

Alvaston Infant and Nursery School

Elvaston Lane, Alvaston, Derby, Derbyshire DE24 0PU

Inspection dates

10–11 October 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The senior leadership team and governors have secured rapid improvements since the previous inspection.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective. Pupils feel safe.
- The headteacher is ambitious for the school; she is a positive role model for staff and pupils.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Teachers and other adults work well as a team.
- Pupils' progress has improved and is now good in both the early years and in key stage 1.
- The teaching of phonics is strong. Year 1 pupils attain high standards in the national phonics screening check.
- Pupils benefit from the wide range of engaging activities planned across the curriculum and through many extra-curricular opportunities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They behave well.
- Most parents are supportive of the work of the school. They are appreciative of the improvements that have been made since the last inspection.
- Children in the early years make good progress. After a secure start in the Nursery, children make faster progress in the Reception Year. The proportion of children who secure a good level of development is now above average.
- The development of the role of middle leaders is still a work in progress.
- Additional opportunities for the most able pupils to write creatively are not always planned. Pupils' attainment in writing at the end of key stage 1 is not as high as in reading.
- Pupils' attendance has improved in recent years, although this remains below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is above average.
- Senior leaders' plans for the use of the primary physical education and sport funding lack measures of success. This means that the evaluation of the impact of the use of the funding is not sharp enough.
- Planning for children in the early years does not have sufficient focus on using available resources to support their physical development.
- Despite recent improvements, the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils are not as strong as those of non-disadvantaged pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to accelerate further pupils' progress by:
 - providing children in the early years with more opportunities to record their thoughts in writing, particularly when learning outdoors
 - ensuring that children in the early years have access to a wide range of resources that will support their physical development
 - challenging the most able pupils in key stage 1 to write creatively for a wider range of purposes and for different audiences
 - improving writing outcomes at the end of key stage 1, so they are more in line with reading and mathematics
 - continuing to diminish the differences in attainment and progress between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by working more closely with parents by:
 - further improving pupils' attendance and punctuality
 - reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent.
- Strengthen the leadership and management of the school by supporting the development of middle leaders by:
 - giving middle leaders a greater role in improving the quality and consistency of teaching in their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring that physical education and sport funding focuses on the impact of the actions undertaken.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- School leaders have worked effectively to address most of the issues identified at the previous inspection, particularly those relating to improving the quality of teaching. Senior leaders demonstrate good capacity to continue to improve the school.
- The headteacher is very ambitious for the school and is determined that Alvaston Infant and Nursery will be the best it can be. She is ably supported by an energetic and committed senior leadership team, which takes the same proactive approach to improving the school.
- The senior leadership team and governing body have a clear view of the school's strengths and have accurately identified aspects to develop in their own evaluations and action planning. There is an appropriate focus on early interventions to support pupils' speech and language skills, and a systematic teaching of phonic skills to help develop their literacy.
- Senior leaders have implemented a new system for assessing pupils' progress. This has helped them to identify pupils who are falling behind or who are underachieving. Targeted support is provided for these pupils, and this is helping them to begin to catch up with their peers.
- Senior leaders have improved their procedures for school development planning. Plans are thorough and detailed, and include relevant links to support the continuing professional development of all staff. Staff value the professional development offered. These opportunities motivate the staff team and help to improve teaching.
- The broad and balanced curriculum provides a good range of activities to enable pupils to learn and enjoy their learning. The teachers successfully plan cohesive opportunities to develop pupils' understanding by developing themes, working across different subjects when practicable.
- Senior leaders have enhanced the curriculum by ensuring that pupils undertake a variety of visits and that they receive visitors to the school. Pupils can access a wide variety of extra-curricular activities. The school places an emphasis on developing pupils' skills in art. Display boards and pupils' books show a wealth of creditable examples of the range and quality of work that is undertaken.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education well. The school's positive values are well embedded within school life.
- The school helps to prepare pupils positively for life in modern Britain. For example, democracy is demonstrated in many pupil-led activities, and representatives are voted for by their peers. These include an active school council, playground pals and a pupil-led learning committee. The members help to guide and support other pupils to make positive choices in and out of lessons.
- Additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is being used effectively. Targeted interventions are quickly put in place to ensure that this group of pupils makes good progress.

