

Wirksworth CofE Infant School

Greenway Croft, North End, Matlock, DE4 4FG

Inspection dates 27–28 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school has worked hard since the last inspection and has significantly improved both teaching and achievement. Both are now good.
- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has improved and they make good progress. Adults give extra help and guidance skilfully to pupils who need it so that they make good progress in line with others in the school.
- The headteacher's highly focused, yet caring, approach ensures that she provides strong leadership. She is highly respected by staff, pupils, parents and carers and school governors. All leaders and managers at the school do a good job.
- Some teaching is outstanding. At its best, it engages pupils' attention fully. For example, pupils became completely engrossed in composing lively music, actions or dances to accompany poems they had written. This helped them to bring their poetry to life and make it even more creative and imaginative.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are friendly to each other, and rightly feel safe and secure.
- The federation with the neighbouring Wirksworth Infant School has helped to strengthen the quality of teaching and raised pupils' achievement in both schools. The federation is also very involved in the local community.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough of the teaching is outstanding to ensure that pupils make consistently outstanding progress over time.
- Pupils do not get enough opportunities to use their mathematical skills in real life situations.
- The targets set for teachers to help them to improve are sometimes too general and not tailored to meet their individual needs or to enable the school to check what impact they are having on pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited five lessons, and saw all of the teachers with their classes. All of these visits were made with the headteacher or assistant headteacher. The inspector saw the teaching of phonics (the links between letters and the sounds they make) and heard children reading.
- He had discussions with the headteacher, teachers, pupils and governors, and a representative from the local authority. He also considered the 19 questionnaires submitted by staff across the federation.
- The views of the 15 parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account, and the inspector also spoke to parents, grandparents and carers as they brought children to school.
- The inspector looked carefully at various documents including the leaders' and governors' own views of the school's strengths and weaknesses, records of pupils' attainment and progress, and information relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

David Edwards, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools, and has only three classes.
- Almost all of the pupils are White British.
- Some pupils need extra help, mostly because of speech, language and communication difficulties. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action for difficulties such as these is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is extra government funding given for those known to be eligible for free school meals, in the care of the local authority or from service families, is below average.
- Since 2005 the school has been part of a hard federation with Wirksworth Infant School. The schools share the same headteacher and governing body, and staff are contracted by the federation rather than separate schools. The headteacher shares her time across both of the schools. Wirksworth Infant School was inspected, by a different lead inspector, at the same time as this school.
- A breakfast club operates on the school site under the school's leadership.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that all pupils, particularly the most able, make rapid and sustained progress, by:
 - ensuring greater consistency in marking and feedback, involving pupils more closely in assessing their own work
 - providing work that stretches the more-able pupils sufficiently
 - ensuring that all lessons have good pace
 - creating more opportunities for pupils to use and apply mathematical knowledge in everyday situations.
- Ensure that targets for improving teachers' performance are specific and enable the school to measure the impact teachers are having on pupils' progress and development.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The school's records show that when children enter the Reception Year, their skills and understanding are generally in line with the levels expected nationally for their age. By the time they leave at the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics and have been since the last inspection.
- Most children make better than expected progress as they move through the school because teaching is good. They settle very quickly into the school's Reception class, feel safe and well-cared for and are taught well by staff. Classrooms and outdoor play areas are well-equipped, stimulating and safe.
- Pupils who could have other disadvantages, for example those known to be eligible for the pupil premium, are also making good progress. The gap between their attainment and that of others nationally is closing rapidly. The good progress they are making shows how well the school is enabling all to learn well.
- A key reason why pupils with disabilities or special educational needs make good progress is that they have specially designed daily programmes, and additional support in class, that help them with physical and emotional or social needs. This means that they are fully involved in everything that goes on and make as good progress as everyone else. Pupils with speech and language needs have good support which is helping their speech and language communication needs and enabling them to make good progress.
- Pupils usually learn quickly in lessons. For example, in an excellent and engaging Year 2 lesson pupils had created their own poems accompanied by musical compositions. They were performing these elements by singing, dancing and playing percussion instruments, so that they made very rapid progress in their learning.
- Reading is promoted well across the school and pupils develop a love of books from their first days in the school. They use their skills in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) to read unfamiliar words and attainment in reading is above average by the end of Year 2.
- Learning is not yet outstanding because the more-able pupils are not always given work that is hard enough for them. Though pupils' learning in mathematics is good, they are not given enough opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills to real-life problem solving situations to help them learn even faster.
- Pupils make good progress in their learning in other subjects and topics. They learn about other cultures and their work indicates that they have developed a good understanding and appreciation of those living in societies very different to their own. For example, pupils have exchanged thoughtfully worded letters with children from a school in South Africa.
- Since the last inspection the work of the federation has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement and continues to do so. Staff from across the federation form a strong team, regularly sharing their ideas, and this has led to pupils from both schools benefiting from good quality teaching. As a result, their achievement has improved.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is lively, engaging and creative. Lessons consistently capture the pupils' attention and motivate them to learn. For example, in a Reception class lesson, which followed up work on the fire station visit the teacher used a combination of role play, art and mathematical work to enhance pupils' learning. This completely engaged the pupils and they made good progress in identifying, writing and adding numbers to ten. In the small amount of teaching requiring improvement, the pace of learning was not quick enough and so pupils were not fully engaged in their learning.
- Teaching in the Reception class is good overall. In a good phonics lesson children were developing their knowledge of letters, and the sounds they make, effectively because they were split into groups so that they were undertaking work that was pitched at the right level to help them all to make good progress in their learning.
- Teachers plan effectively to meet different pupils' needs, and regularly check on the progress of different groups of children in order to identify pupils who do not understand things properly and provide the support they need. This is underpinning pupils' improved progress. Occasionally however, more-able pupils are not given work that is hard enough for them.
- Teaching assistants show good judgement when supporting pupils in lessons. Their positive approach helps pupils build their confidence and self-esteem. As a result, they become more independent as they move through the school and are good, independent learners by the time they reach Year 2.
- Though teaching in mathematics is helping pupils to make good progress there are missed opportunities to raise achievement even further. This is because pupils do not get enough opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills to real-life problem solving activities.
- There were some good examples of the way teachers are informing pupils how well they are doing through their marking of work. Some teachers set the next steps in learning for pupils, but the practice is not fully consistent. Pupils are not using checklists, which provide an outline of what successful work looks like, to help them to assess the quality of their own work and are not asked to respond to the comments teachers make about their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in school, including at the school's breakfast club. This is because they enjoy what they are doing and because staff are successful in engaging them in thinking about what they are learning. Teachers also place a very strong emphasis on the importance of working and playing together 'collaboratively'. This approach is very effective; pupils were observed playing and working together in harmony in different parts of the school. They were also observed helping and supporting each other in lessons.
- Pupils arrive at school ready and eager to learn. Most show good social skills. Those who find it difficult to live up to the school's high standards of behaviour respond well to good guidance, so lessons are very rarely interrupted.
- Pupils have a good understanding of safety for their age. For example, pupils could explain clearly why it is important not to give your personal details to others when using the internet. They said that the school teaches them well about the dangers of speaking to strangers. They told the inspector that bullying and inappropriate name calling occur very rarely in the school.
- Pupils who find school life difficult receive additional support from adults, which helps their

