

Lawn Primary School

Norbury Close, Allestree, Derby DE22 2QR

Inspection dates

13–14 April 2016

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Steered by an inspirational headteacher, school leaders instil a culture of high aspirations so that pupils learn and achieve exceptionally well.
- All leaders are highly supportive of the headteacher's vision of continuous improvement and are excellent role models themselves. Staff support for the headteacher has contributed to sustained improvements.
- Pupils make excellent progress from their starting points. In 2015, Year 2 pupils made particularly strong progress in reading. Year 6 pupils' progress in mathematics and reading was significantly above average.
- Outstanding progress has led to high proportions of Year 6 pupils achieving Level 5 and above in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015.
- The proportion of children in the early years who reached a good level of development has risen each year and has consistently exceeded the national average. Current Reception Year children are working at a level which is higher than children in previous years. As a result of good teaching, Year 1 pupils taking the national phonics check have outperformed their peers nationally every year.
- Teaching is outstanding and this brings out the best efforts in every pupil. Teachers communicate high expectations and pupils rise to meet them, determined to help themselves succeed.
- Care and support for pupils with special educational needs and disability is excellent. The school's coordinator is meticulous in finding the best match for every pupil and this underpins their excellent progress.
- Attitudes to learning are exemplary and attendance is consistently high. Pupils' excitement and enthusiasm for learning lie at the heart of their continued successes.
- Pupils are enormously proud of their school and embrace responsibilities to contribute to school life. They frequently help others and are the embodiment of the school's caring ethos.
- The curriculum is a great strength of the school. Pupils enjoy learning about different subjects and develop a love for the arts, sport and music.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding because it is carefully planned in the curriculum and the wider life of the school and is closely monitored.
- The excellent governing board plays an important and successful role in supporting and challenging the school. They bring about improvements focused on key school priorities.
- Pupils at the early stages of learning English receive support from class teachers and make good progress. As the number grows, the school is keen to provide more specific language support so that they too make outstanding progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide specialist help and language support systematically for those pupils joining the school who are in the early stages of learning English.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- School leaders have been highly successful in improving the school, so that all aspects of its work have become outstanding. Led by the inspirational headteacher, leaders at all levels form a close-knit team with a clear vision and commitment to continuous improvement. Their high expectations are reflected throughout the school.
- The leadership team has been restructured, with new roles created to retain talented teachers who can bring about the key improvements identified in the school's 'raising achievement' plan. Staff morale is exceptionally high and all responses to the questionnaires provided were resoundingly positive about school leadership. Equally, parents' support and praise for the school is exceptionally positive, with many commenting directly on the impact of the headteacher.
- The leadership culture is sharply focused on the systematic and continuous review of all aspects of teaching, learning and achievement for all groups of pupils, in all subjects and key stages. School leaders demonstrate detailed knowledge of the performance of every pupil, based on teachers' accurate assessments of pupils' progress.
- Achievement is high because leaders at all levels consistently monitor the school's work and relate the monitoring to the main points identified in the school's raising achievement plan. Leaders make adjustments to the plan to ensure that the pace of improvements is not slowed.
- School leaders ensure that staff are rigorous in following the school's policies. For example, all teachers provide good-quality information and guidance when marking pupils' work; written and verbal comments offer a helpful balance between praising the pupils and showing them how they can improve their work.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their awareness of different cultures.
- Pupils frequently reflect on sensitive issues. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils diplomatically offered their opinions on justice and on the Syrian refugee crisis. In these ways, the school promotes a shared understanding of British values.
- Leaders are passionate about the arts and music and many pupils become highly skilled musicians. Leaders carefully track all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to ensure that curriculum topics and assembly plans contribute explicitly to pupils' development.
- Equal opportunities are rigorously promoted and no pupil is denied access to anything the school has to offer. The very harmonious school community ensures that all pupils feel valued and respected and they, in turn, show their high regard for each other.
- The curriculum provides excellent opportunities for pupils to learn, to develop and to use their skills across different subjects. Pupils enjoy learning through topics and also relish studying individual subjects, such as science and Spanish. Many trips and visits, such as to the Houses of Parliament, and involvement in creative activities like performing with the Halle Orchestra, serve to raise pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has been used very effectively to raise pupils' achievements. Pupils in Year 6 in 2015 achieved their best results and made excellent progress to achieve a high level of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics; above the level of their peers.
- The PE and sport premium has been used very well to create many more opportunities for pupils to participate in sports and competitions; it has also had a positive impact on raising pupils' awareness of how to stay healthy, and more pupils than in the previous year participate in sports. The school makes good use of specialist sports coaches and has developed pupils as mini-leaders to promote playground activities.
- The local authority has supported the school very well and continues to do so.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Joint chairs of the board ensure that there is now a sharp and strategic overview of every aspect of the school's work. Each governor is involved in each committee and this provides greater transparency and deeper understanding of current school issues.
 - Governors provide excellent support and challenge through their links with subject leaders. They make frequent visits which focus sharply on very specific aspects of the school's improvement plan to maintain the rapid pace of improvements.

