

Great Dalby School

Top End, Great Dalby, Melton Mowbray, LE14 2HA

Inspection dates 11–12 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The leadership of the school is strong. The headteacher is extremely well supported by the assistant headteacher, governors, staff and parents, who all share the drive to improve teaching and learning.
- Across all year groups, pupils of all abilities make progress that is always at least good. The majority make outstanding progress to reach high standards in a wide range of subjects, particularly, in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers set high expectations and astutely plan learning that inspires, challenges and engages pupils so that they make rapid progress.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary at all times. They are polite, courteous and confident. Pupils enjoy school and attend school punctually. Their above average attendance and positive attitudes to learning ensure high standards.
- Leaders at all levels accurately judge the quality of teaching and learning, and their rigorous approach to assessing and checking pupils' progress on a regular basis, ensures pupils make maximum progress.
- The school is making good progress in developing new assessment arrangements to match the requirements of the new national curriculum.
- Governors ensure the curriculum offers a broad range of subjects, including personal and social education, assemblies, educational visits, clubs and activities, in order to develop pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Pupils quickly develop key values, such as respect and tolerance, and the school is a harmonious community.
- The Early Years phase of the school is outstanding. Leaders promote high quality teaching and learning. Teachers motivate and manage children skilfully so they develop a love of learning and positive attitudes from their first days at school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed five lessons. Three of these observations were completed with either the headteacher or assistant headteacher. The inspector also observed pupils at breaks and lunchtimes, and attended registration and assembly.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff, governors and the headteacher.
- The inspector took account of the 63 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), two letters from parents, as well as informal conversations with parents. She also took account of the 14 responses to staff questionnaires.
- A wide range of documents was examined, including samples of pupils' work, information about pupils' progress, the school's development plan and view of its own performance, records of governors' visits to the school, minutes of governing body meetings, records of any poor behaviour, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspector listened to pupils read, and observed reading lessons and the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make).

Inspection team

Sherry Gladwin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British, and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Very few pupils are eligible to receive the pupil premium. This is additional funding for pupils in care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through a statement of special educational need or with an education, health or care plan is well-below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Great Dalby Community Primary School converted to become an academy on 1st March 2013. When its predecessor school, Great Dalby Community Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The Early Years leader is a Lead Practitioner for moderation and standardisation.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and raise attainment so that more pupils reach even higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics by
 - checking that all feedback provided for pupils clearly shows them how they can achieve a higher standard in their work.
 - completing the development work on the new assessment systems as quickly as possible to ensure that all teachers can continue to use assessment as effectively as in the past to identify and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher sets the highest standards and leads a relentless drive for continuous improvement, which is shared by governors, staff and parents.
- Pupils are assessed on a regular basis and the information that is gathered is used to inform pupil progress meetings held each term. Staff reflect carefully on each pupil's progress in light of the challenging targets set at the start of the year. This allows gaps in their knowledge and understanding to be identified. The school recognises that more pupils should be stretched to reach even higher standards. In Year 6 in 2014, pupils did not always make as much progress in mathematics as expected. This matter has been addressed by the headteacher.
- Governors, senior leaders and subject coordinators demonstrate insight and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school's self-evaluation correctly identifies the key priorities and actions needed to improve teaching and raise achievement.
- Leaders at all levels take their responsibilities seriously. They rigorously check progress towards the targets identified each half term. Senior leaders report outcomes to governors, who challenge and support them to achieve outstanding teaching and achievement.
- The school has already begun to refine its preferred approach to assessment so that it reflects the new national curriculum. It is working very purposefully in collaboration with other local schools to do this.
- The school has developed a creative approach to learning and delivers an exciting range of subjects, which are well supported by a rich variety of sporting clubs and cultural activities, including educational visits and residential trips. Assemblies help to promote tolerance and respect for individuals from all walks of life and prepare them exceptionally well for life in modern Britain. Consistently well-planned learning experiences support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. Consequently, pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong, behave impeccably and feel completely safe in school.
- There is a culture of very high expectations in the school which underpins pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning. Pupils of all abilities are valued, well cared for and supported to achieve high standards. Staff know pupils individually and plan their learning with precision and insight. As a result, pupils are wholly engaged in their learning and make rapid progress and teaching is outstanding.
- Continuous improvement occurs because clearly identified and appropriate priorities form the basis of the school's development plan and staff-appraisal targets. The performance of teachers is managed tightly and progress against targets is tracked to ensure the quality of teaching continually improves. The capacity of leaders to bring about further improvement is good.
- Subject leaders are effective. They work closely with senior leaders, providing support and guidance for other members of staff. They share in observing lessons and checking pupils' exercise books to gauge the quality of pupils' learning, as well as their standards of presentation and attitudes to work. Staff receive constructive feedback following lesson observations. The strong staff team are united in wanting the very best for their pupils and plan learning together carefully so that they can all succeed. Staff readily engage in constant dialogue about the quality of their teaching so that it can be improved.
- As an academy the school does not receive local authority support but works closely with other local schools to share good practice.
- The school's very careful use of mixed age classes allows it to build purposefully on pupils' known progress and maximise their achievement and, consequently, ensures the school offers very good value for money.
- The sports premium is used to provide additional resources and expert tuition and unusual activities, such as fencing, which it could not have otherwise afforded. The quality of physical education teaching has

improved as a result of the expert coaching staff receive.

