

Peak Dale Primary School

School Road, Peak Dale, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 8AJ

Inspection dates

12–13 February 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principled and determined leadership of the headteacher has created a culture of inclusion which permeates all aspects of school life. This is reflected in the consistently positive and welcoming attitudes of pupils.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development. They, together with staff, are ambitious for the school.
- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes lies at the heart of the school's work.
- The implementation of the 'creative curriculum' is highly effective and ensures that pupils learn well across a broad range of subjects.
- The personal development of pupils is exceptionally well considered. Plentiful opportunities enable pupils to consider themes such as healthy living and personal safety.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are highly effective and staff have embedded a strong culture of vigilance. Pupils feel safe and happy at school.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are making good progress as a result of the closely targeted support they receive.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good. Pupils receive lessons that are well planned and engaging, enabling them to make good progress.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Children make good progress from their typically low starting points. Leaders are beginning to take action to strengthen the engagement of parents in children's learning.
- Teachers and leaders engage well with local schools to share practice and check the accuracy of their assessment work.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are exceptionally polite, friendly and courteous.
- The attendance of pupils has improved and is above the national average.
- Leaders make exceptionally good use of the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sports. All pupils participate in at least one inter-school competition.
- The progress of pupils in reading and writing has improved. In spelling, however, progress is not as secure as it should be.
- Too few pupils achieve at the higher standard, particularly in writing and mathematics. Leaders are acting to resolve this weakness.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that more-able pupils and middle-ability pupils receive work that enables them to reach the higher standard, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Ensure that teaching enables pupils to write extended pieces with more confidence and with more accurate spelling.
- Strengthen the engagement of parents with pupils' learning, especially in the early years.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The ethos of this community school is exceptionally positive, underpinned by strong values, a dedicated team of staff and high expectations of all. The headteacher's principled, leadership across all aspects of the school's provision has created a compelling vision and inclusive culture within the school. Staff and pupils strive to support this culture and benefit from high-quality relationships in the process. The strength of this ethos is apparent as soon as you enter the school.
- At the heart of the school's culture are its values of care and compassion for all members of the school's community. Pastoral care is a distinctive strength of this school. Pupils and parents recognise the extra lengths that staff will go to in order to support the academic, social and emotional well-being of pupils. As one parent put it, 'This is a small, fantastic school that cares for each and every child.'
- The headteacher, together with governors, has a detailed and accurate overview about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Regular checks are made on the quality of the school's provision and on safeguarding. Leaders have used this evidence incisively to identify the school's key improvement priorities and no time has been wasted in the implementation of them. Consequently, current pupils are already benefiting from the improvements that have been made, particularly in the development of writing.
- The leadership of the curriculum is highly effective. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is successful in engaging pupils' interests and enthusiasm. A strong emphasis is placed on offering a broad and balanced 'creative' curriculum which weaves together learning from a wide range of subjects including science, geography, history and art. An example of this is a prominent display of pupils' 'tree of life' artwork, based on the work of Gustav Klimt.
- The development of pupils' understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes is strong. The curriculum is further enhanced by many enriching opportunities such as visits to places of worship and residential visits that develop team-building skills, resilience and self-esteem. During the inspection a performance was held for parents reflecting global cultures through song. Pupils were highly enthusiastic about learning the Polynesian 'Tiger Tongo', for example.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the principles behind fundamental British values. These are exhibited in their exemplary behaviour in lessons and around the school. They recognise the importance of respect, tolerance and the rule of law. Elections on to the school council also provide pupils with an insight into democracy. Pupils say they appreciate the inclusive school ethos of which they are a part.
- The leadership of pupils with SEND is highly effective. The headteacher is also the school's coordinator for special educational needs (SENCo). She has a thorough knowledge of the specific needs of each individual pupil and carefully maps out their provision to ensure that their learning needs are addressed. The engagement with parents and external agencies is excellent and, as a result, these pupils are making good progress.
- Leaders have ensured that the additional funding for physical education (PE) and

sports premium is used to great effect. The recent 'school games gold level award' demonstrates the effectiveness of this funding in promoting the physical and mental well-being of pupils. The funding has been spent on ensuring that pupils have access to high-quality PE and play resources, sports coaching for pupils and staff and in encouraging all pupils to represent the school in at least one inter-school competition.

- The pupil premium is used effectively. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress, particularly in reading and writing. Leaders have a thorough understanding of pupils' barriers to learning and ensure that the funding is used to enhance provision at an individual pupil level. As a result the achievement of these pupils is rising, particularly in reading and writing, where improvement has been rapid.
- Teachers value the regular opportunities for professional development to share effective practice. These opportunities include external courses, learning from each other and from staff in different school across the 'CORDS' network (the collaboration of rural Derbyshire schools).
- Leaders have taken determined action to ensure that teachers' assessment of pupils' learning is accurate. Leaders ensure that pupil assessment across the key subjects, and in the early years, are standardised within the school and across the CORDS network.
- Pupils are very appreciative of the opportunities to learn from a range of extra-curricular opportunities. Examples include breakfast club, multi-sports, golf, archery, dance, music and arts and crafts.

