

Avenue Primary School

Avenue Road Extension, Leicester LE2 3EJ

Inspection dates

26–27 April 2016

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

- Senior leaders have created an inclusive culture that has high expectations of staff and pupils. These high expectations have led to improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes since the last inspection.
- Achievement in key stages 1 and 2 is good, particularly in reading and writing.
- Gaps in achievement between those pupils who are disadvantaged and other pupils nationally at key stage 2 have closed in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers plan lessons well to meet the needs of their pupils and to ensure that pupils engage with their learning. To this end, teachers and adults provide pupils with effective support.
- The provision in the early years is good, because of the good leadership and the good-quality teaching that children receive.
- Subject and phase leaders receive effective support from senior leaders.
- Pupils behave well. Pupils have positive relationships with their teachers and show great sensitivity to the needs of their peers.
- Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils have a profound understanding of their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school engages well with parents to enable them to support their children in their learning.
- Teachers and support staff provide effective care and guidance for those pupils with complex emotional or behavioural needs.
- Governance is highly effective. Governors have a precise understanding of the quality of the school's provision. They provide support and challenge to all leaders in equal measure.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While attendance is rising, the proportion of pupils who are absent from school remains slightly above national levels, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- Some most-able pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language do not make as much progress in mathematics as they should.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen those strategies that the school currently uses to improve the attendance of all pupils, but particularly disadvantaged pupils, so that attendance levels reach national levels.
- Raise the attainment in mathematics of the most-able pupils and those pupils for whom English is an additional language by deepening their understanding of mathematical concepts.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher, ably supported by governors and all leaders, has created an inclusive and welcoming culture at the school. Since the previous inspection, she has undertaken a thorough review of the quality of the school's provision for its pupils, their parents and the local community. In consultation with governors, staff, parents and pupils, she has created a vibrant vision that places the school at the heart of the local community, and an inclusive culture at the heart of the school's vision. Senior leaders and governors have high expectations of staff and pupils, and they model these expectations well in their own behaviour. It is no surprise that almost all parents who met with inspectors and who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said that they would recommend the school to others.
- There is a wide range of opportunities that enable pupils to broaden their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding comprehensively. The development of pupils' understanding of the multicultural society within which they live, and of the fundamental British values, is at the very heart of the school's work. Pupils study these values within their lessons and in assemblies. They also take part in trips and enrichment activities to secure their understanding of these values. Leaders closely monitor pupils' learning and the activities they undertake to ensure that their view of the different aspects of modern society is comprehensive. This includes checking that all pupils, during their time at the school, visit a place of worship for every religion in the local community. Consequently, pupils have a profound understanding of the multicultural nature of their school and the city within which they live. Furthermore, they demonstrate pride about and sensitivity towards each other's differences.
- Senior leaders use additional government funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils and to encourage all pupils to engage in sport and lead healthy lives. Senior leaders closely check the progress of disadvantaged pupils and provide appropriate support where pupils may have fallen behind. They regularly review this support and adapt it where it may not be having the required impact. Senior leaders have employed a sports coach to encourage all pupils to play sports and to provide staff with appropriate training. Senior leaders also use the sports coach to assist in supporting the vulnerable pupils.
- Leadership of the early years is good. The leader has a precise understanding of the quality of provision in the early years and has taken action to develop the quality of teaching further. Consequently, children's outcomes in the early years have improved and are now in line with national levels.
- Senior leaders provide close support for subject and phase leaders, particularly where those leaders are new to role. Because of this, leadership at all levels is strong.
- The management of teachers' performance is rigorous. Senior leaders and governors consider a range of information relating to teachers' performance when making decisions relating to salary progress.
- Senior leaders work effectively with subject leaders and phase leaders to monitor the quality of teaching. Teachers receive opportunities to work with each other and with colleagues from other schools to develop their own practice. The school also engages with networks that the local authority runs to share best practice and check the accuracy of their assessment of pupils' work. The overwhelming majority of teachers who expressed a view were very positive about the training opportunities they receive.
- Leaders at all levels regularly check the progress pupils make. Where they identify pupils who are falling behind, they put appropriate support in place to ensure that these pupils catch up quickly. Leaders, in turn, regularly review the effectiveness of this support.
- Leaders, teachers and support staff provide effective support for vulnerable pupils. The work of the behaviour and learning mentor, assisted by the sports coach, the induction mentor and the family support worker, has been successful in supporting pupils who are experiencing difficulties. Leaders also monitor behaviour closely and adopt appropriate strategies to meet any behavioural concerns that emerge. Consequently, there has been a significant reduction in the number of pupils who demonstrate challenging behaviours.
- The school's well-planned curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to develop their understanding across the full range of subjects. Enrichment activities such as cooking club, drama club, choir and home learning club enable pupils to secure their knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils who spoke with inspectors spoke very positively about their experience of learning at the school.
- The leadership of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs or disability is strong. The special educational needs coordinator tracks pupils' progress closely and ensures that appropriate support is in place where pupils require it. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs or disability make good progress, especially in key stage 1 and Years 3 and 4.