- The physical education (PE) and sport funding is used effectively to help improve pupils' physical well-being. However, the action planning would benefit from more specific timescales and success criteria being included in the targets.
- Subject leaders are committed to their roles. Nevertheless, there is limited evidence of their work in improving teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility across the curriculum.
- The school is using additional funding to appropriate effect to support disadvantaged pupils in receipt of the pupil premium. Differences are diminishing between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils and those of other pupils. Nevertheless, senior leaders acknowledge that there is more to do in this aspect of the school's work.
- Standards are rising across the school because of the emphasis on increased expectations and timely interventions. However, this is not yet consistent in all classes, and not all pupils are reaching the standards of which they are capable. This was particularly apparent where the most able pupils could have been challenged by creative, extended writing opportunities being planned across the curriculum.
- The local authority has helped the school to improve since the last inspection. The appointed adviser has worked closely with the school and has provided an effective balance of support and challenge.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is good.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- The governing body is well organised, and members have a wide variety of relevant skills. Governors demonstrate a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- Governors know their responsibilities very well in relation to safeguarding.
- The governing body makes sure that the headteacher rigorously manages the performance of staff members.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a nurturing environment, in which pupils feel safe and supported.
- The school has well-established partnerships with a variety of external agencies. Full and detailed records are kept to ensure effective and timely support for those children who need it.
- Staff and governors' training is comprehensive and up to date.
- Parents are kept well informed of the school's safeguarding procedures and policies through the school's website. The vast majority of parents who expressed views

through the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and in discussions with inspectors, were positive about the school and its focus on safeguarding.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved since the previous inspection and are now good.
- Teachers' subject knowledge across the curriculum is secure. They plan a range of stimulating and cohesive lessons, which engage pupils' interests and help to ensure that most make good progress.
- In most year groups, there is a consistent approach to teaching across classes and year groups. Senior leaders are positive role models for those teachers in the earlier stages of their careers, supporting them to extend their skills and improve their practice.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength. There is a clear and targeted focus being given throughout the school. This enables pupils to develop quickly effective strategies to embed their basic literacy skills.
- The feedback and guidance provided by teachers are detailed and consistent with the school's marking policy. Pupils understand the policy and speak confidently about the different symbols used. Pupils said that this helps them to improve their work.
- Other adults work effectively in classes, supporting individual pupils and small groups of children. They work closely with teaching staff and adopt a similar, positive approach in their interactions with pupils.
- Parents receive accurate information about their children's progress, with two written reports being sent home each year. In addition, there are regular information events, including mathematics and reading morning workshops. Individualised target books are shared regularly between school and home. Parents have a good understanding of how they can support their children in their learning.
- The school has identified gaps or differences in the achievement of some of the more vulnerable children, particularly disadvantaged pupils. Many interventions are introduced to help to support these children. However, despite the gaps in attainment diminishing and this group's faster progress, some underachievement is still apparent at the end of key stage 1 in writing and mathematics.
- There is a structured approach to the teaching and learning of writing, which most pupils respond to well. In some circumstances, however, this inhibits the creativity and independence of the most able pupils who have secured the basic skills of writing.
- Pupils' books show a breadth of work across the wider curriculum, although there is limited evidence of creative writing for pupils in English or in other subjects.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils take pride in their work, their own appearance and their school. The school vision of 'Being the best we can be' is a theme which is apparent throughout the school, and pupils spoke with enthusiasm about this ethos.
- Pupils said that they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when online or out of school. Pupils show awareness of key adults whom they can go to if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils said that any instances of bullying are rare and that these are dealt with promptly by senior leaders.
- The school has introduced a variety of opportunities for pupils to develop their self-confidence and leadership skills, including becoming elected members of the school council, playground pals and the learning committee. They take these responsibilities seriously and rise to the challenges set.
- Pupils spoke positively about the learning attitudes, such as the 'creative chameleons' and the 'teamwork termites' recently introduced. Relevant links to these targets are made during assemblies and lessons and on the playground, and they are helping pupils' understanding of how to be successful learners.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils show respect for each other and listen well to others' ideas in lessons.
- Good behaviour and positive manners are apparent as pupils move around the school or when on the playground or in the dining hall. Pupils are polite and sensible, showing self-discipline in most situations. The school's records show that the incidence of poor behaviour has significantly decreased in recent years.
- Behaviour of pupils in lessons is almost always good. A lack of attention or low-level disruption by a small number of pupils was seen in some classes.
- There has been noticeable improvement in the attendance of pupils in the past year. However, attendance is still below that of all schools nationally, and not all pupils arrive at school on time. Initiatives introduced to increase attendance are showing some impact. Senior leaders acknowledge that they need to continue to focus on their work with parents and the wider community, to help to instil the value of education and the importance of pupils attending school regularly and punctually.
- The rate of persistent absence in the school has reduced but remains above the national average. The school's analysis indicates that some of the most vulnerable children are those who are persistently absent. Leaders do as much as they can to ensure that these absent pupils are safe. However, there is a need to ensure that processes to support these pupils are well embedded.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- There have been good improvements in the outcomes achieved by pupils since the previous inspection. Current assessment data shows that almost all pupils now make at least good progress from their starting points. The school has developed a detailed system of tracking pupils' attainment on a frequent basis, which leads to rapid, focused and successful interventions.
- Results in national tests in reading, writing, mathematics and science have improved noticeably since the previous inspection, and key stage 1 pupils' attainment in all subjects rose to above average in 2017.
- The outcomes of the phonics test at the end of Year 1 have improved recently, which reflects the targeted focus on this skill apparent throughout the school. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in the phonics screening check is now above average. The proportion of children whose phonics skills were re-tested in Year 2 also did better than the national average.
- Effective processes for transition between year groups within the school are established. This is enabling pupils to receive continuity in their learning, which is contributing to their good progress. Pupils are now suitably prepared for the next stages of their education in key stage 2.
- The progress of those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is now good.
- Despite recent improvements, gaps remain between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally. This is particularly so for mathematics and writing at the end of key stage 1.
- The most able pupils are suitably challenged to extend their learning. These pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, generally make good progress and attain well. However, the most able pupils have limitations in their ability to write in a range of genres and for different audiences, which is restricting their achievement in writing.
- The number of pupils achieving the expected standard in writing at the end of key stage 1 has increased. However, outcomes in writing remain below the standards achieved for other subjects.
- In 2016, the school attained higher key stage 1 outcomes than found nationally in reading and mathematics. Pupils performed less well in writing and science.

