

# Dove Bank Primary School

Off Rutland Road, Kidsgrove, Stoke-on-Trent, ST7 4AP

**Inspection dates** 5–6 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The school leadership has improved teaching and learning since the previous inspection. As a result, attainment has risen strongly and achievement is now good.
- The good progress children make in Nursery and Reception prepares them well for their work in Year 1 and beyond.
- Teachers' performance is managed well. This ensures pupils' work is almost always at the right level, and any underachievement is quickly tackled.
- The way different subjects are brought together in topics makes learning exciting for pupils, especially because they have a say in the direction their learning might take.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for. They enjoy school and generally behave well. They know how to keep themselves safe.
- The governing body is well informed about attainment and progress, as well as teaching. Governors support this improving school well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to sharpen mathematical skills by using them in different subjects.
- Opportunities are missed to mark and improve writing that occurs in different subjects, and not all marking is equally good.
- The whole-school targets set for pupils' attainment and progress are not ambitious enough, and class targets are too general for each pupil individually.
- The criteria by which the school measures its progress towards its stated priorities are not precise enough.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 16 lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher. They also observed play and lunchtimes, and visited the breakfast club.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff, and a representative of the local authority.
- The views of the 31 parents who replied to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were analysed. Other parents' views were sought informally at the start of each school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school improvement plan and the school's self-evaluation document. They also examined the work in pupils' books, visited the nurture group and sampled sessions where pupils were learning letters and sounds (phonics). They also listened to pupils read.

## Inspection team

Doris Bell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Faheem Chishti

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and children from armed-forces families, is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is above average, as is the proportion who are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has its own breakfast club. It also operates nurture provision for pupils who need it.
- The school does not use alternative provision for pupils offsite.

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

- Improve teaching even more by building on the work already done to improve writing and mathematics by:
  - ensuring writing skills are marked equally well in all subjects and bringing all marking up to the quality of the best
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and extend their mathematical skills in different subjects.
- Make the targets set for pupils to achieve more demanding by:
  - taking greater account of the good progress pupils now make in different year groups to set more ambitious targets for pupils year on year
  - giving pupils individual targets that include the smaller steps needed to reach and exceed class targets and, therefore, make even better progress.
- Sharpen school improvement planning by:
  - linking priorities more closely to improving pupils' rates of progress, and
  - using quantifiable criteria, such as the overall proportions of pupils expected to reach particular levels, for judging the success of the priorities for improvement that are set.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with skills below those typical for their age. The strong upward trend in attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 since the previous inspection gave the school its highest ever test results in 2012. Those results took reading and writing to just above average for the first time, and brought mathematics up to average. Pupils' work and data tracking their progress held by the school show that the upward trend is continuing. Given their starting points, pupils achieve well.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They read well, using their phonic skills effectively to read and spell new words. Their reading is fluent but not always expressive. Spelling, grammar and punctuation are usually accurate. Pupils learn from a young age how to adapt their writing to suit different purposes and audiences. For example, Reception children learned how to use bullet points and write shopping lists, while Year 6 pupils wrote well, explaining their scientific investigation.
- Pupils readily write in different subjects but they do not always remember to use the skills they learn in literacy when they do so. This is because written work is not marked well enough – except in literacy, itself – and class targets are not broken down for individual pupils to remind each one, personally, what needs to be done to improve.
- Pupils enjoy solving problems in mathematics. They learn the importance of mathematics in everyday life, for example, as they learn to use money. They do not have enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects, therefore missing opportunities to take that learning further.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. They are supported well in their learning by having clear individual improvement targets that are kept under constant review. Support staff are familiar with these targets and adjust learning to suit each individual's needs.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium also make good progress. The school uses the money it receives for these pupils effectively to close gaps in their learning, and bring their attainment in English and mathematics up to that of others in the school. The funding enables the pupils to be taught in smaller groups, receive help from additional adults, or, where relevant, attend the 'nurture group' where they learn to control behaviour and develop good attitudes to learning.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection, and is now sometimes outstanding. Planning of learning is detailed and thorough. In English and mathematics, it is securely based on what teachers learn from marking pupils' work, and activities are often adjusted during lessons depending on the rate at which pupils are learning. However, planning of learning does not always give pupils enough opportunity to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects.
- Phonics are taught well. The school is justifiably proud of the results of the national phonics screening check for pupils in Year 1. Pupils' results in 2012 were well above the national average for all groups of pupils.
- Teachers use support staff well, always making sure they are fully briefed and understand how

to move learning on. This is particularly helpful for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those for whom the school receives pupil premium funding. Support staff also make a valuable contribution to the personal and academic progress of pupils who attend the 'nurture group'.