- Subject leaders have been quick to identify where the school's provision may not be so strong. They have taken action to resolve these issues. For example, the school has adopted a new system by which it teaches phonics (the link between letters and sounds) and has assessed pupils' reading levels in order to improve their communication skills. Consequently, there has been an improvement in pupils' reading skills across all years. Furthermore, the mathematics leader has taken action to deepen pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts. However, it is too early to measure the full impact of this work. Some most-able pupils and some pupils for whom English is an additional language do not, currently, make as much progress as they could in mathematics.
- All staff work effectively with parents to ensure that they engage well with their child's learning. The school runs popular workshops to encourage parents to come into the school and to help parents develop their own communication skills. These include the 'Big Cook Little Cook' club and a workshop that helps develop the English-speaking skills of those parents for whom English is an additional language. The school also employs a family support worker to assist families that are undergoing difficulties and to encourage pupils who are regularly absent to attend school. Because of this, levels of absence are steadily declining, although they remain slightly above national levels.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The highly knowledgeable and skilled governors have a precise understanding of the quality of provision that the school offers its pupils. Governors provide appropriate support to senior leaders and are tenacious in the challenge they offer. Governors undertake their own activities to check that the information they receive from senior leaders is accurate. In doing this, they are able to evaluate for themselves the quality of leadership in developing teaching and securing good outcomes for pupils.
 - Governors have a clear understanding of how senior leaders spend additional government funding and of the impact that this has on pupils' outcomes.
 - Governors are highly self-reflective. They undertake regular reviews of their own effectiveness. To this end, they have engaged with training that the local authority offers on effective governance. Governors review the cultural diversity of their membership. This is to ensure that it reflects accurately the multi-ethnicity of the school and local community.
 - Governors have a secure understanding of their responsibilities in relation to ensuring that pupils are safe. They are aware of the actions they must take where there is a safeguarding concern. They work closely with senior leaders to ensure that the school's safeguarding procedures are comprehensive.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff are highly vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe and cared for. Senior leaders work closely with parents and external agencies where they may have a concern regarding a pupil's safety or welfare. They make timely referrals where appropriate and are tenacious in ensuring that external agencies take appropriate action.
- Staff receive regular training relating to safeguarding, including training by the local authority. They are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and know the possible signs of abuse to look for in the pupils they teach. All staff have undergone training relating to female genital mutilation, and radicalisation and extremism.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching is good due to the close monitoring of teaching that leaders undertake. Leaders support teachers and teaching assistants to improve their practice by ensuring they receive appropriate training.
- Where learning is most effective, teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Teachers plan activities that engage with pupils' interest. Teachers regularly ask questions of pupils to check their understanding and clarify misconceptions. Where they identify pupils who are beginning to fall behind, teachers provide appropriate support. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, the teacher worked separately with a group of pupils who were struggling to understand how to tackle a problem. Because of this, pupils were able to answer the problem successfully.
- There are positive attitudes to learning in the classroom. This is due to the close relationship between the pupils and their teachers and the high level of challenge that teachers set their pupils. For example, in a Year 3 English lesson, pupils worked enthusiastically on editing written work they had completed the day before. They were able to develop their use of language because of the close support and challenge that they received from their teacher. A large majority of pupils who responded to the online questionnaire agreed that their teachers gave them challenging work. Almost all pupils said that they enjoy learning.

