

Inspection of Hardwick Primary School

Dover Street, Derby, Derbyshire DE23 6QP

Inspection dates:	25 and 26 February 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The head of school is Randhir Sandhu. This school is part of Derby Diocesan Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Dr Sarah Clark, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Dr Sarah Charles. There is also an executive headteacher, Jonathan Gallimore, who is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school are happy and well cared for. They thrive in a nurturing environment where they feel safe and valued. Staff know each pupil well. Pupils trust the adults in school to help them whenever they face concerns or worries. This warm, supportive environment ensures that pupils feel secure and confident as part of the school community.

The school's 'care' values encourage pupils to try their best and enjoy their learning. The school sets high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils rise to these expectations. They are motivated and keen to learn. Pupils work hard in lessons and behave well. They are polite, courteous and keen to earn 'positive points' for their efforts.

The school meticulously plans many rich and purposeful experiences to broaden pupils' horizons. These experiences include visits to the seaside, residentials and trips to places of worship. Pupils proudly take on responsibilities, such as school and sports councillors. They make a tangible difference to the school. The school meals committee had an important voice in deciding what should be on the dinner menu, as well as being vital taste testers. The sports committee plays a crucial role in shaping the school's extra-curricular offer.

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

The school has carefully constructed a well-sequenced curriculum that begins in the early years. It has identified the specific knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to know and remember. The school has ensured that pupils' knowledge builds progressively. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their learning. In a small number of subjects, the activities that pupils undertake do not consistently help them to achieve the aims of the highly ambitious curriculum. Consequently, pupils do not achieve as well as they could in these subjects.

The school's published outcomes for 2024 show that the proportion of pupils who met the expected standards in reading and mathematics in key stage 2 was below the national average. Many pupils had only benefited from the school's well-designed curriculum for a short period of time, as they had joined the school at various stages. This cohort was also affected by a number of staff changes. Current pupils are achieving well across a range of subjects.

Oracy and language development are given a high priority. Children gain a love of language in the early years through frequent exposure to rhymes, songs and stories. Staff choose suitable literature to develop pupils' vocabulary and enrich the subject curriculums. Well-targeted phonics teaching begins straight away for children in Reception. Staff support pupils well in blending sounds to read words. They provide extra help for pupils who fall behind. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive bespoke support and soon become confident readers. The school skilfully identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and adapts the learning so that these pupils access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

In the early years, the planned learning and resources promote children's social, emotional and physical development well. Children are confident, curious and independent learners. However, routines are not consistently well established. Staff expectations are not always clear. This leads to some lost learning opportunities.

The support for pupils who speak English as an additional language is a strength of the school. Close support from skilled staff enables these pupils to quickly settle in, make friends and access their learning alongside their peers. Pupils celebrate the diversity that is found in their school with pride.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is typically calm, caring and harmonious. Pupils learn how to recognise and manage their emotions. The school leaves no stone unturned in its quest to improve attendance. This work has borne fruit. Attendance is rising, and persistent absence has reduced drastically.

The personal, social and health education curriculum is exceptionally well crafted. It gives pupils a thorough understanding of important values. Pupils' knowledge of these values and the protected characteristics is exemplary. They are proud of their beautifully presented spiritual, moral, social and cultural books. The school's 'fab forty' offer ensures that pupils receive a wealth of wider experiences. Pupils make vital contributions to school life and the wider community, which prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

A strong team spirit exists. Leaders are very mindful of staff workload and well-being. Trustees and the local academy committee understand the school's priorities. They offer effective support and challenge to improve the quality of education for pupils. The school is a very special place, being described by pupils as 'an amazing and wonderful paradise'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the activities that pupils undertake do not support them consistently to achieve the intended goals of the ambitious curriculum. Some pupils complete work that is not ambitious enough. When this occurs, pupils do not progress as well as they could through the curriculum. The school should ensure that staff devise ambitious learning activities that help pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- In the early years, routines are not consistently well established. Staff expectations of children are not always clear. This leads to some children becoming disengaged and opportunities for learning are lost. When this is the case, children's behaviour has an impact on others. The school should ensure that there is a shared understanding of

routines and expectations in the early years. The school should make sure that this is implemented consistently so that all children learn how to work well together.

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	143875
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10347654
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	593
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Dr Sarah Charles
CEO of the trust	Dr Sarah Clark
Headteacher	Jonathan Gallimore (Executive Headteacher) Randhir Sandhu (Head of School)
Website	www.hardwickprimaryschoolderby.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is part of Derby Diocesan Academy Trust. However, the school does not have a religious character.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and a range of staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust and members of the local academy committee, including the chair of the committee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, religious education, physical education and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. In addition, they met with pupils informally and formally to hear their views.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers through their responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered the views of staff through Ofsted's online survey for staff. Inspectors spoke to some parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Kirsty Norbury, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Emma Tayler

Ofsted Inspector

Tim Leah

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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