

Lionwood Infant and Nursery School

Telegraph Lane East, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 4AN

Inspection dates 10–11 March 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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The difference that the staff in this school make to the lives of the pupils is remarkable.
- The executive headteacher's inspirational leadership has created a culture of high ambition. As a result, adults believe there are no barriers too great for the pupils to overcome.
- Leaders and managers have a highly detailed understanding of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They have a relentless focus on ensuring that the quality of teaching is never less than good and often it is better.
- Pupils are very well prepared for entry to the junior school because they make rapid progress from individual starting points that are often very low.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are exceptionally well provided for. As a consequence, they have extremely mature and positive attitudes to learning.
- The outstanding early years provision sets the tone for high-quality, creative and memorable learning that continues into Years 1 and 2.
- Staff have an excellent understanding of how pupils learn and what works best to help them achieve highly. The consistent application of this understanding ensures that pupils make at least good, and often better progress.
- All groups of pupils achieve very well. This is because teachers skilfully plan learning to interest and challenge individuals of all abilities and backgrounds.
- Pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics are tracked thoroughly and effectively.
- Leaders and managers ensure that children are very safe and are central to their work. The arrangements to safeguard them fully meet requirements and are well thought through.
- The challenge from the governing body makes a significant contribution to the work of the senior leadership team.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Track pupils' progress and personal skills in all subjects as thoroughly as those for reading, writing and mathematics.
- Make sure that, when children in the early years learn independently, their learning is guided specifically on their individual targets, particularly for the boys and the most able.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- Staff are highly motivated and there is no shortage of applicants to work at Lionwood. Central to the school's success is the executive headteacher's drive, vision and innovation to make the school the best it can be. This includes a commitment to do things differently so that pupils gain the maximum benefit from what is on offer. Nothing is done for the sake of convention.
- The school's work is highly respected by parents and local authority advisers. However, the success is not solely dependent on the executive headteacher because responsibilities are well understood and shared by staff at all levels.
- Staff's aspiration for pupils is not only to do well when they go to the junior school but also to have the knowledge and skills to be successful at university and beyond.
- It is not only the pupils who are encouraged to be life-long learners. There is a culture of continuous improvement for staff, fostered through high-quality training. Staff undertake a range of research projects and postgraduate qualifications focused on improving teaching and the curriculum, particularly for vulnerable pupils.
- Senior leaders model good practice and encourage staff to reflect on what works well. This approach leads to highly consistent practice for the pupils and their families.
- The curriculum helps pupils excel in their academic and personal development. Pupils are well on the way to being self-confident citizens in modern society by the time they go to the junior school because the curriculum makes sure that pupils:
 - have plenty of opportunities to talk about what they are doing, how they feel and what they think
 - develop a strong sense of belonging to a community
 - have a well-developed sense of fairness, especially what it means to treat people with respect for who they are, not what they look like
 - understand what it means to vote and to accept the decisions made by the majority of those who vote
 - know where to go for help, especially when people do things that are wrong, such as bullying and breaking laws.
- Parents speak highly of the school's provision, particularly:
 - the nurturing and safe environment
 - the relaxed and welcoming atmosphere
 - the highly effective management of pupils' behaviour
 - how well pupils' social development is fostered, especially their self-esteem and spoken language.
- The influence of senior leaders extends beyond Lionwood. They support school improvement across Norfolk, such as in training for newly qualified teachers and curriculum development within the local cluster of schools.
- Senior staff and the governing body have an accurate and insightful understanding of the performance of pupils and staff. Targets are aspirational with a long-term view of pupils' entitlement to achieve high standards. Improvements are planned carefully but measurements for success are not always defined clearly.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - challenges leaders to explain in detail how well pupils are doing and what would make achievement even better
 - checks that the pupil premium and sports funding monies are used appropriately and that these resources make a significant difference to pupils
 - makes sure that judgements about the school's performance are based on robust and secure evidence.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. As a result, pupils learn and play in a safe environment, and take responsibility for their own safety and that of others. Staff are well informed about how to protect children from harm. Concerns are acted upon quickly and appropriately.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- Teachers and support staff work very effectively together to remove obstacles to pupils' learning. The attitude that pervades teaching is that no barriers are too great for the pupils to overcome.
- Learning takes place in a relaxed and purposeful atmosphere. Teachers give clear explanations, which helps pupils to apply what they learn quickly, confidently and successfully. Classrooms are well resourced and well organised.
- Good-quality, precise teaching of letters, sounds and handwriting allows pupils to be confident and proficient readers and writers from an early age. The solid groundwork in early years is consolidated throughout Years 1 and 2.
- Opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy are planned throughout the curriculum, which helps pupils understand that reading, writing and mathematics are important in all areas of life. The development of pupils' spoken language is a high priority in teachers' planning.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability and those who need extra help are supported effectively to stay on track. Staff gain a detailed picture of how well the pupils learn so that they can plan exciting activities that maximise pupils' progress.
- Pupils' knowledge is checked and challenged well throughout lessons. Mistakes and misconceptions are addressed swiftly, which speeds up the learning and consolidates what pupils know and understand.
- Pupils have targets that challenge them to learn a little bit more each time. For the most-able pupils, this works well to encourage them to think about how to apply what they know in different ways and for different purposes.
- Pupils' work is recorded in learning journals, which are highly prized by pupils and their parents. The journals are a highly effective record, not only of what pupils can do but also how they learn and improve.
- Homework is a strong feature of teaching and the curriculum. The journals are used well to work with parents to follow pupils' interests and to extend what pupils learn in class.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils understand how to be good learners and they can explain what it means very clearly. They take on board the things that staff teach them about never giving up, to keep trying and to do their best at all times. They know that it is okay to get things wrong and they explain how they learn from their mistakes.
- It takes very little prompting for pupils to celebrate one another's successes.
- Those pupils with special responsibilities, such as The Green Team, the librarians and members of the school council, are held in high esteem. This is because they went through a rigorous selection process including a ballot, and know they have to maintain high standards if they want to hold positions in public office.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe on the road, and when using the internet and mobile phones. They are particularly clear about what to do when things do not seem right or if they are asked to do things that they know are wrong.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- There is very little disruption to learning. This is partly because pupils learn from an early age how to manage their frustrations, disappointments and worries. It is also because staff are highly skilled in managing the behaviour of the few pupils who require help to remain focused.
- When out at play, pupils' behaviour is energetic and positive. Adults ensure that they are well managed and supervised. Pupils are very friendly and want to play with each other. On the very rare occasions when a pupil is alone, others come quickly to help and play. Inside school, pupils are polite and well mannered. One way they demonstrate this is by holding doors open for visitors.
- Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average. Some pupils are collected by minibus to make sure that they attend each day, arrive on time and are in a positive frame of mind for learning.