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is effective. Governors have full confidence in the headteacher's leadership of the school.
- Governors are well informed and receive high-quality information provided by the headteacher. They regularly seek views from parents, pupils and staff. As a consequence, they have a detailed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are fully aware of the actions being taken to improve standards further and make regular visits to the school to check the progress being made on development priorities.
- Governors are clear about their roles and responsibilities and, together with the headteacher and school staff, are ambitious for the school's future. They are skilled and hold leaders to account effectively.
- Governors understand their responsibilities and duties to keep pupils safe.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are highly effective. Leaders have tenaciously embedded a strong culture of vigilance in keeping pupils safe, including protection from extremist views. Any issues which arise are swiftly addressed so that any worries or concerns a pupil may have are resolved. Staff meet regularly to discuss any safeguarding concerns they may have. The school has a strong reputation in the local area for its safeguarding practice.
- All parents who spoke with the inspector or responded to Ofsted's online survey

overwhelmingly agreed that their children feel safe, happy and well looked after at the school. Pupils also say, with unanimous conviction, that they feel safe and happy in school.

- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and can talk about this confidently. They were able to tell the inspector what they have learned about internet safety and the respectful use of technology, personal safety, road safety and the dangers that exist in local quarries.
- All staff understand what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being. This is because they receive regular training and updates which are of a high quality. School records are detailed and systematically organised. They demonstrate that prompt and decisive action is taken to keep pupils safe. Leaders work highly effectively with external agencies and parents to ensure that pupils receive the right support when it is needed.
- The checks made on the employment of staff are secure and monitored by governors. Procedures are in place to ensure that all visitors to the school are suitably vetted.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes towards their learning. Relationships between pupils and staff are consistently positive. Teachers know their pupils very well and clear routines have been established, underpinned by high expectations.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use thoughtfully to plan interesting and engaging lessons that motivate pupils' learning. Lessons are well sequenced and most pupils are appropriately challenged in their learning. Teachers use well-prepared resources to sustain pupils' focus, ensuring that little time is wasted. Pupils say that they enjoy their lessons and want to do well.
- Teachers use questioning well to check pupils' understanding and to clear up misconceptions. They provide well-targeted support to those pupils who need it. In a mathematics lesson about understanding fractions, for example, the precise explanation and questioning provided by the teacher enabled pupils to gain greater confidence in their ability to solve problems.
- Teachers work in a collaborative way to ensure that pupils' work is assessed accurately. This often involves working with teachers in other local schools. Teachers use assessment information well to plan learning that enables most pupils to make good progress over time.
- Many pupils benefit from the effective support provided by additional supporting adults, particularly pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. Pupils respond well to this additional support and make good progress as a result, especially in reading and writing.
- All classes are mixed-age. Teachers make sure that pupils complete work that is set at the right level of challenge to help pupils make progress which is appropriate for their age and ability. However, on occasions, teachers miss opportunities to adapt activities so that the more able pupils are moved on in their learning more quickly.
- Samples of pupils' written work showed that, while teaching provides advice and

opportunities for pupils to correct spellings, this advice is not routinely acted upon by them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Leaders have implemented an effective and well-considered programme of learning to support the personal development of pupils. Themes covered include personal safety, relaxation techniques, respecting differences and understanding extremism. Captured within the programme are many opportunities for pupils to explore their understanding of fundamental British values such as respect and tolerance. This understanding is reflected in pupils' consistently positive attitudes and excellent behaviour.
- Pupils know how to live healthy lives. All pupils are taught how to make healthy food choices and this is supported through initiatives such as the mobile kitchen. Pupils also participate in the morning 'daily mile' physical exercise routine.
- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding lies at the heart of the school's provision. This is evident in the many and wide-ranging displays that capture the school's ethos. The 'tree of success', for example, illustrates how positive human qualities are celebrated such as kindness and helping others.
- The pastoral care in the school is very strong. Pupils know who they can talk to if they have any concerns. Leaders have ensured that caring for the mental and emotional well-being of pupils is an essential aspect of the school's work and, when necessary, pupils have access to a trained counsellor or health practitioner.
- Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare at the school and this is reflected in school records. They know that all forms of bullying are wrong. Pupils also say that they have complete confidence that staff would deal with any issues swiftly and effectively. A clear majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's survey agreed.
- Pupils and staff alike are proud of the school's inclusive culture. Pupils know to respect all people, including those who have different backgrounds and beliefs to their own.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils say they are very happy and proud to be members of the school's community. They recognise and appreciate the care extended to them by staff. The pupils are a credit to the school.
- Pupils at the school are exceptionally friendly and courteous. They are respectful and helpful to each other and to visitors who come to the school.
- Pupils conduct themselves impeccably around the school, in lessons and during social time. They play together sensibly and take responsibility for their environment. In the dining room, for example, pupils take responsibility to queue sensibly and to clear up after themselves.
- Pupils are very responsive to the high expectations of conduct from staff. They wear

their uniforms smartly and are punctual to lessons. Pupils follow instructions from staff promptly including, as an example, the routine prompt to participate in the 'daily mile' each morning.

- Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. The inspector observed no disruption to learning in lessons and school records show that this is rare. Very little time is wasted in lessons.
- Overall attendance has improved for all pupils and is currently above the national average, including for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school has decreased and is broadly average when compared to national figures. Leaders take all reasonable steps to ensure that levels of attendance are high and offer well-targeted support when this is needed. When necessary, leaders take decisive action in addressing attendance concerns.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2018, the progress made by pupils at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly average. From their typically below-average starting points, pupils made the most progress in reading. The progress made by pupils in writing was much stronger in 2018 than in previous years. This was due to the sharper focus on the development of writing skills during the last academic year.
- The attainment of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the expected standard by the end of key stage 2 was broadly similar to national comparisons. Attainment was slightly stronger in reading, compared to writing and mathematics. Too few pupils, however, attained at the higher standard in writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the grammar, punctuation and spelling check dipped in 2018 and was below the national average. Leaders have acted to address this, and pupils' current work in Year 6 shows improvement.
- The school's own information and work examined in pupils' books indicate that current pupils in key stage 2 are making good progress across all subjects. Pupils' reading to the inspector and a scrutiny of pupils' books confirmed this.
- Pupils read widely and fluently. They use their phonics knowledge well to segment and blend difficult words. Pupils also demonstrated a good comprehension of the texts they are reading.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress overall due to the well-targeted support that they receive. Staff know these pupils exceptionally well and excellent use is made of teaching assistants and external sources of support to ensure that the needs of these pupils are met and that they learn well.
- Standards in key stage 1 have fluctuated over the last two years and pupils attained much less well in 2018 compared to 2017. The small size of the year groups, high pupil mobility and the specific needs of individual pupils explain the variation in outcomes at this key stage. However, observations of learning and evidence in pupils' books show that current pupils are making good progress.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils who attained the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was slightly below the national average.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children enter the Reception Year with knowledge and skills which are below those typical for their age, particularly in communication and language. As a result of good teaching, children make good progress towards their early learning goals given their low starting points.
- Children engage well in a variety of well-planned learning activities, both indoors and outside. They benefit from an attractive and welcoming environment which stimulates their interest in learning. In one lesson, for example, children were especially enthused in their exploration of wildlife and seasonal change as part of their regular 'Welly Wednesday' session.
- Staff have high expectations of the children and routines are firmly established to help children make good progress. Relationships are very positive and children respond very well to the expert care that staff provide. Consequently, the behaviour and attitudes of children are excellent.
- Children have frequent, well-planned opportunities to develop their language skills. This was observed by the inspector in a phonics session, for example where children were able to consolidate their learning of letter sounds following the expert modelling of expected learning goals.
- Leadership of the early years is securely good. Staff know the children, and their needs, very well. This enables them to assess children's progress and adapt teaching in order to cater for children's needs and stages of development. Children with SEND or who are disadvantaged are particularly well cared for.
- Arrangements for transition into the Reception class are well managed and leaders are supported by effective liaison with the local nursery.
- Parents say that they are very positive about the quality of provision in the early years. Relationships are strong. Leaders have recently introduced a new system to enhance the engagement of parents in their child's learning. This is beginning to strengthen, although it is too soon to evaluate the impact of this on children's learning.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective, as in the rest of the school, and all statutory requirements for the welfare of children are met.

School details

Unique reference number	112656
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10057679

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	72
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Alison Hill
Headteacher	Helen Stamp
Telephone number	01298 22695
Website	www.peakdale.derbyshire.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@peakdale.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 July 2015

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised into three, mixed-age classes.
- All pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above average compared to national figures. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is well above the national average.
- The headteacher of the school also oversees the provision of another local primary school. These schools are poised to form a joint federation arrangement from 25 February 2019.

Information about this inspection

- I observed eight parts of lessons across all key stages and in a range of subjects. These were conducted jointly with the headteacher. I also visited one whole-school assembly.
- I spoke with two groups of pupils drawn from key stages 1 and 2. I also spoke with pupils informally during the school day at playtime and lunchtime.
- I met with the headteacher, the senior leader in charge of early years and members of staff. As it was a small school, I held several meetings with the headteacher covering a wide range of aspects of the school's provision, including the performance of current pupils, behaviour and attendance, provision for pupils with SEND and those pupils in receipt of the pupil premium, personal development and the leadership of teaching and pastoral care. I also held a meeting with two governors.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plans, pupils' performance information, behaviour records, a range of policies and the minutes of meetings of the governing body. An additional meeting was also held with a link advisor from Derbyshire local authority.
- I looked at samples of pupils' work in writing, mathematics and topic learning across key stages 1 and 2. I also looked at a sample of children's number work in the early years.
- I considered the 12 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey and the 11 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. I also considered the 27 responses to the governors' school survey. No pupils completed Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Chris Stevens, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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