

The Dassett CofE Primary School

Fenny Compton, Southam, CV47 2XU

Inspection dates 15–16 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school is led effectively and skilfully by the headteacher. Together with a positive team of senior and middle leaders, staff and governors, she has ensured that good teaching and good achievement are firmly embedded throughout the school.
- The governing body has greatly improved its contribution to the management of the school since the last inspection. Governors regularly challenge school leaders about the school's performance and improvement.
- Pupils enjoy school, are articulate and lively, behave well and are eager to learn. They are respectful and caring. They feel safe in school. They are well prepared for their future, and have a well-developed understanding of British values and society. Their attendance is excellent.
- Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils, and high expectations for their personal, social and academic achievements. They provide pupils with a stimulating range of learning opportunities to widen their skills and knowledge.
- Children have a good start to their education in the Reception class because of good teaching. They learn quickly and soon become self-confident.
- All groups of pupils achieve well and make good progress. Pupils attain above-average standards by the time they leave Year 6. Standards in mathematics are now well above average.
- The school benefits strongly from its several partnerships with other local schools.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' attainment and achievement in writing are not as high as in reading and mathematics because the teaching of higher-order writing skills is not yet effective enough.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of phonics (the sounds letters make) are not consistent across the school, because not all teachers are trained enough to be confident in the teaching of these skills.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in 15 lessons. Six of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, other staff with leadership responsibilities and five governors. An inspector also spoke to a school improvement adviser from the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors discussed teaching and pupils' progress with class teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils' books and records of their progress were examined.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked with them about their reading experiences.
- Inspectors took account of 74 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. They also spoke to parents informally and examined the school's own regular surveys of parents' views.
- The inspectors considered the 18 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire for staff.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation, including: the school's self-evaluation and development plans; an analysis of pupils' achievement and progress; safeguarding arrangements; policies and records of checks made by leaders on the quality of teaching and learning.

Inspection team

Rodney Braithwaite, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stephen Matthews

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils who are looked after or known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Children in the Reception Year attend the school full time. There are six single-aged classes for pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- The school has extensive links to schools in the Kineton Learning Community cluster, and also to a larger group of schools in a local consortium.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- A privately run nursery and before- and after-school club are located on the school site, but are inspected separately. Their reports can be found on reports.ofsted.gov.uk.
- There have been several changes of staff since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the writing and phonics skills of pupils throughout the school by developing teaching skills further, enabling:
 - pupils to achieve at least as well in writing as in mathematics
 - teachers in all years to improve their knowledge of teaching phonics in order to reinforce pupils' present good skills in reading
 - teachers to have more opportunities to observe the most effective practice to inform and improve their own skills in the teaching of writing.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school with skill and determination. Under her leadership, the school has raised its capacity for improvement, which is good, and is exemplified by the improvements in the school's performance in the last two years.
- Her ambitions for continuous improvement in teaching, learning and behaviour throughout the school are shared by an enthusiastic team of leaders, some new to their posts, all other staff, and the governing body.
- The leadership and management of the early years ensure that children receive a good start to their education. Children receive good teaching in a colourful and lively environment and are well prepared for their future in the main school.
- The headteacher has strongly promoted effective monitoring of teaching and learning in the school, and is well supported in this by other senior leaders. This has led to improvements in teaching, and the successful induction of new teachers.
- Nevertheless, the school does not rest on its laurels, and has rightly identified further areas for improvement, such as accelerating improvement in the teaching of writing, and helping all pupils to have a better understanding of phonics.
- Leaders' analysis and evaluation of the school's performance are particularly detailed and astute, and are enabling the school to have a very clear picture of the road to further improvement.
- Improvement is apparent in several areas. Attainment and achievement in mathematics and reading have risen and continue to do so; the new and exciting curriculum has been introduced successfully; assessment and procedures for tracking pupils' progress are much improved; the training of teachers and their assistants is now a high priority; and the governing body's involvement in, and knowledge of the school have improved considerably.
- In addition, the new senior and middle leaders are making an effective contribution to school improvement and management.
- The revised curriculum has had a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is enhanced by the vibrant displays of pupils' work throughout the school, especially in the school hall, and by a calm and welcoming social and learning environment.
- The curriculum places much emphasis on the promotion of British values and democratic institutions. Pupils learn about tolerance and care, and about those with beliefs and faiths other than their own. The study of local and British history and the development of citizenship help pupils to develop a good understanding of modern British society.
- The additional funding for physical education (PE) and sports has been used well to encourage great interest by pupils in sport and competition with other schools. Pupils were delighted when their football team recently won a local schools competition for the first time ever. The use of specialist sports coaches is improving the teaching skills of school staff. Pupils' increased involvement in sporting activities is helping to improve their understanding of health and physical well-being.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively. The school does not tolerate discrimination. Relationships across the school are excellent, and all pupils have equal access to activities, including after-school activities and clubs. Pupils are proud of their school, and respectful and caring of each other.

