

Orchard School

South Leverton, Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22 0DJ

Inspection dates

7–9 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- School leaders have created a culture that encourages pupils to become confident learners who make good progress.
- Good teaching ensures pupils in the primary and secondary phases make consistently strong progress in a range of subjects.
- Children in the early years provision make good progress because of the strong support and effective teaching that they receive.
- Leaders have a precise understanding of the quality of the school's provision. They know the areas that they can develop further.
- Senior leaders have created a curriculum that is broad and that focuses on meeting pupils' individual needs and interests. Pupils engage well with their learning as a result.
- The proprietors are ambitious for their pupils. They ensure that resources are available to help pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development due to the close support that teachers provide for them to prepare for their next steps, and for life in modern Britain.
- The strong culture of mutual respect that exists at the school ensures that pupils behave well.
- Levels of attendance at the school are high. Pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Leaders' close checks on pupils' achievement ensure that pupils quickly receive support when they are not making good progress.
- Leaders' management of teachers' performance ensures that all teachers, in planning learning, focus on the progress that pupils make.
- All staff are highly vigilant of pupils' welfare.
- Training opportunities for staff do not focus sharply enough on ensuring that all classroom practice is of the highest level. As a result, in some year groups, pupils' progress in some subjects is not as strong as in other subjects.
- There are limited formal arrangements for the school to work with other organisations.
- There is a limited range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils, whereas pupils can take advantage of a wide range of enrichment activities to enhance their learning.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils in all year groups achieve high levels of progress across the whole curriculum by:
 - making sure that teachers receive training that focuses sharply on their individual needs, to enable them to develop their good classroom practice to the highest levels
 - working closely with other organisations, including schools, to learn from the practice of other professionals.
- Develop further the range of extra-curricular activities and ensure that pupils across all year groups can take full advantage of these.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The proprietors have ensured that the school meets all of the independent school standards.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have created a culture of high expectations in which pupils are able to make good progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Senior leaders have ensured that there is a strong focus on preparing pupils thoroughly for when they leave the school. This allows pupils to make outstanding progress in their personal development.
- Senior leaders' expectations regarding pupils' behaviour are high. By promoting strong relationships between pupils within and across all year groups, leaders have ensured that pupils show respect for each other and demonstrate excellent behaviour.
- Leaders have a precise understanding of the quality of the school's provision. They know where further development should take place to allow all pupils to achieve as highly as they can across the whole curriculum.
- Through their regular checks on pupils' achievement, senior leaders quickly identify pupils who are not making good progress. Leaders ensure that these pupils receive appropriate support to catch up quickly.
- Leaders manage teachers' performance well. All teachers have targets that relate to pupils' achievement. These targets reinforce for teachers the need to provide pupils with work that allows them to make at least good progress.
- Leaders have designed the curriculum to be broad and balanced. Through this, they ensure that pupils of all abilities are able to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding fully across a range of subjects.
- The most able pupils in both phases receive opportunities to complete more challenging work. Where it is appropriate, the most able have the opportunity to join classes for the next year group up from their own. At key stage 4, the most able are able to study more academically challenging subjects, including biology, chemistry and physics.
- Senior leaders also provide pupils who have an interest or strength in a subject that lies outside the school's curriculum with the opportunity to study that subject. On such occasions, senior leaders ensure that the pupil receives teaching in the relevant subject to allow them to develop their understanding and skills further.
- A wide range of enrichment activities allows pupils to deepen their learning well. Pupils undertake educational visits off site, including to a range of places of historical and social interest. Pupils are also able to take part in educational trips abroad, which enable them to learn about other cultures.
- Comprehensive opportunities enable pupils to become secure in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about different religious beliefs and cultures. Teachers also frequently challenge pupils to consider conflicting opinions. Through this, pupils learn to consider the views of others and to challenge prejudice and intolerance.
- Through their regular visits to lessons, senior leaders have a precise understanding of the

quality of teaching. They are quick to take action when they identify classroom practice that does not meet their high expectations. However, leaders have yet to ensure that all teaching is of the highest level.