- Teachers work well with other adults present in the classroom in order to support pupils in their learning. Teaching assistants work with pupils in small groups or on a one-to-one basis to offer support and challenge. This enables pupils to secure their understanding and, where appropriate, develop it further.
- Teachers regularly set homework in order to extend pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- In line with the school policy, teachers provide regular feedback to improve pupils' understanding. Pupils respond well to this feedback. They use it well to improve their work and deepen their understanding.
- The school has recently adopted a new system to teach phonics. Because of this, children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 are increasingly able to tackle unfamiliar words and to recognise how to pronounce more complex words. This is enabling them to secure their reading and writing skills.
- Reading is encouraged throughout the school. Pupils are able to win points by reading books. These points contribute to the 'Reading Mile' (a chart, displayed in the main hall, which records how much pupils have read). Teachers celebrate reading with pupils at regular reading celebration assemblies. Parents for whom English is an additional language have come into school to read to pupils from a book in their native language. Because of this, pupils are keen readers and are able to communicate their ideas well.
- Teachers use assessment information well to plan their lessons to meet the needs of their pupils. Consequently, most pupils are able to engage in activities that develop their understanding effectively and enable them to demonstrate skills that are appropriate to their age. However, some most-able pupils and some pupils for whom English is an additional language do not make as much progress as they could in mathematics. This is because the work does not always sufficiently deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. All pupils who met the inspectors said that they enjoyed learning.
- Pupils are able to take advantage of a wide range of opportunities to develop their understanding of the world around them and the community within which they live. For example, each month, pupils learn about a new language and the culture from which it originates. Pupils have also engaged in a 'Who do you think you are?' activity with their parents. Through this, they have explored the different cultures that the parents come from. Inspectors observed an assembly that encouraged pupils to explore and be proud of the multicultural nature of the city. Such opportunities enable pupils to have a deep appreciation of their multicultural city, as well as the global community.
- Pupils have a very effective understanding of the need to be environmentally aware. Pupils run an eco-committee where they discuss how the school can be more environmentally friendly. These pupils monitor the environmental efficiency of each classroom, present assemblies to other pupils and measure the energy that the school's solar panels generate. These pupils have also made a video about their work that they presented at a national conference on the environment.
- Pupils have a profound sense of caring towards each other. Pupils act as buddies for their peers. Pupils offer opportunities to support other pupils at the 'Friendship Stop' (where pupils go when they may have had a disagreement with a friend). When speaking to inspectors about pupils who had complex emotional, behavioural or learning needs, pupils demonstrated exceptional sensitivity. They recognised how such needs were, in some cases, beyond the control of these pupils.
- Senior leaders provide pupils with valuable opportunities to take on positions of responsibility and to be involved in developing the school's provision. Members of the learning council, for example, work closely with senior leaders and governors in reviewing aspects of the school, including the curriculum, attitudes to learning and safety.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying, including cyber, physical, racial and transgender bullying. Pupils told inspectors that bullying rarely happens but that, where it does, teachers take it very seriously and deal with it effectively. The member of staff responsible for the school's anti-bullying policy monitors incidents of bullying closely. The school's records show that incidents of bullying are rare. Almost all parents, pupils and staff who responded to the respective online questionnaires agreed that teachers deal effectively with bullying, on those rare occasions it occurs.
- Pupils are aware of how to stay safe, including online.

