

Inspection of a good school: Dovelands Primary School

Hinckley Road, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE3 0TJ

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 January 2022

Outcome

Dovelands Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils speak highly of this friendly school. They are proud that their school is 'rights respecting' and that their teachers listen to them. They enjoy celebrating each other's languages, cultures and traditions in this happy school.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils are keen to read and enjoy a variety of books and poems. They use their arithmetic well and explain solutions in mathematics. Pupils enjoy learning. For example, older pupils understand why people migrated to Leicester. They learn to care about the wider world. They plant trees, learn about deforestation for profit, and explain that 'you can't breathe money'.

Pupils behave well. They are focused on their learning and classrooms are calm. They relish responsibilities, such as being library monitors and technicians. They represent their school in sports competitions and online conferences. They are keen to earn house points and win the house trophy. They appreciate experiences such as dance and gardening lessons. Pupils say bullying rarely happens. They trust adults to help them solve issues fairly.

Parents and carers say their children feel happy and safe. Opportunities to promote pupils' emotional and physical well-being are well considered. Pupils are thoughtful and responsible.

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

Leaders ensure that pupils follow a broad and relevant curriculum. Teachers make sure that pupils learn and build key knowledge in all subjects. In history, for example, pupils explore the idea of monarchy and they build their chronological knowledge across the year groups. Leaders complement classroom learning with other opportunities, such as visits to museums and online talks with experts, to enhance learning. Teachers use different ways to check pupils' learning in English and mathematics. However, assessment is not consistent in other subjects.

Leaders make sure reading is a top priority. They say: 'It is the key to academic success.' They carefully select books, including poetry, stories, non-fiction and those linked to topics. Leaders make sure that phonics is taught well from the start of Reception. Pupils are given books that match their reading abilities. In Nursery, adults prepare children for Reception by developing listening and language skills. Older pupils read with fluency and confidence. Pupils who are falling behind receive the right support so that they can catch up. Staff promote a love of reading and of books. Teachers read to pupils every day to nurture a love of reading and to extend pupils' vocabulary. Many pupils understand the complex language in the books that they read.

Leaders ensure that the mathematics curriculum is well planned. Teachers have sound subject knowledge. They enable pupils to build their knowledge systematically. They explain new learning clearly and check pupils' understanding. Pupils regularly practise arithmetic so that they can quickly calculate accurately. They have good understanding and explain their approach to solving problems.

Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have access to the same curriculum as other pupils. Teachers adapt the curriculum and ensure that pupils are given the right support. Teachers quickly spot when pupils need additional help. Leaders check pupils' needs and make sure the right support is put in place.

Leaders prioritise pupils' mental and physical well-being. Pupils learn the importance of respecting difference, including different beliefs and lifestyles. They experience varied opportunities to build their understanding of being responsible citizens. For example, they fundraise for local and national charities.

Leaders make sure that children quickly settle into the routines in Nursery and Reception classes. Adults build strong relationships with children. Children confidently take part in stimulating activities. Teachers make sure every activity builds up children's learning. Leaders provide effective training so all adults support children well. Children learn and practise lots of new vocabulary. Leaders ensure children have a strong basis to build on. However, leaders have not clearly identified all of the key knowledge children need to prepare them for learning in Year 1.

Staff say that they enjoy their work. They are committed to working as a team. They feel valued and supported. They appreciate quality training. Staff share leaders' and governors' vision for high standards for every child.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They receive regular training. They know to share information quickly, as the slightest concern could be important.

Leaders ensure pre-employment recruitment checks are thorough. They log welfare concerns diligently. They work well with other agencies. They are tenacious in seeking the right support for pupils when needed.

Pupils know they can share any worries they may have with a trusted adult. Pupils learn about respecting personal space. In addition, older pupils learn about respectful relationships and consent. Pupils are taught to be alert to the risks and benefits of the online world.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that pupils have consistent opportunities to recall and remember their learning in all subjects. Teachers do not consistently assess and use assessment information to progress pupils' learning in all foundation subjects. Leaders should ensure teachers assess and provide pupils with regular opportunities to recall and remember their learning in all subjects.
- Leaders have identified what they want pupils to know and remember from Year 1 to Year 6 in all subjects. They have not identified the most important knowledge that they want children in the early years to learn, as the starting point for foundation subjects. It is not clear how the topics children study in the early years are teaching the key knowledge and skills they need as they move into key stage 1. Leaders should ensure they identify the key knowledge children should learn in the early years to best prepare them for their future learning.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

Unique reference number	130927
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10211531
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	556
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kate Gerrard
Headteacher	Sara McAdam
Website	www.dovelands.leicester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 September 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school currently has two acting deputy headteachers. The special needs co-ordinator was new to post in August 2021 and the early years foundation leader was new to post in October 2021.
- The school has a Nursery class.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, acting deputy headteachers, assistant headteacher, and other leaders.

- The inspector met with the vice-chair of governors and four other governors. A meeting was held when the inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector considered a range of documents, including school policies.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. This included a meeting with subject leaders, visiting lessons and speaking with teachers. The inspector listened to pupils reading to adults, considered curriculum plans and scrutinised samples of pupils' work. The inspector looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other subjects, including geography, art and computer studies.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils. The inspector visited the breakfast club and the playground at lunchtime.
- The single central record was scrutinised as part of the inspection of safeguarding. The inspector spoke with a range of staff and pupils and considered safeguarding records. This included a meeting with safeguarding leaders.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Also, consideration was given to the 92 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the 92 responses to the free-text facility. Also, a consideration was given to 28 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 92 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Mandy Wilding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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