

Dovelands Primary School

Hinckley Road, Leicester, Leicestershire LE3 0TJ

Inspection dates

14–15 September 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, supported well by governors, have worked determinedly to improve the quality of teaching and instil a strong ethos and culture of high expectations.
- The school is a purposeful and calm place where strong values underpin all that takes place. Relationships are strong and equality and respect are high on the agenda.
- Practice in the early years is robust. Children settle quickly and are given a good start to their education.
- Pupils enjoy attending school. They feel safe, behave well, enjoy learning and are proud of their school.
- The quality of teaching is good. This, coupled with pupils' excellent attitudes towards their learning, results in their making good progress.
- The school provides a wide range of varied opportunities that enable pupils to grow into confident young people and prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- Pupil premium funding could be better targeted in order to further increase the progress of disadvantaged pupils, particularly those who are most able.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics is not as strong as it is in other areas.
- Leadership roles in the foundation subjects require development to make them more effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that disadvantaged pupils make even more progress as they journey through the school so that a greater number of them reach the standards achieved nationally by non-disadvantaged pupils by:
 - being sharper and more rigorous with the analysis of performance data and use this information to better inform the school's spending of the pupil premium funding
 - ensure that the most able disadvantaged pupils reach the same high standards as non-disadvantaged pupils nationally who had the same starting points.
- Further improve the leadership of mathematics by ensuring that teachers have the necessary subject knowledge within mathematics to provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their key mathematical skills across the wide curriculum in order to deepen their understanding.
- Further develop the role of foundation subject leaders so that they have the same impact on raising standards as seen in the core subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, ably supported by the governing body, has managed the school through a period of change. They have not shied away from difficult decisions, in order to create a culture where the whole school community is committed to high expectations and excellence.
- The headteacher and senior leaders ensure that the pupils are at the heart of every decision as they relentlessly endeavour to improve the school.
- The special educational needs leader is a real strength within the school. She sets high expectations for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for the staff who teach them. New staff are trained to ensure that they can identify pupils' needs. Home visits are arranged to help transition into school for those pupils joining the school who are known to have special education needs and/or disabilities. Likewise, extra transition sessions at the end of key stage 2 help pupils settle into their secondary education.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is good. Joint lesson observations with inspectors during the inspection showed that senior leaders have a sound understanding of the effectiveness of teaching across the school. This was further supported when analysing the school's own monitoring documentation, which clearly outlines strengths and areas where improvements are required.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive effective professional development opportunities. Staff report that they feel supported in their careers and appreciate the outward-looking approach that the school takes. They work collaboratively with other schools to moderate work and outcomes and share expertise. Teaching assistants meet weekly with a senior leader to discuss their needs and training opportunities.
- Leaders are very clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses and as such do not hesitate to seek support from outside the school where it is needed. They work well with a range of outside agencies and Christ the King Academy, an outstanding local school, which has been of great support during the past couple of years.
- Leadership of the core subjects is strong. There is a clear focus on supporting vulnerable groups. Through close monitoring and close liaison with staff such as the special education needs and inclusion leaders, precise intervention and support programmes are swiftly put in place. The mathematics leader, in particular, has been pragmatic and is in the early stages of incorporating the subject into other areas of the curriculum. She has influenced the way mathematics can be used in other subject areas and then monitors that it is being used at the appropriate level.
- The role of the foundation subject leaders (staff who lead subjects such as history, geography or art) requires further development. They know about the work that pupils undertake throughout the school but do not, as yet, know how this compares with standards in other schools. Neither have they been directly involved in improving the quality of teaching and learning in their subject area and thus further raising standards.
- The school has developed a curriculum which ensures that pupils receive rich, varied, broad and balanced experiences. This is further enriched by a host of extra-curricular activities. The articles of Unicef are at the heart of everything the school does. This enables the school to deliver a curriculum which is underpinned by such characteristics as equality whilst promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

and increasing their awareness of British values.

