

# Inspection of Overdale Infant School

Eastcourt Road, Knighton, Leicester, Leicestershire LE2 3YA

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders have made improvements to the curriculum at Overdale Infant School. However, they know that there is more to do. In some subjects, including in reading, the curriculum is not taught well enough. This means that some pupils do not gain the knowledge and skills they should over time, including pupils who struggle to read. This includes some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders create a calm and orderly environment in the school. Pupils are polite and respectful. They know that bullying is not tolerated. Pupils generally behave well. They told inspectors that behaviour is good most of the time and that staff deal quickly with any incidents of bullying. Pupils have a clear understanding of difference and equality. They know that there is always a member of staff they can speak to if they are worried. They told inspectors that they feel safe.

Most parents and carers are positive about the school. One parent, typical of many, said: 'Staff are very caring, dedicated and knowledgeable. They listen and respond quickly and appropriately to concerns.' However, a significant minority of parents say that they would like more information from the school, including about their child's progress.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders have developed a strong curriculum in some subjects. The curriculum has been organised to ensure that pupils build their knowledge and skills gradually. Pupils understand complex subject vocabulary. For example, in art, pupils can explain the difference between primary, secondary and tertiary colours. In history, pupils remember facts about significant events, such as the Great Fire of London. However, some curriculum thinking is not as clear. In some subjects, leaders have not identified precisely the key knowledge that pupils need to learn from the early years to the end of key stage 1. In some subjects, leaders do not have a consistent approach to checking how successfully pupils learn this important knowledge.

The teaching of reading and phonics does not help all pupils to read with confidence and fluency. Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to teaching phonics. However, there has not been sufficient training to ensure consistency in how all staff teach phonics. For some pupils, the books they are given to read do not match the sounds they have learned. Some pupils struggle to read unfamiliar words as they have too many gaps in their phonics knowledge. Some of the pupils who struggle to read do not receive the support they need to help them catch up.

Leaders have planned the mathematics curriculum carefully. It is set out so that pupils build their understanding and knowledge securely. Pupils understand, and use, mathematical vocabulary precisely. For example, they can explain that numbers can be split into parts. They can give examples of number bonds to 20. Pupils say that they enjoy their learning in mathematics. Teachers frequently check pupils'

learning. They are quick to address misconceptions. Staff provide regular opportunities for pupils to recap their knowledge.

Relationships are very positive between children and adults in the early years. Teachers provide tasks related to children's learning. For example, children work independently on tasks such as counting in mathematics. Children are confident in using counters to build and apply their understanding of number. Other children carefully use scissors to develop their fine motor skills. Staff ensure that the learning environment is very engaging.

Access to the curriculum is variable for some pupils with SEND. Some pupils thrive in classrooms. However, on occasions, teachers do not provide sufficient support for pupils. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not make the progress that they could.

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. They support pupils to understand right from wrong. Leaders support pupils to be confident and resilient individuals. They help pupils to develop strength of character. Staff provide opportunities for pupils to be responsible. Pupils enjoy making a positive contribution to the life of the school as school councillors. They know how to eat healthily and keep fit. Pupils appreciate the support from staff. One pupil told inspectors: 'Staff care for us. They want us to do well and be safe.'

School leaders, with the support from the multi-academy trust, have brought about recent improvements in the quality of education in the school. However, trustees do not have sufficient understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They do not hold leaders to account well enough, including over the quality of education.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of care at the school. Leaders provide strong support to vulnerable pupils. Staff pass on concerns promptly. Record-keeping is meticulous. Leaders ensure that they provide regular safeguarding training for staff, governors and trustees. They check that staff know how to spot pupils who may be at risk. Trustees and governors regularly check the school's safeguarding procedures.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe, including when working online. Pupils say that they know who to go to if they have a concern. They know that staff will take their concerns seriously.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The key knowledge and content that pupils need to learn in some subjects is not sufficiently well planned or sequenced. It is not yet fully clear what pupils should learn or by when it should be learned, to build their knowledge over time.

However, leaders have begun to review and plan the curriculum from the early years to the end of key stage 1 in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans for all subjects set out the knowledge that pupils should know and by when.

- Staff are inconsistent in their implementation of the school’s phonics programme. They do not deliver the school’s phonics programme consistently. Some pupils who struggle to read have reading books that are too challenging. They do not receive sufficient support to enable them to become confident readers. As a result, some pupils across the school struggle to read unfamiliar words and find it difficult to access the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to deliver the school’s phonics programme well, including by ensuring that reading books match the sounds that pupils already know, and by providing pupils who struggle to read with the support they need to enable them to read with greater confidence.
- Not all teachers routinely ensure that pupils with SEND access the curriculum well enough. As a result, pupils with SEND do not always benefit from a good-quality education. Leaders should make sure that pupils with SEND receive the support they need, so that they achieve as highly as they should.
- Staff regularly check what pupils know in the core subjects. However, leaders have not developed systems for checking what pupils have learned in the foundation subjects. As a result, teachers do not regularly check how successfully pupils access the wider curriculum. Leaders need to develop a consistent approach to checking how well pupils learn and remember what they have been taught in the wider curriculum, ensuring that the use of assessment does not place unnecessary burdens on staff or pupils.
- Trustees do not have sufficient understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. As a result, they do not have sufficient information to hold leaders fully to account. Trustees should ensure that they have the right information to be able to hold the school leaders fully to account.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child’s school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145617
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240412
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	360
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Ross Grant
<b>Headteacher</b>	Hayley Holmes
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.overdale-inf.leicester.sch.uk">www.overdale-inf.leicester.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school joined Oak Multi-Academy Trust in April 2018. When its predecessor school, Overdale Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2019.
- The chair of governors took up his post in September 2022.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, the leader with responsibility for provision for pupils with SEND and teaching and support staff.
- One inspector met with representatives of the governing body and the trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science, art and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. He considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's free-text service. They also considered the responses to the staff survey and the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Damien Turrell, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Matthew Rooney	Ofsted Inspector
Luella Manssen	Ofsted Inspector

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