- Governors bring a highly pertinent range of professional skills and expertise to their work and use this particularly well to support and challenge the school in equal measure. They look closely at how performance management is used to develop staff. They have supported leaders in making decisions which have helped to raise the quality of teaching to the outstanding level now seen across the school.
- The impact of additional funds to boost the uptake of sport across the school is closely monitored and governors check that the school's sports vision is actively translated into greater involvement in sports activities and the development of play workers to involve the pupils actively.
- Governors monitor the use of pupil premium funds to ensure that they are used effectively. Board members receive regular feedback on the impact of how the funding successfully closes learning gaps.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders have excellent partnerships with parents, carers and external agencies. This has helped to ensure that pupils are supported and kept safe. Safeguarding training for staff and governors is up to date and governors make thorough checks on all safeguarding practices. Governors know precisely what to do in the event of a safeguarding concern and staff have all of the information and guidance they need to provide excellent support for pupils in their care.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is outstanding**

- School leaders have placed a strong focus on raising the quality of teaching and learning, and this is one of the main reasons why teaching has improved and is now outstanding.
- Teachers continually express their high expectations and pupils aspire to do their best to achieve them. Lessons are very well planned. This enables teachers to share their ideas and expertise, so that pupils in all classes have a good variety of challenging activities and opportunities from which to choose.
- Pupils understand the way in which the school's revised curriculum provides them with stages of learning which give them choices in selecting which task to work on. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson pupils showed their delight at having completed a task on fractions at the 'secure' level; they left for assembly talking about what they would have to do to reach the 'mastery' stage.
- The most-able pupils direct themselves to the appropriately challenging 'mastery' tasks. The teachers encourage the pupils to think carefully when reviewing their completed work and reflecting on their next learning steps.
- At every stage, teachers encourage pupils to find things out for themselves and to make their own choices, based on an excellent understanding of individual targets and what the pupils need to learn next. Teachers make regular learning checks during lessons and pupils frequently check and mark their own work. This high level of involvement contributes to the pupils' enthusiasm for learning and plays an integral part in pupils' high achievements.
- Teaching assistants are very well directed and make a huge contribution to pupils' excellent learning and progress. They know pupils well and are sensitive to their needs, providing the right balance of support at the right time. As a result, they help to ensure that all pupils with special educational needs and disability make excellent progress.
- Pupils appreciate and value homework, which is regularly set. This ranges from weekly 'talk topic' work to lengthier project pieces. The mathematics revision workshop and spelling, punctuation and grammar club are well attended by Year 6 pupils and provide good support in preparation for national tests.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is outstanding**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school is highly committed to developing each child academically, socially and emotionally. School values permeate everything the school does and pupils acquire great sensitivity and empathy for others because of this.
- Pupils feel very safe. For example, they have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet because of the many opportunities in assemblies, workshops and computing work to learn about potential risks.
- The school provides excellent care and support for the pupils who are potentially more vulnerable and the 'Hub' is known as the place to go at lunchtime for those seeking a more nurturing, safe environment.

- The special educational needs coordinator meticulously checks that every pupil receives a bespoke balance of care and support in class and carefully monitors the impact this has on pupils' well-being. As a result, pupils settle well in school and achieve excellent outcomes in their learning.
- Pupils are very well informed about British values, which are not only implicit in the work of the school, but made explicit also. Each month a featured 'value' is explored in depth. For example, a focus on 'Freedom' provoked insightful discussions about free choice, living with dignity and what this means for people in countries where segregation and discrimination are experienced.
- Pupils openly express their pride in being a part of Lawn Primary School and present themselves very smartly in the new school uniform. Pupils wear school council and team captain badges with a true sense of achievement. Pupils with specific roles and duties, such as those on the eco-committee, door monitors and 'buddies', go out of their way to be helpful and guide others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. They manage their own behaviour very well and play a very active part in maintaining the positive, friendly atmosphere in the school. Many older pupils keep a watchful eye over younger ones at playtimes and thoughtfully organise lunchtime games and activities.
- Parents, carers and staff confirm that behaviour in lessons and around school is excellent.
- Attendance levels are high and continue to rise, reflecting the value given by pupils and parents to the importance of coming to school to learn. Many parents comment on how very caring all staff are and how much this helps to settle new pupils joining the school.
- Bullying is rare and taken very seriously when it occurs. Pupils understand the different types of bullying, including how to stay safe online. School councillors have produced their own anti-bullying policy in 'child friendly language'. This shows their concern for the safety of others and is typical of the values which are embedded at Lawn.