Governance of the school

- Governors are passionate about the school. They clearly know the school's strengths and weaknesses and are committed to addressing their identified areas for improvement. They hold the school to account through their probing and questioning. They review performance information, visit the school regularly to carry out their own monitoring activities and ensure that the school works with other schools and outside bodies to validate the work of the school.
- Governors ensure that they are kept up to date and seek out ways to develop their skills. They take part in safeguarding training, safer recruitment training and performance information analysis training so that they can hold the school to account in these very important areas.
- Governors challenge the school about decisions that are made and priorities that are identified. Therefore, development planning, action plans and the school's own self-evaluation documentation are not just 'rubber stamped' by governors – on the contrary, they strategically oversee the school's development by questioning, contributing and giving much consideration before 'signing off' plans. Equally, the performance management of staff is extremely rigorous. Pay progression is far from automatic – if targets are not met then staff do not progress. The headteacher's targets are challenging in order to bring about whole-school improvement.
- Governors check that the government's pupil premium funding and sports funding are spent effectively and they measure the success and impact of this spending. However, the school's allocation of funding, what it had been spent on and its impact have not been shared with parents or indeed the wider community through the school's website. However, this omission is due to this area of the website currently being updated.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Governors do not just ensure compliance with the law, but have, with school leaders and staff, created a 'safeguarding culture' within school where all members of the school community, including the pupils themselves, know how to keep pupils as safe as possible.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers know their pupils well. They tailor questions to move each individual pupil's learning forward. Challenging questions make pupils think or expand on an answer they have already given. Pupils are encouraged to speak in order to build their confidence.
- Teachers encourage pupils to share their thoughts through collaborative work with their peers. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils were using 'Thinking Hats' to review information from the text 'Friend or Foe'. This helped them discuss and question not only the facts, but to share feelings and emotions, present worst- and best-case scenarios and encouraged them to look at situations from different points of view.
- Teachers constantly check on the accuracy of pupils' work and they address misconceptions quickly. Teachers quickly identify the need to provide additional challenge. Teachers' marking is kept simple so that it is clear and effective. It highlights what pupils have done well and gives them a 'next step' for improvement. Often the

comments will ask pupils to improve an element of their work and pupils nearly always respond to this. All of this bespoke guidance enables pupils to make good and often rapid progress.

- Teachers explain things very carefully in order to help pupils achieve similar quality. They also share good-quality examples of work produced by other pupils for evaluation as well as celebration purposes.
- Through liaison with the special educational needs leader, teachers ensure inclusiveness. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have their needs effectively met within the classroom alongside their peers. They are well supported with appropriate learning activities and strategies and flourish in this environment. Likewise, the teachers are now much more aware of who their disadvantaged pupils are and through interventions funded by the pupil premium they ensure that most of them make good progress.
- The learning environment supports pupils' learning. Pupils report how they can refer to information around the classroom, prompts, guides and modelling from the teacher about what they have been taught. 'This means we do not need to disturb the teacher when she is working with another group,' explained one pupil. Pupils are also a great support to each other. One Year 3 pupil in an English lesson wrote the incorrect word ending and was gently corrected by his friend. This is reflective of the school ethos and culture.
- Teachers have high expectations. They help pupils develop good attitudes to learning and make activities fun. This mixture of ingredients ensures that pupils remain engaged and enthused from the beginning to the end of lessons and make good progress. Pupils in one class were still highly enthused from the previous day's 'Roald Dahl Day,' when they had all come to school dressed as a Roald Dahl character. Inspired by this event they now created menus for Mr and Mrs Twit's dinner, their imaginations running away with them. Focusing on alliteration, one Year 3 pupil wrote, 'Gruesome gravy and smelly slug salad.' In a Year 5 lesson where some pupils were discussing the ethics behind Red Riding Hood shooting the wolf, one pupil clearly enjoying the subject said, 'It really gets your imagination going.'
- The teaching of phonics is effective and results in pupils making good progress, gaining a strong phonological awareness and moving on to become fluent readers. Teachers' subject knowledge in this area is strong and they use this to reinforce these skills across the whole curriculum.
- Subject knowledge in mathematics is less strong and therefore the activity that teachers have designed does not always bring about the learning they intended. Neither is their subject knowledge sufficient to enable them to plan and deliver activities which encourage pupils to apply key mathematical skills in meaningful ways in order to deepen their understanding.
- The teaching of physical education is good. The sports funding has been used to employ a sports specialist teacher. Teaching and learning are of a high quality and have led to more pupils taking up extra-curricular sport and the school experiencing great success at competition level.
- There are good partnerships between teachers and parents. Home visits to pre-school children take place. There is an expectation that parents listen to their children read for homework and record it in reading records. This, along with the progress information that parents receive about their child, are some examples of how the school enables