Outcomes for pupils

are outstanding

- From low starting points, pupils make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Age-appropriate standards are achieved by the end of Year 2 because pupils make more than expected progress each year.
- Pupils' progress is particularly rapid in speaking and listening. As their spoken language improves, pupils' achievement across other subjects accelerates quickly, such as in science, reading and spelling.
- Creative writing is often well developed by the end of Year 2, especially for the most-able pupils, and pupils of all ages are confident writers.
- Pupils take great care with their work and are proud of their accomplishments. They take responsibility for learning by selecting the equipment or the clues from around the classroom that help them succeed.
- Pupils achieve well in all subjects and their progress is assessed and tracked well in journals. However, leaders do not track pupils' progress in some subjects or pupils' personal development as precisely as they do in English and mathematics.
- There is little difference in the progress of different groups of pupils. This is not only because staff have high expectations of all pupils, but also because staff know what different groups need in order to do well. For example, pupils with special educational needs have appropriate support to complete tasks at their own level and at their own pace, as efficiently as others, even when the challenge is hard.
- Pupils who are most in need achieve well because potential problems are picked up and addressed quickly.

Early years provision

is outstanding

- By the time pupils start in Year 1, they are keen to learn, inquisitive and ask lots of questions. They get on well with one another. They know how to work things out for themselves, such as spelling and reading of tricky words.
- Children have good levels of concentration because the activities are stimulating and they want to succeed. Activities centre on the children's interests, with a particular focus on speaking, listening and physical development.
- Children find it hard to take turns at first. By the end of the Reception Year, this is no longer the case because staff make sure that the children practise their social skills throughout all areas of learning.
- High-quality observations and frequent recording in children's journals give staff and parents a detailed picture of what each child can do. The skills to practise or the next steps to learn are well understood and help to maximise children's learning at school and at home.
- The learning is highly organised and children know what is expected of them. Staff often pose questions to move learning on to the next stage, but boys and the most-able children are not challenged consistently.
- Almost half of the children do not reach the good level of development achieved by those of the same age nationally by the end of the Reception Year, although this has improved rapidly over the past few years. Language skills are particularly low. Nevertheless, this represents strong progress from starting points that are often well below average.
- Partnerships with parents are strong and set the tone for the positive communication with families that extends throughout Years 1 and 2.

School details

Unique reference number	134956
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10001551

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

Type of school	Infant and nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	267
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sharon Forder and Tim Wood
Executive headteacher	Selene Sawyer
Telephone number	01603 433957
Website	www.lionwoodinfant.co.uk
Email address	office@lionwoodinfant.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 March 2011

Information about this school

- In September 2014, the school federated with Lionwood Junior School. The schools share the same executive headteacher, senior leadership team and governing body.
- There are 11 classes, including two Nursery classes.
- The school is part of the Norfolk Better to Best programme, which supports school improvement.
- The executive headteacher is a local leader of education and currently supports a local junior school.
- Approximately one in five pupils are deemed to have special educational needs or disability, which is above the national average.
- Approximately 35% of pupils are known to be entitled to the pupil premium, which is higher than the national average of 26%.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection began as a short inspection and converted to a full inspection so that inspectors could gather more evidence about the quality of the school's work. The school was notified of the inspection on the afternoon before the inspection started.
- Inspectors observed lessons with the senior leaders. Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, two deputy headteachers, two assistant headteachers and teaching leaders. They also met with the joint Chairs of the Governing Body, with three other governors, and with teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils, parents and the head of the Norfolk Better to Best programme.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents regarding: pupils' achievement; the monitoring of teaching; the school's self-evaluation and action plan; safeguarding arrangements; the single central record of recruitment checks on staff's suitability to work with children; reports from external partners; and documents on the school's website.
- Inspectors took account of the 31 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, which included 25 written comments.
- Nine members of staff responded to the online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Heather Yaxley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Lucas	Her Majesty's Inspector
Janet Satchwell	Ofsted Inspector
Brenda Watson	Ofsted Inspector

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