Early years provision

Good

- The majority of children enter the school with levels of development below those typical for their age. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of early years is now above that found nationally. While children make a secure start during the Nursery Year, they make faster progress during the Reception Year. Children are well prepared to move into key stage 1.
- Leadership of the early years is good. There are growing links and the sharing of best practice between the Nursery and Reception classes.

- Adults ensure that assessments of children’s abilities and development are quickly undertaken as they join the Reception class. This enables the school to introduce targeted interventions promptly, with respect to each child’s individual needs, which help children to make rapid progress.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength in the early years provision, particularly in the Reception classes. This focus leads quickly to basic reading skills becoming secure. Children in one class re-told a traditional tale with great enthusiasm, using actions and visual prompts.
- The school quickly identifies children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and they are given good levels of support.
- The school has focused a substantial proportion of the pupil premium funding to support phonics teaching and the development of children’s speech and language skills. This focus is helping to reduce the gap in achievement between disadvantaged children and other children in the early years, which was correctly identified by leaders.
- All adults in the early years setting work positively and proactively together, demonstrating very effective team skills, to help to extend children’s understanding. For instance, in one class, children were making pizzas, and their learning was supported by focused and detailed questioning.
- A wide variety of learning opportunities are available across the continuous provision in all classes in the early years. Children’s enjoyment of their learning is clear and they spoke confidently with inspectors about their activities.
- The behaviour of children in the early years setting is good. Children show respect for each other and adults. For instance, during one session the school’s learning attitudes were shared, and children were asked to vote on a choice of a book character, which led to a brief discussion about democracy.
- The school’s partnership with parents is positive in the early years and parents feel an important part of their child’s school life. Children’s learning journals are shared between home and school, and parents contribute details of home activities.
- Children are encouraged to practise their emergent writing in many situations. However, some opportunities are missed for children to record their thoughts, especially in some of the outdoor areas. Children’s writing is not always extended by providing a wide variety of writing materials and resources in all areas, to enable children to write in all situations for their own purposes.
- Children’s physical development is currently a weaker area for some. Resources and activities to support children’s development in this area are not as abundant or appropriate as in other areas of learning.

School details

Unique reference number	112744
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10031161

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

Type of school	Nursery/Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	316
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Rose Richmond
Headteacher	Mrs C T Atwal
Telephone number	01332 571704
Website	www.alvastoninfant.org.uk
Email address	head@alvastoni.derby.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28–29 April 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Alvaston Infant and Nursery School is a larger than average-size primary school. It serves the City of Derby. Most children attending the school come from the local area.
- Children from the Reception Year to Year 2 are taught in three parallel classes in each year group. Nursery provision is from three years of age, with an admission number of up to 52 children.
- The majority of children are of White British heritage. A small proportion of children speak English as an additional language. This proportion has increased in recent years.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team comprised two inspectors for two days and one inspector for one day. The inspection was quality assured by one of Her Majesty's Senior Inspectors for part of both days.
- During the inspection, teaching and learning were observed in every class, including joint observations undertaken with the headteacher and assistant headteacher. Inspectors observed the teaching of early reading skills and pupils were heard to read. The inspectors talked with pupils about their school and looked at pupils' books in and out of lessons. A sample of pupils' books was scrutinised to gain a view of the progress that pupils have made and the impact of the teaching they have received.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and members of the school's senior leadership team, staff members, four representatives of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day and considered 61 responses to the Ofsted online parent questionnaire, Parent View. They also considered 13 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, improvement and action plans, records of the monitoring of teaching and learning, the most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils, and information relating to the safeguarding, behaviour and attendance of pupils.
- Inspectors considered the range and quality of information provided on the school's website, which meets statutory requirements.

Inspection team

Yvonne Watts, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Lakatos	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Dale	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017