- Teachers receive regular opportunities to undertake training, including through sharing good practice with each other. However, leaders' oversight of the training that teachers receive does not ensure that the training focuses sharply enough on developing the specific needs of individual teachers. This can limit teachers' opportunities to develop further their strong classroom practice.
- Formal arrangements for the school to work with other organisations, including other schools, are limited. As a result, teachers and leaders do not receive as many opportunities as they could to learn from the practice of other professionals.
- Opportunities for pupils to engage in extra-curricular activities are limited. Consequently, pupils do not receive as many opportunities to develop their skills beyond the classroom as they should.

Governance

- The proprietors are ambitious for the pupils. They are committed to ensuring that the quality of the school's provision allows pupils to achieve well, both academically and in their personal development.
- To this end, the proprietors have ensured that there is a wide range of resources available to enable pupils to make good progress.
- The proprietors encourage staff and pupils to involve themselves in the running of the school. They are quick to respond to any requests that staff or pupils make in relation to the school's provision. For example, they have adapted the school's uniform at the request of the female pupils. They also encourage pupils to help organise school events and to raise money for charities of their choice.
- Through the work of the headteacher, the proprietors have an accurate understanding of the quality of the school's provision. They recognise the aspects of the provision that can improve further to ensure that all pupils make good progress across all areas of the curriculum. For example, the proprietors are keen to develop links with other schools in order to enable teachers to learn from other professionals' classroom practice.
- The proprietors understand what they must do when they have a safeguarding concern.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding policy is available on the school website. It reflects the government's latest guidance.
- The leaders responsible for safeguarding work diligently to ensure that pupils who have concerns receive the support that they need. In this, leaders work closely with parents and with local agencies, when this is appropriate.
- All staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are extremely vigilant about their pupils' welfare. Staff know the signs to look for and what they must do if they have a concern about a pupil's well-being. They recognise the importance of sharing any

concerns that they may have to ensure that leaders are able to identify any patterns of concern and take prompt action where necessary.

