

Inspection of Worthington School

Main Street, Worthington, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 1RQ

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 April 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 10 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils express genuine joy and gratitude to attend Worthington School. They say that teachers are wonderful and that they make learning fun. Parents, particularly parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), appreciate the individualised support and expert care that their children receive. They describe the school as 'an amazingly inclusive school where children progress really well across all areas of the curriculum'.

Pupils benefit from a glorious, well-resourced outdoor space. At social times they can play music and enjoy many activities. The pupil sport ambassadors work hard to encourage their peers to try out new games. Pupils play harmoniously. They say they 'really appreciate the privileges that the outdoor space provides'.

The expectations of pupils from all staff are extremely high. Pupils work hard and achievement has improved. Pupils, including children in the early years, conduct themselves in an exemplary manner. They are not fearful of bullying. They trust that any of their concerns will be swiftly resolved.

The school has a warm and caring culture. Pupils feel safe. Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful. The school is aptly described as a 'school family'.

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

The curriculum is ambitious. It is designed to ensure that pupils study all national curriculum subjects. Careful planning ensures that pupils acquire key knowledge and skills. They revisit learning so that it 'sticks in [their] head'. In art, for example, pupils explore a range of varied materials and media. They revisit and practise techniques. Consequently, they demonstrate greater mastery of the subject. They produce beautiful art work.

The phonics curriculum is well planned and sequenced. Pupils begin to learn to read as soon as they enter the early years. Pupils know the reading routines. They show enthusiasm when learning their letters and sounds. Pupils who need additional help to read receive support to catch up. Some of this support is inconsistent in quality. Some pupils do not catch up quickly enough. At times, this is due to poor attendance or being repeatedly late to school and routinely missing phonics learning.

The school is ambitious for pupils with SEND. Teaching assistants are well trained. They are particularly effective in their roles. The curriculum is suitably adapted.

Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. The school works closely with families and with external services. There is a range of help and support. In spite of this work, pupils' attendance is a concern and a leadership priority.

The school has recently adapted the start of the school day. More pupils now arrive at school on time. However, some pupils are routinely late to school. They miss important learning.

The early years leader is experienced and skilled. The early years curriculum is well designed. The learning needs of children, including those with SEND, are expertly met. The learning environment, including outdoors, is well organised and stimulating. Children are challenged and expertly supported.

Pupils benefit from a well-planned personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. They learn from experts who visit the school. Pupils are keen to share the opportunities that they have received to learn about British values. They speak confidently about the law, rules and respect. The school council takes its role in representing its peers seriously.

Pupils play an active role in the life of the community. They take part in the heritage weekend where the history of the village is celebrated. Trips, residential and events broaden their education, including of people of different faiths and cultures. Many pupils also take part in extra-curricular clubs and events.

The governing body shows great commitment to the school. Governors know the school well. They provide effective support and challenge.

Staff have strong subject knowledge. They receive appropriate training and professional development. They deliver the curriculum with accuracy and enthusiasm. They feel well supported by the headteacher. Staff say that she is kind, empathetic and caring. She supports workload and encourages staff's well-being. This is a community of staff, parents and pupils who are proud of their school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In spite of the help that some pupils receive, some do not learn to read quickly enough. This is a significant barrier to their learning. The school must ensure that the pupils who struggle to read catch-up quickly with their peers and become confident and accurate readers.
- The school works hard to ensure that pupils attend school. Even so, pupils' absence is too high. Some vulnerable pupils are persistently absent. Some pupils are regularly late. As a result, pupils miss valuable lessons, including phonics. Consequently, they develop gaps in their learning. The school must continue the work to ensure that pupils' absence decreases, and more pupils arrive to school on time.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	119954
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10324079
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kate Whitton
Headteacher	Natasha Clark
Website	www.worthington.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 and 6 February 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and a range of school staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and two governors. She spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art. As part of the deep dives, inspectors spoke with curriculum leaders to review the curriculum, visited lessons and considered pupils' work. They spoke with pupils and teachers. Inspectors also reviewed the curriculum plans in history and science. The reviewed samples of pupils' work in these subjects.
- Inspectors visited the early years provision and met with the early years lead.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at various times of the school day, including the start and end of the day and at lunchtime and breaktime.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the survey of school staff.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Rob Cruise

Ofsted Inspector

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