parents to be involved in the teaching and learning of their children. One parent reported that the school goes above and beyond expectations in supporting their child at both school and home.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. The school teaches e-safety effectively and as a result pupils are well aware of the potential dangers that exist online and know what to do to safeguard themselves.
- Pupils hold their school in high regard. They are proud to be a part of it. One older pupil openly stated, 'I will be sorry to leave this school.'
- There is a culture of respect throughout the school. This is promoted well through the articles of Unicef, which are very prominent in the daily life of the school. Pupils are attentive to each other and listen respectfully to each other's views. They help one another in class and look out for each other informally or through more structured initiatives such as the 'Peer Leaders' scheme.
- The school promotes British values well. This can be seen in practice around the school. During a Year 6 class discussion, one group of pupils considered that even during war, we are all equal because people on both sides are human beings. Pupils talk confidently about all British values such as 'the rule of law' and 'democracy'. They cite examples where they have the opportunity to express these values such as hustings and elections held to be a school councillor or the rigorous application and interview process to become a teacher, teaching assistant or headteacher on 'Takeover Day'.
- Pupils' health and fitness are promoted well through a wide range of sporting and extra-curricular activities. They understand the importance of exercise, diet and healthy choices.
- Pupils are well supervised and cared for. Pupils can instantly name members of staff that they would go to if they had a problem. They find staff approachable and supportive. Adults around school carefully consider 'what' and 'how' they say things to pupils. They are well aware that they are role models and that what they say can have a profound impact on pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare. They work hard to instil confidence in their pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- They conduct themselves well around school, showing consideration for each other. They work collaboratively together in lessons with enthusiasm and often help each other if someone is stuck!
- Pupils are polite and well mannered. The school is orderly and calm. Pupils hold doors open for each other and line up in a sensible manner. There are plenty of smiles, pleases and thank-yous!
- Pupils report that they enjoy coming to school and as a result their attendance is good. The ever-increasing activities on offer for both boys and girls clearly make school an exciting place to be.

- School keeps detailed logs of any incidents and these are followed up appropriately. The 'Good to be Green' initiative ensures that pupils who do the right thing are rewarded. Pupils report that bullying is rare and would not be tolerated by the school. Exclusions are also uncommon.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- From their individual starting points, pupils make good progress throughout the school across a wide range of subjects. In 2015 and 2016, by the end of key stage 2, pupils reached standards that were at least in line with those seen nationally in mathematics and all elements of English. In most cases, standards were well above national.
- Published performance information shows that standards by the end of key stage 1 were below those seen nationally in 2015. However, pupils had made good progress from their starting points. Work in pupils' books shows that they make good progress across a variety of subjects in key stage 1.
- Pupils' awareness of phonics is good and they apply their skills well across the curriculum. They know how to decode unfamiliar and difficult words. The proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the phonics screening check by the end of Year 1 is in line with that seen nationally.
- There is a strong emphasis on reading as a life skill and reading for enjoyment. Most-able readers read with fluency and great expression and those that find reading more difficult are well equipped with the skills to overcome difficult words.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not consistently make sufficient progress to ensure that the remaining differences diminish between their achievement and that of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. Pupil premium funding is not specifically targeted at the most able disadvantaged pupils to ensure that they achieve as well as non-disadvantaged pupils nationally from similar starting points.
- Work in pupils' books throughout key stage 2 shows that pupils make good progress. They write at length and have opportunities to write for a purpose across the curriculum. As a result, writing from Year 3 to Year 6 has improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils are given opportunities to apply mathematical skills to real-life problems. In some disadvantaged pupils' books there was evidence of the pupils applying their mathematics to real-life problems with success as they worked out the timings of a football match and the cost of a new school floor. The progress that pupils now make in mathematics has improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to the precise intervention they receive. One parent of a pupil who has special educational needs described the 'immense progress' that their child had made since starting at the school.
- The most able pupils make good progress across the school. This is due to the levels of challenge that most teachers give in their feedback and the opportunities they take during lessons to further extend pupils' learning.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress. This is due to pupils having early effective support put in place. Some pupils are disadvantaged, have special educational needs and/or disabilities and speak English as an additional language. Although large, the school knows its pupils well enough to cater for their