- Teachers and support staff provide very effective support for vulnerable pupils, including those pupils who are in the care of the local authority. The behaviour and learning mentor and the sports coach, among others, work closely with pupils who demonstrate challenging behaviour and those who lack confidence. Pupils who met with inspectors said that they have adults they could speak with where they have a concern. They are secure in the knowledge that the adults will listen to them and take action to help resolve their concern.
- Pupils are able to take advantage of a wide range of opportunities to be healthy. The playgrounds for both key stages and for the early years have apparatus that pupils can use to play games. The school has used additional government funding effectively to provide a wide variety of sports clubs. These are very popular among the pupils. The pupils also learn about healthy eating.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and demonstrate a pride in their work.
- Pupils behave well around the school site at breaktime and lunchtime. Those pupils who inspectors met said that behaviour was good at the school.
- Senior leaders closely monitor behaviour. They take action where they identify patterns in pupils' behaviour. For example, they have increased the presence of staff at lunchtime, as senior leaders identified that patterns of behaviour at this point in the school day were different from other times.
- The school's behaviour culture, 'Good to be green', encourages pupils to behave positively and engage with their learning. Pupils receive rewards which contribute to their class and cross-school team rewards total. This encourages positive behaviour. It also deepens pupils' understanding of their place within the school community. The school records demonstrate that, as a result, incidents of poor behaviour have declined and that very few pupils engage in behaviour that is not positive.
- The school's rate of exclusion due to pupils' poor behaviour is extremely low.
- While reducing, the proportion of pupils who are absent from school, including those who are regularly absent, remains above national levels. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Achievement at key stages 1 and 2 is good. The proportion of pupils making the progress expected of them for their age and stage of education is in line with national levels, particularly in reading and writing.
- In 2015, pupils achieved well at key stage 2. The proportions of pupils who made the progress expected of them were in line with all pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, and above in writing. The school's current performance information indicates that the proportion of pupils making the progress expected of them in reading and writing is in line with national levels. Pupils are also making good progress in the other subjects they study. The work contained within the pupils' books that inspectors looked at confirmed this to be the case. However, the proportion of those pupils making the progress expected of them in mathematics is slightly below the national level. This is due to a small number of most-able pupils and pupils for whom English is an additional language who are not making as much progress as they could.
- In 2015, pupils' outcomes in key stage 1 were below the national level. Senior leaders closely analysed why this was the case and, rightly, took appropriate action. The majority of those pupils, who are now in Year 3, are now making rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is enabling them to catch up.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who pass the phonics test has been below national levels for the past two years. However, school performance information indicates that the proportion of pupils who will pass the test this year will be above national levels. This is due to the new phonics system that school leaders have introduced, which secures pupils' understanding of how to pronounce words correctly.
- The gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally closed in 2015 in key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. This is due to the close support that these pupils receive from their teachers and from other support staff. The majority of disadvantaged pupils currently at the school are making the progress expected of them for their age and stage of education.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability receive close support from adults to ensure that they are secure in their learning. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs or disability make good

progress, particularly in key stage 1 and Years 3 and 4. Pupils who do not make the progress expected of them receive further support, particularly to develop their confidence.

- The strong focus on reading that senior leaders have put in place has resulted in pupils being able to read well. The assessment of pupils' reading levels has enabled teachers to direct pupils more precisely to books that will develop their reading skills. Those pupils who read to an inspector did so fluently and were able to discuss what they had read.
- The most-able pupils make good progress, particularly in reading and writing. However, some most-able pupils do not make as much progress as they could in mathematics. This is because the work they complete does not always enable them to deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress in reading and writing. In 2015, the proportion of these pupils who made the progress expected of them in reading and writing was in line with national levels for similar pupils. However, some pupils for whom English is an additional language do not make as much progress as they could in mathematics. This is because they do not fully understand the mathematical concepts they are learning.
- The school supports pupils effectively as they prepare for the next step in their education. For example, before the end of each academic year, pupils spend time with the teacher they will have the following year. The school works closely with the local secondary school to ensure that pupils in Year 6 make a smooth transition to their next school. This process begins in Year 4, with pupils attending the local secondary school for an open day. Most pupils who responded to the online questionnaire said that they receive the right amount of information about their next steps.