- Staff receive regular safeguarding training, including training that the local authority runs. Staff also receive regular safeguarding updates to enable leaders to share concerns about individual pupils. These updates reinforce for all staff the importance of sharing any concerns that they may have.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at the school. They say that there are staff that they can approach if they have a concern. They are confident that staff will listen to them and take effective action to help resolve their concern, including checking on how they are feeling at a later date.
- All parents who expressed a view said that their child is happy and safe at the school, and that staff care for their child well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Across the primary and secondary phases, the quality of teaching is consistently strong, allowing pupils to make good progress in their learning.
- Staff have very strong subject knowledge. They use this well to design tasks that engage pupils in their learning, and allow them to make good progress.
- Relationships between teachers and their pupils are strong. These relationships promote positive attitudes to learning.
- Teachers plan tasks that take into account the prior learning of pupils. Teachers are particularly sensitive to occasions when pupils have previously not demonstrated secure understanding in their learning. On such occasions, teachers design further activities to reinforce the learning.
- Teachers carefully ask questions to check on pupils' learning. Where pupils are not secure in their understanding, teachers provide appropriate support.
- Teachers regularly set homework that provides pupils with effective opportunities to become secure in their understanding of the topic that they are studying.
- Teachers in the primary phase promote reading well. As a result, pupils engage enthusiastically with reading. The primary phase pupils who read to an inspector did so fluently, using a range of strategies to read more complex words. They demonstrated clear understanding of the text that they had read.
- Senior leaders have identified how pupils' engagement with reading declines when they enter the secondary phase. Because of this, leaders have put into place a strategy to encourage pupils in Years 7 and 8 to read regularly. This strategy has seen larger numbers of pupils in these year groups reading a range of books.
- On occasions, teachers in both phases do not set sufficiently challenging tasks that allow pupils to make consistently strong progress. When this is the case, some pupils' progress is not as strong as the progress that they achieve in other subjects, where they regularly receive challenging work.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Senior leaders expect all members of the school community to work with each other respectfully and cooperatively. This expectation has led to strong relationships between pupils from across all year groups, and between pupils and their teachers.
- These strong relationships ensure that pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and become confident learners. Pupils recognise the value of their education and are keen to achieve well, both academically and in their personal development. As one parent said, 'The school encourages pupils to be the best version of themselves that they can be.'
- Older pupils have opportunities to work with younger pupils, both in helping them in their learning, and in caring for them. Pupils are appreciative of the support that they receive from their peers, from older pupils, and from their teachers.
- Through the strong relationships that exist, pupils learn to accept the views of others and to show respect to all people, including those who are different from them. This includes respecting those who fall within the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010.
- Pupils receive a variety of opportunities to learn how to be safe. All pupils learn the importance of being safe online. Older pupils learn about what they should do if they are the recipient of inappropriate messages through social media. All pupils learn how to keep themselves safe when out in the local community.
- Pupils in both phases learn the importance of living healthy lives. They learn about the choices that they should make to live healthily. They also learn of the consequences of making choices that may put their health at risk.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying, including physical, racial and homophobic bullying. They say that bullying very rarely happens at the school. The school records confirm this to be the case.
- Pupils attribute the fact that bullying is rare to the strong relationships between pupils. Pupils are clear that, should bullying occur, teachers would deal with it swiftly and effectively. Almost all parents who expressed a view agreed that the school deals with bullying effectively when it happens.
- Pupils receive wide-ranging opportunities to learn about the school's local area. Pupils raise money to contribute to a local foodbank and hold an annual concert at the local church to help raise funds to maintain the building. Pupils also learn about the experiences of people who live in other countries, including through sponsoring a boy who lives in Ethiopia.
- Pupils in Year 8 and above receive comprehensive careers advice and guidance. Pupils in Year 10 undertake work experience, which enables them to learn about the workplace. The school arranges for Year 11 pupils to visit a local school that offers 16 to 19 study programmes. Such opportunities ensure that pupils prepare well for their next steps when they complete Year 11.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- There is a calm, purposeful and productive atmosphere around the school. Pupils move swiftly from one lesson to another. As a result, little learning time is lost.
- Pupils are polite to each other, to their teachers, and to visitors. Senior leaders expect all members of the school community to demonstrate good manners.
- Pupils from the primary and secondary phases mix well during breaktime and lunchtime. This opportunity for younger pupils to mix with older pupils reinforces all pupils' understanding of the need to behave well, and to show each other respect.
- On the rare occasion that a pupil finds it difficult to manage their own behaviour, leaders are quick to provide effective support. This ensures that the pupil is able to recognise quickly what is acceptable conduct, and can adapt their own behaviour appropriately.
- Occasions when pupils receive an exclusion from school are very rare.
- Levels of pupil attendance in both the primary and the secondary phases are high. Very few pupils are absent from school. This is because they are happy to attend the school, and value the opportunities that they receive to learn.
- When pupils are absent from school for long periods, leaders are quick to ensure that they receive support. This includes providing pupils with work so that they don't fall behind. On most occasions when pupils are absent for long periods, the support that they receive ensures that their attendance improves rapidly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Across all year groups, pupils, including the most able, become secure in their knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects. This is due to the strong focus that teachers place on planning activities that take into account pupils' prior attainment and that engage pupils well in their learning.
- Pupils who completed their GCSE studies in 2017 made good progress across a range of subjects, including mathematics and English literature.
- Current key stage 4 pupils are making good progress across a range of subjects, including in English, mathematics, art, design technology, drama and statistics. This is due to the challenging work that their teachers set them and the careful support that they receive in preparation for their public examinations.
- Pupils across all year groups in key stage 3 make strong progress in a range of subjects, including English, mathematics and history. This is due to the strong relationships that exist between teachers and pupils, and teachers' careful planning of tasks that meet pupils' individual needs.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics and English in key stages 1 and 2 is strong. Pupils who did not make enough progress in Year 5 last year are now making rapid progress.
- There is no discernible difference between the progress that boys make compared with that of girls. Boys and girls make good progress in a range of subjects across all year groups.