individual needs and as such these pupils are supported well to make good progress.

- Pupils make good progress across the wider curriculum. The quality of physical education (PE) teaching they receive means that they can compete against other schools with success. Their knowledge is enriched about exercise and healthy living whilst essential English, mathematical and science skills are reinforced. One PE lesson saw Reception children naming parts of the body and being 'as small as a mouse!'

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter school with a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding and many have starting points well below those typically expected for their age. From these starting points, children make good progress. By the time they are ready to move into Year 1, many of them have caught up and are demonstrating skills, knowledge and understanding typical for their age. In 2014, only approximately half of the pupils had achieved a good level of development ready for key stage 1. This number has risen year on year and in 2016, nearly three quarters of the children achieved a good level of development.
- The leaders in the early years have an accurate view of the strengths of the team, resources and environment at their disposal. They utilise these to ensure quality in the teaching and learning provided so that children make good progress. They are able to accurately identify their own areas for improvement.
- Accurate assessment is a result of constant communication between adults in school and parents. At every opportunity throughout the day, observations and discussions are recorded so that adults can plan precise and effective next steps for each individual.
- Leaders work with a local network of schools to benchmark the practice of the school, ensure that assessments are secure and access high-quality professional development. Good practice has been shared across these schools.
- There are high expectations within the early years. Leaders set non-negotiable targets with staff to ensure that children with low starting points catch up.
- Where children have not met age-related outcomes by the end of the Reception Year, leaders ensure that they are tracked carefully through key stage 1 and interventions are put in place to ensure that they catch up.
- Parents express their appreciation for the effective communication which starts very early with home visits. This ensures that transition is smooth and stress free for both children and parents and enables children to settle quickly.
- The school helps promote and build important and valuable characteristics such as independence and resilience from the beginning. Children are given a wide choice of activities and encouraged to move freely between the activities. One child who fell out of a low-level tree she was climbing said that she would try climbing it again the next day so that she gets better at climbing.
- The early years does not give children enough opportunities to link with the rest of the school. Therefore, opportunities for older pupils to act as role models or beacons of inspiration are missed. Nursery and Reception do not collaborate as well as they could in order to benefit from each other.

School details

Unique reference number	130927
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10019559

This inspection of the school 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	569
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wendy Martin
Headteacher	Sara McAdam
Telephone number	01162 857 716
Website	www.dovelands.leicester.sch.uk
Email address	office@dovelands.leicester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 September 2014

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- The school meets government floor standards.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of the 2015/16 information about its pupil premium allocation, what it has spent it on and the impact it has had, on its website.
- There have been considerable changes in staffing over the last two years.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors spent time in lessons in all phases of the school and were often accompanied by senior leaders. They also scrutinised a number of pupils' books whilst in lessons.
- The inspectors also looked through a large sample of pupils' books from the previous academic school year.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and members of the governing body.
- The inspectors listened to a range of Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6 pupils read.
- The inspectors spoke to parents before school as they dropped their children off for the day.
- The inspectors considered the 63 responses from Parent View and read through the many comments submitted by parents.
- The inspectors held four telephone conversations. One was with a representative from the local authority, two were with previous members of staff and one was with a parent.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's development plan and self-evaluation, governing body meeting minutes, policies and records relating to safeguarding. They also examined records relating to behaviour, attendance, pupils' achievement and leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspectors also analysed the school's assessment information.

Inspection team

Mark Mallender, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Anne White	Ofsted Inspector

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