social, emotional and academic skills, demonstrating the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.

- Parents and carers overwhelmingly feel that the school keeps their children safe and they believe behaviour in the school is good.
- The pupils' higher than average attendance is testimony to their enjoyment of coming to school.
- Pupils are learning to think and reflect. In an assembly about light, they were learning about the importance of lighting candles to welcome the coming of Jesus into the world at Christmas time.
- Relationships between pupils are strong, as are their relationships with adults in the school. This creates an atmosphere of mutual respect.

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership of the headteacher is highly successful. All leaders and managers, including in the Reception class, have been successful in their actions to improve the school. They know its strengths and weaknesses very well. Consequently, school leaders have improved the quality of teaching so that pupils make stronger progress in learning, which has led to the raising of pupils' achievement to good since the last inspection. This demonstrates the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.
- The school has detailed records of the standards pupils have reached. This helps the headteacher and other leaders to identify the progress individuals and groups have made since they joined the school, and from one year to the next.
- The pupil premium money is being spent appropriately on the eligible pupils so that they stay on track to reach the standards they are capable of and make good gains in their learning. It is being used in the same way as some of the money for other pupils who need extra help, for example, by providing time to work with an adult on their own or in groups, doing some intensive learning. Pupils can also attend the breakfast club free of charge, which gives them a good start to the day. This exemplifies the school's desire to create equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- The headteacher has already carried out the required formal yearly check of teachers' work, and is rightly using the results to identify with them what the whole school should work on and what training is needed. She is clear about how pay should be linked to the quality of teaching, and what she expects of teachers who have higher salaries and greater responsibilities. However, the targets set for teachers are often too general, being linked broadly to whole-school priorities rather than being specific, measurable and closely matched to the actions that individual teachers need to take to make their teaching even better. Because targets are not precise enough, it can be difficult for the headteacher to measure the impact of these on pupils' achievement.
- School leaders ensure that pupils cover a range of exciting learning topics. These include 'themed days' and exciting visits where pupils learn about other cultures or gain practical experience of how things are made. For example, a visit to Thornton's chocolate factory enhanced their understanding of the processes involved in making chocolate. These activities play an important role in supporting pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- The local authority has provided 'light-touch' support for this school. This has been appropriate because the local authority has judged correctly that the school is making good progress.
- The school's federation partnership with Wirksworth infant school has helped to raise the quality of teaching with a resulting rise in pupils' achievement. The federation is highly regarded in the community. Social relationships between children and families from both schools within the federation are enhanced and this has a positive impact on the community the schools serve.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school's work. One commented, 'The school creates a real family ethos. They always listen and sort things out.' This was typical of the many positive comments sent to the inspector.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has successfully overseen a period of strong improvement in the school. Governors have received appropriate training in their roles. They know and understand both schools and are aware of what has been done to improve teaching and how achievement compares to that of other schools. Governors have good relationships with staff, visit the school frequently and have established links with teachers who are subject leaders. Their effective monitoring of the school's work helps them to focus well on the most important improvement priorities. The governing body has a good overview of the schools' systems to manage the performance of staff and has good plans to add even greater rigour to this process. It ensures its own review of the performance of the headteacher is detailed and rigorous. Governors know how the school has used the funding for the pupil premium and check that this, and other all other funding, is used effectively and having a positive impact on pupils' learning. They ensure that pupils are safe and that all safeguarding requirements are fully met.

What inspection judgements mean

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

School details

Unique reference number	112864
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	400369

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tricia Rice
Headteacher	Joanne Poyser
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 2010
Telephone number	01629 822453
Fax number	01629 822453
Email address	Info@wirksworthcofe.derbyshire.sch.uk

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