- All pupils who left the school at the end of Year 11 in 2017 moved on to sustained places of further education. This is due to their achievement at GCSE, and the strong advice and guidance that they had received when preparing for their next steps.
- The progress that pupils who are currently in Year 9 and Year 10 make in science is not as strong as the progress that pupils in the other year groups make in this subject. The same is the case for pupils currently in Year 9 and Year 11 who study French. In part, this is because these pupils do not always receive work that is sufficiently challenging.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader has a precise understanding of the quality of the early years provision. She works closely with other adults in the provision to ensure that the quality of teaching and care that the children receive allows them to make good progress.
- Adults carefully plan activities that interest children and encourage them to engage enthusiastically in their learning. As a result, children make good progress.
- The leader of early years closely checks on children's progress. She ensures that children who are not making good progress receive appropriate support.
- Achievement in early years is good. From broadly average starting points, all children attain a good level of development by the end of Reception Year. As a result, children are well prepared when they enter Year 1.
- Relationships between the children are strong and children behave well, showing each other respect. In a lesson, children applauded when each had successfully completed a written task in front of their peers.
- Adults who work in early years understand their responsibility to keep children safe. They monitor children's welfare closely, so that children are safe and feel safe.
- Adults in the early years provision ensure that they engage parents in their child's learning. As a result, parents are fully aware of the progress that their child is making.
- The early years leader ensures that there is close communication between the provision and the school that the children will attend in Year 1. This ensures that the children make a successful start to their school life.
- The early years provision works well with external agencies to ensure that children receive the support that they need. As a result, children make good progress, both in their learning and in their personal development.

School details

Unique reference number	122933
DfE registration number	891/6015
Inspection number	10033529

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	126
Number of part-time pupils	17
Proprietor	Mr and Mrs Fox and Mr P Atkinson
Headteacher	S Fox
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,485 to £7,575
Telephone number	01427 880395
Website	www.theorchardschool.co.uk
Email address	office@theorchardschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–10 July 2014

Information about this school

- The Orchard School is an independent all-through school. It is much smaller than an average all-through school.
- Orchard School Nursery comes under the school's registration, but operates from another site, at 21 Holly Road, Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22 6BE. This nursery was inspected on 7 September 2017 and was judged to be good.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is smaller than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. There are no pupils at the school with a statement of special educational needs or with an education, health and care plan.

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils in the secondary phase.
- The school's last standard inspection took place on 8 to 10 July 2014.

Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector undertook a tour of the school site and the nursery site to check the facilities against Part 5 of the independent school standards.
- Inspectors observed learning in 16 lessons, including two lessons in the early years provision. During these occasions, inspectors spoke with pupils and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' books as a separate activity.
- Inspectors held meetings with: the headteacher; senior leaders; the special educational needs coordinator; the early years leader; the teacher responsible for the school's reading scheme; leaders responsible for the personal, social, health and economic education programme; the designated member of staff for children looked after by the local authority; two of the three proprietors; and a selection of staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at the beginning of the school day, between lessons, and at breaktime and lunchtime. On these occasions, inspectors spoke with pupils informally.
- Inspectors met formally with pupils from key stages 2, 3 and 4.
- The lead inspector spoke by telephone with the local authority designated officer.
- The inspector took into account the 27 responses to the staff survey and the 22 responses to the online parent survey, Parent View, including the nine responses to the accompanying free-text service. An inspector also met with eight parents at the beginning of the second day of the inspection.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to the school's provision, including those concerning: the school's self-evaluation and improvement; pupils' attainment and progress and behaviour and attendance; safeguarding; accessibility plans; and complaints against the school.
- The lead inspector checked the school's single central register and the school's systems for recruiting staff.

Inspection team

Simon Hollingsworth, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Janis Warren

Ofsted Inspector

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