- Parents are extremely supportive of the school. There are many opportunities to maintain good links with parents. The school's informative website, regular newsletters, subject workshops, including phonics, all help to strengthen partnership. Good support with home learning is available for parents through the school's website. Parents generously support the school as volunteers and by providing resources such as the 'trim trail', which supports pupils' good physical development.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well. The school meets all statutory equality requirements. All groups of pupils make at least good progress and are kept free from any kind of discrimination and bullying.
- The leadership and management of the Early Years are excellent and ensure children acquire knowledge and skills quickly and make outstanding progress.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- There is a full governing body which carries out its duties very effectively. Governors are highly skilled and bring a range of professional experiences to the role. Governors keep up to date through regular training, including on how to use the school's latest performance and other data. They are aware of national developments and the responsibilities they have for the curriculum, assessment and the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Governors have a clear strategic plan for the school and are committed to achieving high standards in teaching and learning and raising achievement for pupils. Their regular visits to the school, together with good progress reports from senior leaders, mean that they are informed of the school's strengths and areas for development. They regularly check the progress of pupils, set challenging targets and monitor outcomes.
- Governors are not afraid to challenge senior leaders. They manage the headteacher's appraisal tightly and this sets the model for staff appraisal. They understand that pay progression is linked to good teaching. The pupil premium is used prudently, and governors can account for this spending and closely check the impact on achievement for eligible pupils. The school's finances are managed with effectiveness and transparency.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are impeccably polite, courteous and confident around the school. They readily engage in conversation about their work and take time and effort to be friendly to visitors. From the Early Years onwards, pupils are considerate and demonstrate respect for and tolerance of others. In the Reception class, routines are established quickly and pupils across the school show high levels of cooperation with adults and one another.
- Attitudes to learning are outstanding. Pupils are enthusiastic learners with a thirst for acquiring knowledge. They enjoy coming to school and demonstrate a willingness to concentrate, work hard in lessons and persevere when work is challenging. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning support their rapid progress. Pupils listen well to one another and to teachers, taking turns to share their ideas. They collaborate maturely when working together and negotiate skilfully with each other.
- Opportunities to develop leadership skills, including the roles of house captains, e-safety officers, eco representatives, school council members and play leaders, help shape pupils' personal and social development. Volunteers help to set out fruit bowls for younger pupils and provide support with equipment in assembly. Pupils are proud of their school and show respect for the environment. They cooperate to make it a strong, caring community.
- Pupils' enjoyment in coming to school is reflected in their above-average attendance and punctuality. Effective systems ensure the school quickly follows up any absence. Additional funding is used effectively to support the attendance of eligible pupils so that all groups of pupils have a good record of attendance and ensure that there are no persistent non-attenders.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The school site is safe and secure and sound procedures are in place to check and monitor visitors to the school. Pupils engage in a range of learning activities such as 'bike-ability', e-safety and road safety. Visitors to the school attend lessons and assemblies to support pupils' personal, social and health education. There is good support for parents and pupils in relation to safe use of the internet and electronic mail.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. They treat others with respect and kindness. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are rare. Pupils understand that bullying in its various forms is wrong. The school is free from sexist, racist and homophobic bullying. Pupils are confident that should unacceptable behaviour occur, it will be dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff. Adults encourage pupils to resolve occasional differences by themselves in the first instance and to make an apology for any hurt they may have caused. The playground is safe and pupils express joy in being together.
- Systems for maintaining records of unacceptable behaviour are rigorous. Incidents are carefully investigated and parents are contacted. The school's behaviour policy supports behaviour for learning in the classroom very effectively. Consistently high expectations and skilled behaviour management from staff shape the culture of the school. Pupils refer to the 'six golden rules' with pride. Praise and rewards are used effectively to motivate pupils who are keen to gain house points and certificates. The governors' 'golden pen' award has been used effectively to improve the quality of writing. There have been no permanent exclusions and fixed term exclusions are rare.
- Case studies provide evidence of the school's successful work with a range of pupils who experience difficulties, either with learning or behaviour. Good links with external agencies support pupils and families in developing strategies to support these pupils. Consequently, they gain the skills necessary to succeed in learning, manage their own behaviour and become responsible citizens.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers are enthusiastic about their subjects and have a love for learning, which they communicate to pupils. They use their good subject knowledge and personal knowledge about each child to plan learning that is imaginative and challenging. Lessons are stimulating and engage pupils' interest and commitment. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and enjoyment and make rapid progress.
- Learning is effective both indoors and out. Pupils are highly engaged by all learning opportunities and are keen to consolidate their classroom learning through the well-designed practical activities that teachers provide to enhance their understanding and make their learning 'real'. In the Reception class, for example, pupils worked very purposefully to link the objects they were handling with the letter sounds they had just learned about.
- Teachers establish a good rapport with pupils. They treat pupils with respect and set good examples through their actions and speech. Teachers and pupils work together to create an atmosphere of focused energy, calm and purpose.
- Classrooms are vibrant and well-organised places in which pupils learn quickly. High-quality displays of pupils' work are on display. Pupils of all abilities, including the most able as well as those who are disadvantaged, are challenged to produce their best effort and achieve high standards. This generates pride in pupils.
- Teachers manage behaviour skilfully. They set high standards and expect pupils to work hard. They make sure that pupils understand the purpose of the learning and know what is expected of them. The school's high expectation of the quality of pupils' presentation of their work and their handwriting are applied consistently well by all staff. Pupils respond by consistently presenting work which shows they have taken care and have developed good use of the cursive script.
- Reading, writing, mathematics and communication are taught to a high standard in English and mathematics and reinforced very well in other subjects. Pupils have benefited greatly from the school's