- The school gains much from working closely with other schools in the cluster and consortium. Ideas are shared, and joint moderation of standards is effective. Pupils have good opportunities to mix with others who they will join in their future schools.
- The school works closely with the local authority's improvement advisor, and is pleased with the support and guidance received. The school's performance, improvement and leadership are highly regarded by the authority.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet national requirements. The safety and security of pupils are under continual review. Leaders have taken steps to identify and deal with any extremism or radicalisation should they arise. All school policies are regularly monitored and fully applied.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that the extra funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. They compare these pupils' progress with that of other pupils, and analyse how any gaps are closing between the performance of these pupils and others.
- Almost all parents, as indicated through Parent View and the school's own surveys, have positive views about all aspects of the school, and would recommend it to others.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are fully involved in the leadership and management of the school. They work closely with leaders and regularly visit the school. As a result, they have a much improved knowledge of the school's performance and the effectiveness of teaching and learning.
 - The governing body has gained in confidence in challenging school leaders. They have, for example, questioned leaders strongly on the performance of pupils in writing, and played a proactive role in the appointment of new teachers.
 - The governing body's knowledge of the quality of teaching in the school is used effectively to guide decisions for pay increases for teachers. These are based on the performance and appraisal targets set for teachers to reach, as shown by pupils' progress and attainment. Governors now have a clear understanding of data relating to pupils' attainment and progress as a result of increased training.
 - In line with its careful monitoring of the budget, the governing body is fully involved in the allocation of additional funding, the evaluation of how effectively it is used and its impact on pupils' learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive in all year groups. They behave well in lessons, are cheerful and polite and always prepared to support each other.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They recall many enjoyable learning experiences, including the residential trip to Marle Hall, the 'Victorian Day' when everyone dressed up, taking part in the school plays, and being in touch with other schools in Birmingham, Sweden and New Zealand.
- Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the extra sports, PE and clubs they now have as a result of the new sports funding for schools.
- Pupils behave well in school and in the expansive school grounds. A number of them appreciate the chance to enjoy eating their packed lunches outside in fine weather, as during the inspection. They quietly chat to each other and ensure that they always keep the playground tidy and free of rubbish.
- Pupils think that behaviour in school is good, and only recall minor incidents of anyone being annoying in class by being noisy. Only a very few lose concentration when learning. Exclusions of pupils have been very rare in recent years. Almost all parents, and all staff indicate that behaviour in the school is good and well-managed.

- Attendance has been consistently high for several years, and pupils' punctuality is also excellent. Leaders set very high targets for both.
- The wide range of learning opportunities and experiences provided for pupils have a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have considerable trust in the adults in the school. One pupil, for example, said, 'Our teachers are very nice – there are always three or four outside caring for us at playtimes.'
- Pupils can immediately name the first-aiders who look after them when there is an accident and show great confidence in the care they receive.
- The school takes care that any incidents concerning the health and safety of pupils are dealt with quickly and to the benefit of the pupils. Few such incidents have been recorded in recent years.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying and can recall few incidents in recent years. They also have a good understanding of cyber-bullying. The school constantly reminds them of these dangers. One pupil said, for example, 'There are lots of warnings about the internet in our ICT (information and communication technology) room.'
- The very large majority of parents responding to Parent View feel that the school deals effectively with bullying. A very small number expressed concerns about this. The inspectors found that the school is always open for parents to discuss problems or issues, including a 'Headteacher Surgery' every Monday. School leaders act rapidly if there are incidents, and do their best to deal with disputes fairly.
- Checks are always made on staff during recruitment, and all risk assessments are checked carefully by the headteacher and administrative staff. The school is fully inclusive and school records indicate that there have been no incidents of racist or homophobic comments by pupils in recent years.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school. As a result of improved teaching, pupils' achievement has risen in the last two years.
- The staff have benefited from sustained and effective monitoring of learning by senior staff, led strongly by the headteacher, in order to develop teaching skills to a high level.
- School leaders acknowledge, however, that the teaching of writing does not yet match the quality of teaching in mathematics. Teaching skills are not yet sufficiently well developed to enable more pupils to reach even higher levels in writing.
- Good teaching is leading to above-average attainment and progress in reading. Although many pupils reach high standards in their reading, a few pupils, including a number in Key Stage 2, struggle to apply a knowledge of phonics to help them read unfamiliar words.
- The prompt actions taken by leaders to improve the teaching of mathematics since the last inspection have been successful. As a result, the learning, achievement and progress of pupils throughout the school have shown rapid improvement.
- Teachers have excellent relationships with their pupils and have high expectations of them. The pupils have greatly enjoyed the introduction of their 'Ready, Steady, Go' learning challenges. Although pupils occasionally choose 'Go' tasks which may be too challenging, they play a major role in their own learning and understanding.

