that contact is managed by the staff.

- Safeguarding is effective. The school's policies and procedures are implemented in full. The children feel safe at the school and their very good behaviour shows that they are happy and thriving.



## School details

|                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Unique reference number | 112832     |
| Local authority         | Derbyshire |
| Inspection number       | 10031192   |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Type of school                      | Primary  |
| School category                     | Community  |
| Age range of pupils                 | 4 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 52   |
| Appropriate authority               | The governing body   |
| Chair                               | Kirsty Woodfield   |
| Headteacher                         | Peter Johnston   |
| Telephone number                    | 01335 370 351  |
| Website                             | <a href="http://www.kirkiretonprimary.co.uk">www.kirkiretonprimary.co.uk</a>                       |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:headteacher@thevillagefederation.co.uk">headteacher@thevillagefederation.co.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection         | 12 September 2006  |

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- There are not enough pupils at the school to allow for the publication of information about the government's floor standards.
- The headteacher was also the headteacher at the time of the previous inspection, but all of the teaching staff are new to the school since then.
- The school is now part of a federation with another nearby primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is broadly average, but varies between year groups.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, but varies markedly between year groups and, in some year groups, there are none.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed lessons in all key stages of the school and in all classes. He carried out other visits to classrooms to look at particular aspects of the school's work and scrutinised examples of the pupils' work. He listened to pupils reading.
- The inspector held meetings with leaders, managers and other staff at the school, and with members of the governing body. He spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- He spoke with pupils in groups, in lessons and around the school.
- The inspector checked the responses on Parent View, but there were not enough from the last 365 days to provide an analysis. He looked at the outcomes of surveys of parents carried out by the school recently. He spoke briefly with some parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including the school's development plan and self-evaluation, policies and records relating to safeguarding, records relating to the pupils' attendance, the school's information about the pupils' progress, and other information about the work of the school.

## Inspection team

Clive Moss, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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