- The good rapport between pupils and staff develops good attitudes to learning in pupils, secured by the effective management of pupils' behaviour. Good relationships are enhanced by the different ways in which staff teach the pupils and successfully encourage them to take some control of their own learning. In an excellent Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils were frequently asked to check their work against the clearly displayed 'success ladder'. This practice led to some high-quality writing.
- Teachers' marking gives praise and support. However, it does not always show pupils clearly how to improve their work when they are writing in subjects other than in literacy. When it does focus enough on improvement, teachers make sure pupils have time to respond and do corrections, and this takes progress even further forward.
- The absence of individual improvement targets for pupils to aim for means that, while pupils know they are working towards the class target, they are not clear enough about what they personally need to do to reach it. Nevertheless, during whole-class sessions, particularly at the ends of lessons, teachers often use pupils' work well to show others how they might improve theirs.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils generally get on well with each other. They listen attentively, concentrate and persevere with their tasks, and help each other in lessons. They enjoy learning and are keen to do well. They say the different approaches teachers take make learning fun. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and most pupils attend regularly.
- All pupils spoken to said they feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet or mobile phones. They have many opportunities to use computers to enhance their learning, and make good use of them as a learning tool.
- Pupils say behaviour is usually good, although there is sometimes some skirmishing, arguing, or falling out. They know the difference between falling out and bullying, which they describe as day-to-day harassment that includes name calling, pushing, shoving and threatening someone. They also know that they should report bullying of any sort, and say staff deal with it quickly when it is reported. Pupils trust the staff to help them should they have any concerns.
- Some parents raised concerns about how the school deals with bullying. Inspectors examined the systems and procedures in place to deal with it and found them to be appropriate. They also found that pupils understand the systems, and appreciate the rewards and sanctions in place to encourage good behaviour.
- Pupils like the way subjects are linked together, and think they are taught well. They have lots of opportunities to help around school and take responsibility. They particularly enjoy the many extra activities, such as the 'take-over' day when older pupils ran the school and taught younger ones, and the many clubs and activities available to them especially within the sports and arts.
- Pupils raise money for different charities and, through the school council, know their views are heard and valued. The well-attended breakfast club ensures the day starts positively for those

who use it. Pupils also appreciate the good range of visits, visitors and, also well-attended, after-school activities that enrich their learning and personal development.

## **The leadership and management** are good

- The local authority provides 'light touch' support for this improving school. It recognises that the school has the capacity to improve further on the upward trend of the past three years. The senior leadership team is fully committed to securing that improvement. Staff and governors share their commitment.
- Staff respond well to advice. They feel well supported, for example, through professional development opportunities that include having time to observe and work alongside each other to share good practice. The school's self-evaluation and monitoring of teaching are rigorous and accurate, and teachers' performance is managed well.
- The school has worked hard to increase parental involvement in their children's learning. Its success is most evident in the pupils' improved attendance, and in the increasing involvement of the parent-teacher association in, for example, raising funds for specific projects.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is managed well, as is the provision for children in Nursery and Reception. Safeguarding procedures, including for child protection, meet current requirements and all training is up to date. The school is vigilant in protecting pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- Pupils are taught a wide range of subjects, often in exciting ways, in topics designed to appeal to them and in which they have a say. Pupils' personal development is promoted well in all subjects. Writing skills are also given due emphasis, but marking is not consistently good when pupils write in subjects other than in literacy lessons. The school has recently had training on how to promote mathematical skills in different subjects but has not yet had time to implement the strategies learned.
- Although leaders are properly ambitious for the school to go further forward and have made impressive improvements since the previous inspection, whole-school targets for pupils' attainment and progress are not, now, ambitious enough. School development planning is not fully linked to pupils' rates of progress and there is, therefore, a lack of quantifiable criteria linked to attainment and progress to judge whether targets are fully met.
- Pupils are successfully taught to reflect on their learning and behaviour, to grow in confidence and to consider others. The school promotes equality of opportunity well by building into different subjects opportunities for pupils to learn the importance of respecting others, regardless of their background.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body knows where teaching is more or less strong. It is involved in managing teachers' performance and ensuring that teachers' targets link to the priorities in the school improvement plan. However, the plan itself is not specific enough about how much pupils' progress is intended to improve through achieving those priorities. Governors make sensible decisions about staffing, and help the headteacher to make decisions about pay, for example, when to reward good performance or tackle underperformance. Governors receive good information about pupils' performance and they understand what the data tells them about how well the school is doing. However, they do not take enough account of the faster progress pupils are now making when they set the whole-school targets each year.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124089
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	406213

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	195
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carol Reddish
<b>Headteacher</b>	Eithna Ford
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 May 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01782 296786
<b>Fax number</b>	01782 296786
<b>Email address</b>	office@dovebank.staffs.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