- The new curriculum is leading to good gains in learning, especially with regard to aspects of British life, history and culture. Many examples were seen in stimulating displays of pupils' work throughout the school. Their studies of the history of Dasset and Fenny Compton strengthened their knowledge of the changes brought about by William the Conqueror. There are also prominent displays of their understanding of democracy, the electoral processes, and the work of Parliament; one pupil was able to describe very accurately the passing of a Bill through Parliament until it is signed by the monarch.
- Teachers' marking of work has been developed effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of the colour coding system, and often respond to teachers' guidance with their own evaluations. Teachers have raised their expectations of the presentation of their work by pupils. Their books show that pupils have taken note as, over time, their presentation and pride in their work have clearly improved.
- Teachers work well with their teaching assistants who join regularly in assessing pupils' progress. Teaching assistants also make valued contributions to the care and achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Teachers are increasingly effective in promoting the development of literacy and numeracy skills across a wide range of subjects. This was observed, for example, in pupils' work about lemurs, transport systems, different faiths in the United Kingdom, their visits to museums and residential experiences.
- Almost all parents indicate their view that teaching is good and that, as a result, their children make good progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' attainment since the last inspection has been consistently above average. In 2014 pupils left the school at the end of Year 6 with attainment well above average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. Pupils made good progress in all three subjects. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been above average for several years and were well above average in reading and mathematics in both 2013 and 2014, and pupils made consistently good progress.
- Children enter the early years provision with skills typical for their age and make good progress. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, and in 2014 made outstanding progress in mathematics. Their progress in writing in Key Stage 1 over the last few years has not been as marked, and fewer pupils have reached above average levels. Similarly, progress in writing in Key Stage 2 over the last few years, while good, has not been as rapid as in reading and mathematics. Teaching of higher-level writing skills has not been as effective as in the teaching of mathematical skills.
- Inspection evidence indicates that standards continue to rise in all years. More pupils are reaching higher levels, and the increased focus on writing is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment. This is because teaching is more consistently challenging, and data on pupils' progress are being used more effectively in teachers' planning.
- Several lessons observed, for example in mathematics, and work in pupils' books, demonstrate that many pupils are reaching above-average standards in all year groups. While the reading of many pupils is good, the school correctly believes it could be even better if the recent improvement in their understanding of phonics in Key Stage 1 could be replicated in all year groups.
- Achievement is consistently good for all groups of pupils in both key stages across the whole curriculum. Pupils make particularly good progress in history, art and physical education.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have been particularly successful in improving their progress which now matches that of other pupils. This is because the leadership and management of the needs of these pupils are much improved as a result of expertise which has been shared within the local cluster of schools.

- The most able pupils achieve well. Throughout the school, they relish the chances to choose their learning challenges, even those at the highest level. Teachers ensure that these pupils, and the gifted and talented, always have tasks which thoroughly stretch their thinking and learning skills.
- For a number of years, there have been few disadvantaged pupils and it is not possible to comment on their attainment without risk of identifying them. Their progress is also good and similar to that of other pupils. Gaps in attainment between them and other pupils have varied across year groups because of the very small numbers. The current inspection showed almost no attainment gap between these pupils and others.
- Pupils are keen to read and enjoy their daily guided reading sessions. They name a wide range of favourite authors, such as Roald Dahl, C S Lewis and Enid Blyton, and have little difficulty in naming numerous favourite books. Some have extensive knowledge of the works of Shakespeare, although, as one admitted, 'I haven't read them all.' Pupils keep the records of their reading conscientiously, and appreciate occasional adult comments on their skills.

The early years provision is good

- Adults maintain a very detailed knowledge of children's progress and their learning needs which are recorded in detail in their informative and well-kept 'Learning Journey Profiles'. This information is used carefully in planning for the children's further learning and development.
- Children start in the Reception class with skills and experience typically seen at their age. They make good progress, particularly in their literacy skills, because teaching is consistently good and staff monitor children's progress effectively.
- Leadership and management are good, and enable children to make good progress in their first year in school. As a result, children are more than ready for their transition into Key Stage 1.
- Leaders ensure that children have a wide range of exciting and varied learning experiences. They enjoy especially their opportunities to learn in the outdoor area and talk enthusiastically of their trips away from school, such as to the pantomime in Leamington.
- The classroom is a colourful and stimulating learning environment. This, together with the variety of activities provided by the teacher and teaching assistant, helps the rapid development of children's skills. As a result, almost all attain national expectations by the time they enter Key Stage 1, and a significant proportion attain above the expected level.
- Children speak confidently to each other and adults. When engaged in activities, there is constant interchange of opinions and reactions between them, as for example, when working with sand, one remarked to the others, 'It feels soft and smooth and sticky and cold like the beach.' Children were equally animated when involved in pretending to cook food, and when counting and planting seeds.
- Children's behaviour is good because of their lively and confident attitudes to learning. They are always keen to start their activities, and have a good understanding of what is expected of them in all parts of the school including outside. Just occasionally, a small number of them can lose interest and concentration when they have the chance to choose their own activities.
- Children are kept safe and secure, and staff and older pupils ensure that they are well cared for at all times.
- Staff work closely with parents, especially when children first start school. Parents are very pleased with the way their children settle to school life and routines. The school continues to offer as many opportunities as possible for parents to join in their children's learning throughout the year. Staff work effectively with pre-school providers, particularly the on-site nursery.

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	130379
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	462540

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pete Thompson
Headteacher	Alison Hine
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 April 2013
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