recent initiative to focus on writing. Information and communication technology skills are applied, as appropriate, in all subjects. Teachers recognise, however, that there is scope for some pupils to achieve even higher standards, and this rightly remains the priority for the school.

- Teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled and collaborate well to plan pupils' learning. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive good support and make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress. Teachers skilfully use questions to check pupils' understanding, accurately assess their progress, challenge their thinking and encourage high levels of speaking and listening skills. Adults use a good range of vocabulary which helps pupils build their own communication skills. On occasion, there is scope for the checking of pupils' understanding in lessons to be sharper to ensure that individual pupils are always absolutely clear about the key learning points that they are being taught.
- Marking is consistently good. Teachers apply the school's policy and mark classwork and homework accurately and regularly. Teachers regularly include constructive comments which recognise pupils' achievements and effort.

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities below those typical for their age. Outstanding teaching supports children's rapid progress so that they achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. This prepares them well for entry to Year 1.
- Pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills quickly. They use and accurately apply phonics (letters and sounds) to their reading and writing. Recent training for teachers in phonics and its application to writing has significantly improved the quality of teaching in this area. Pupils demonstrate high levels of confidence, knowledge and skill in reading, which are reflected in the exceptionally high outcomes obtained in the national phonics screening check. In 2014, results in the phonics screening were significantly above the 2013 average and easily exceeded what is expected for pupils of this age.
- In 2014, Year 2 pupils attained standards in reading, writing and mathematics that were above national expectations. Improvement in teaching is leading to higher attainment at Key Stage 1. School information shows that current pupils continue to make very good progress and the majority are set to attain high standards in 2015.
- Over time, Year 6 pupils have consistently attained standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are above national averages overall and often significantly so, for example in mathematics. Current pupils continue to make very good progress and the majority are set to attain high standards in 2015. The school plans to raise the level of challenge for pupils even further this year to help more pupils reach the highest possible standards by the end of Key Stage 2.
- In Year 6 in 2014, there were too few pupils eligible for additional pupil premium funding to report their attainment without identifying individuals. This additional funding is used well to support eligible individuals throughout the school, who progress quickly and achieve at least as well as their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics, and often do better.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, given their starting points. This is due to well-directed help from all adults, including teaching assistants, which provides effectively for all individuals and ensures each pupil is equipped with appropriate knowledge and skills by the time they leave.
- The most-able pupils make at least, good progress and the vast majority make outstanding progress. They are challenged to work hard and consistently achieve their potential for learning.

The early years provision is outstanding

- Children of all abilities and groups make good progress and most make outstanding progress due to the very good provision and outstanding teaching they receive. Learning is well-planned so that the needs of all learners are met. Children are prepared well for Year 1, particularly in their acquisition of phonics.
- Teaching is always very good and often outstanding. Adults understand the needs of individuals because their assessments accurately reflect each child's progress and needs. Excellent use is made of the outside area to stimulate children's imagination and natural sense of curiosity, to encourage them to explore their learning in depth and to develop their communication and social skills.
- Children have a good sense of right and wrong and they are keen to behave well. They are given clear routines to follow in the first week of teaching, which enables them to settle quickly into school life and show good levels of cooperation with adults and other children.
- Links with parents are very strong. Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in their child's education and progress from the outset and are appreciative of the time and effort staff put in to help their children feel happy and secure.
- The leadership and management of the Early Years are outstanding. Assessments are accurate and carefully used to inform the planning of activities so that learning is often very rapid. The school's careful balance of internal and external learning, and of adult and child-led activities, promotes independence, knowledge and skills very effectively.

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

Unique reference number	139342
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	448704

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	134
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lauren Harkness
Headteacher	Andrew Raistrick
Date of previous school inspection	14 September 2009
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