Early years provision

is good

- The leader of the early years has a precise understanding of the quality of provision that the children receive. Her accurate review of the provision has enabled her to take appropriate action to raise standards where necessary. For example, the early years teachers now use a new system for teaching children phonics in order to secure their language skills.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers set activities which stretch and challenge children and enable them to develop their communication and mathematical skills well. Teachers and teaching assistants provide carefully designed activities to ensure that children have a secure understanding of the skills they are learning. Where they identify children who are falling behind, they provide extra support to ensure children's understanding is fully secure.
- The well-designed, theme-based curriculum enables children to engage well with their learning and develop their understanding of their communication and mathematical skills. Inspectors observed children undertaking a range of activities during which they explored their language skills and considered mathematical concepts such as shape and height.
- Children behave well in the early years. Inspectors observed children working on activities together. They were able to work cooperatively. This is due to the close relationship that children have with their teachers and other adults, and the clear routines that the teachers have established.
- Teachers work well with other adults to support children in their learning. Adults frequently ask questions to enable children to explore their thinking when they are completing tasks which the teacher has set, or when they are engaged in play.
- Previously, the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development has been below national levels. However, school performance information indicates that the proportion of children who will achieve a good level of development this year is in line with national levels. The children's work that inspectors looked at confirmed this to be the case. These improved outcomes are due to the action that the early years leader has undertaken to secure children's development of language and communication.
- The lead of the early years closely checks the progress of the disadvantaged children within its provision. She also checks the effectiveness of the school's use of the additional government funding that it receives to support these children. Because of the effective support they receive from the adults within the early years provision, disadvantaged children make good progress. For example, in 2015, all disadvantaged children achieved a good level of development.
- Adults who work in the early years are able to take advantage of training opportunities to improve their practice. For example, adults have received training on the use of the new system for teaching phonics.
- Teachers work closely with parents to support the children's development. The work of the induction mentor provides teachers with useful information relating to children's starting points upon arrival in the

early years. 'Read, steady, go!' (a programme to enable children to be ready for nursery) and 'morning target time' (where parents come in to support their children) provide teachers with further opportunities to discuss with parents their child's progress.

- Staff take children's safety very seriously. Staff undertake risk assessments for outdoor activities, and meet and greet children at the door every morning. Staff are aware of the action they must take where they have a concern regarding a child's welfare. The early years leader is one of the five designated safeguarding people at the school. She works closely with the headteacher to ensure the children within the early years are safe.

School details

Unique reference number	131002
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10001844

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	560
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cathy Brown
Headteacher	Nicky Kandola
Telephone number	01162 708326
Website	www.avenue.leicester.sch.uk
Email address	office@avenue.leicester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 December 2013

Information about this school

- Avenue Primary School is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is twice that of the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and for whom the school receives the pupil premium is 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 or disability is lower than the national average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils enter or leave the school at different times during the academic year.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons across all years. The lead inspector conducted three of these observations jointly with the headteacher. An inspector observed an assembly.
- Inspectors looked at a range of pupils' work, either in lessons or as a separate activity.
- Meetings took place with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, phase leaders, a group of staff and groups of pupils. The lead inspector met with eight representatives of the governing body and spoke with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors took into account 121 parental responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, the views of 73 pupils who completed the online questionnaire, and those of 55 members of staff who responded to their questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a variety of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation of its provision and its school improvement plan. Inspectors also considered information relating to safeguarding, governance, teaching and learning, achievement, and behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

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