Outcomes for pupils

are outstanding

- From their different starting points, pupils make excellent progress through the school. The school's reliable assessment information and pupils' current work indicate that they are ahead of their peers in previous years.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2015, pupils' progress in mathematics and in reading was well above, and in writing above, the national averages. This excellent progress led to high proportions of Year 6 pupils gaining Level 5 in national tests for reading, writing and mathematics, as well as in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Year 2 pupils reached the end of key stage 1 in 2015 with achievements that were also well above their peers nationally. Reading was a particular strength and more than half of the pupils achieved at the highest level.
- Pupils in Year 1 show a secure grasp of the principles of reading. In 2015 results in the national phonics screening check were well above the national standard. Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes towards reading and embrace the many opportunities to use the refurbished library. This means that they read extensively in class and at home.
- Writing standards are high as every opportunity is taken to get pupils to write. This includes, for example, the use of drama and role play to practise 'talk for writing'. This practice has contributed to the pupils' sustained enthusiasm and extended the range and depth of their writing.
- In mathematics, pupils have excellent opportunities to think for themselves when selecting appropriate tasks and checking their own work. They know what they are trying to achieve and freely choose the next step up to challenge themselves when they feel that they are ready. This high level of confidence and mature attitude to learning contributes well to raising their achievement.
- Disadvantaged pupils make excellent progress and, in 2015, the pupils in Year 6 made more progress than other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Gaps between the rates of progress made by disadvantaged pupils and others closed because extra funding is used very effectively to provide additional teaching support and a broad range of experiences for the pupils, such as the Year 6 residential week in an outdoor education centre. Early barriers to learning are quickly removed.

- Pupils with special educational needs and disability receive exceptionally good-quality support and achieve very well as a result. Their progress is carefully tracked and support is adapted to maximise the achievement of each individual. Additional funding to provide specialised adult support for smaller groups has been highly effective in promoting these pupils' success.
- The pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress. Teachers address their language needs on an individual basis but this is not yet systematic and there is no designated specialist.
- The most-able pupils make excellent progress in all subjects. They are frequently provided with very challenging work and approach this with an ingrained determination to get it right. Pupils have high levels of self-confidence and believe in their own capacity to be successful. The school's culture of high aspirations makes an excellent contribution to this, and prepares pupils exceptionally well for their move to secondary school.

Early years provision

is outstanding

- Provision in the early years has become very strong. Children enter from an increasing variety of different pre-school settings, but with the skills and abilities expected for their age. Year on year, children's achievements have risen and they have comfortably exceeded the national benchmark for a good level of development.
- Early years staff form a close team and get to know the children very well. Adults assess accurately what children can do from the moment they join the Reception classes. This means that children's needs and abilities are deeply understood and enables teachers to direct support appropriately. Teachers use this information to ensure that plans include sufficient challenge to raise children's achievements. As a result, children make excellent progress and quickly grow in confidence and belief in their own capabilities.
- The highly effective early years leader keeps a close eye on the quality of teaching and the progress of children in both Reception classes. She has established an excellent rapport among the team and several parents commented about how approachable and helpful the early years staff are.
- Adults' commitment to helping children achieve frequently extends to encouraging parents to learn with their children through workshops, 'stay and play' sessions and by simply joining them for lunch. This has built positive relationships with parents and harnessed their help with children's early development.
- Teaching is outstanding. Early years staff plan activities and experiences which capture the children's interest and are appropriately stretching for children of all abilities and needs. Both the indoor and outside spaces are arranged to reinforce important learning points and children have many colourful, stimulating activities to choose from.
- Children have very good opportunities to practise phonics, writing and counting skills. Resources are made available to strengthen any identified gaps in children's knowledge or understanding. 'Activity sacks' have become popular and parents sign these out to work with their children at home on reading, writing and mathematics tasks. Mathematics 'challenge work' at home is also popular and children do these extra activities willingly to improve their skills and reach a higher standard by the end of the year.
- Staff expect a lot from the Reception Year children. School values and behaviour guidelines are established early on. Children understand how to play and work together safely and show their mutual respect and regard for each other. Children are keen, enthusiastic learners and make excellent progress with their social skills.

School details

Unique reference number	112779
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10001863

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	395
Appropriate authority	The governing board
Chairs	Debbie Haynes and Helen Robinson
Headteacher	Sarah Allison
Telephone number	01332 550 178
Website	www.lawn.derby.sch.uk
Email address	admin@lawn.derby.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 November 2013

Information about this school

- This is an above-average-sized primary school. More pupils now than previously join the school from outside the catchment area.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average; the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language is rising and is currently slightly below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and are eligible to be supported through the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and disability is also well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school's website complies with statutory requirements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 23 lessons, 12 of these jointly with senior leaders. They observed support in and out of class for pupils who need additional help with their learning. A review of additional support in lessons was carried out jointly with the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and attended three school assemblies.
- The inspection team looked closely at pupils' work in every class and spoke with pupils about their work.
- Inspectors spoke informally with parents at the start of each day and took note of their views through the 77 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and through the school's own annual parent survey.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils around the school and met with school councillors, eco-team representatives and a group of vulnerable pupils.
- Staff returned 34 questionnaires during the inspection and these were analysed to gain their views of the school.
- Inspectors met with four governors and a senior school improvement adviser and also held discussions with school leaders responsible for English, mathematics, science, early years, assessment, and for coordinating special educational needs.
- Inspectors checked school documentation on attendance and behaviour and looked closely at records of assessment of pupils' progress and those relating to monitoring of safeguarding. They looked at records of governors' meetings and how the school manages staff performance.

Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Victor Wilkinson	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Wood	Ofsted Inspector

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