

Dosthill Primary School

High Street, Dosthill, Tamworth, Staffordshire B77 1LQ

Inspection dates

29–30 November 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Outcomes at the end of key stage 2 have declined significantly since the previous inspection. Senior leaders and governors have not acted swiftly enough to address this.
- Leaders do not ensure that teaching is consistently good across the school. There is some teaching which is inadequate.
- The governing body has been too slow to question leaders about the lack of progress of different pupil groups. Assessment information provided is too complex and overly detailed to give them a clear overview.
- Leaders record incidents of poor behaviour but do not analyse them. Consequently, they are unable to detect any patterns or evaluate the impact of actions taken.
- Current achievement of pupils in Years 1 to 6 is uneven. Pupils do not build sufficiently on their skills and knowledge or make enough progress from their different starting points.
- Teachers do not question pupils effectively or plan suitably challenging work for pupils of different abilities. Work set for the most able is often too easy and it does not extend lower- and middle-ability pupils' skills.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are not taught well enough to enable most pupils to reach the levels expected for their age and a proportion to exceed age-related expectations.
- The pupil premium is not used effectively. Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, do not make the progress they should.
- The support provided for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not helping them to make the same progress as other pupils nationally.
- Where the pace in lessons slows or teaching fails to capture pupils' interest, pupils disengage and do little work. As a result, behaviour requires improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the early years get off to a good start and make good progress. They are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is well developed. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Most pupils behave well and feel safe. They are polite and respectful to each other and adults.
- The curriculum is enriched well with different activities which pupils enjoy.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective.

Full report

In accordance with section 44 (1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise achievement for all groups of pupils by:
 - raising expectations of pupils' progress in lessons and over time
 - ensuring that teachers take full account of pupils' prior learning when planning work
 - planning activities which challenge and motivate pupils of different abilities
 - improving teachers' questioning skills
 - keeping the pace of learning brisk so that pupils do not disengage and lose interest in their work
 - improving pupils' reading comprehension skills
 - equipping pupils with spelling strategies to help them tackle unfamiliar words
 - developing pupils' planning, drafting and editing skills to help improve their writing
 - developing pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics so that more pupils work at greater depth.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that:
 - assessment information gathered is clear and purposeful and informs leaders' planning
 - leaders draw on a range of evidence when monitoring the quality of teaching and focus more closely on the progress of different groups, especially when checking pupils' work in books
 - additional funding is used effectively to help disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make faster progress
 - governors are presented with clear data which enables them to identify precisely how well pupils are achieving and where further support is needed
 - behaviour records and incident logs are analysed to establish any patterns and establish if actions taken are effective in raising expectations of pupils' progress in lessons and over time.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders and governors have not acted quickly enough to address the decline in achievement since the previous inspection. Since 2013, pupils have failed to make enough progress from their starting points, especially in key stage 2. In 2016, results at the end of key stage 1 declined and were average, having previously been above average.
- There has been a high level of staffing turnover and staff unrest in the last year. This impacted on the climate within the school and hindered achievement further.
- Leaders and teachers do not have an accurate overview of how well pupils are achieving. This is because the recent assessment systems they have introduced are overly complex and are not used consistently by staff. Pupils are periodically tested using standardised reading and mathematics tests. The results from these tests show very wide variations between classes in pupils' attainment and rates of progress.
- Leaders have not checked the consistency or accuracy of teacher assessments. Teachers use a skills-based assessment system to assess pupils' abilities. However, this information is not used consistently. Pupils' work and skills sheets inside pupils' books show that some pupils have mastered the skills required but are not moved on to more demanding work. For others, assessment information is missing and nothing is recorded on the skills sheet. Furthermore, there is a mismatch in the information the school holds. For instance, results from teacher assessments indicate that a higher number of pupils are working at age-related levels than the standardised tests indicate. Information gathered, therefore, is not reliable or accurate.
- All members of the leadership team, including senior leaders and phase leaders, carry out monitoring activities to check the quality of teaching. However, some inadequate teaching remains and leaders have failed to address this. This is because systems lack rigour and leaders do not focus enough on the progress of different groups when they visit lessons or check pupils' workbooks. This prevents leaders identifying which pupils need additional support and where weaknesses in teaching lie.
- The school does not promote equality of opportunity effectively. Overall, all groups of pupils underachieve, especially in key stage 2. Despite additional funds, the pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding are not enabled to catch up with other pupils nationally. Leaders and governors have not evaluated the impact of the funding or checked the quality of support provided. Additionally, the most able pupils, including pupils in this group who are disadvantaged, together with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not reach the standards they should.
- Leaders do not analyse behaviour records to detect where trends or patterns lie. Logs of racist incidents and poor behaviour are kept but actions taken by staff are not evaluated to determine whether repeat incidents occur.
- The headteacher and governors are reflective and acknowledge that significant improvement is needed. The climate within school is much improved and leaders have begun to address issues in teaching. Challenging performance targets are set for all staff. Leaders are also providing good support to new staff, especially those who are

newly qualified. A clear action plan has been devised and is focused on teaching and leadership priorities. Measureable milestones are in place. However, it is too early to determine the impact of the support provided and there remains significant work to be done in Years 1 to 6.

- The school curriculum is broad and balanced. A range of interesting topics promotes pupils' interests. Science is a particular strength with pupils carrying out investigations and experiments to develop their understanding. Pupils learn both French and German in key stage 2 and many learn to play musical instruments. The curriculum is well enriched with educational visits, clubs and visitors. Pupils spoke with excitement about the visit of the 'reptile lady' in Year 1 and the visit to a science museum in Birmingham by Year 4 during the inspection.
- Effective use is made of the extra funding to promote participation in sport and physical education (PE). Pupils take part in a range of sporting clubs and activities. Specialist sports coaching is available at lunchtimes and staff have had training to improve their ability to teach PE. This has had a positive impact on staff's skills to teach PE. Pupils have also had considerable success in local sports competitions, particularly football.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in assemblies and through school activities. Most pupils behave well and treat others with respect. They are aware of British values and understand the importance of democracy and individual freedom. Pupils have a good awareness of different cultures and those with different beliefs in their school and community. As a result, they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The large majority of parents who expressed their views were positive about the school. Most feel their children are happy and safe at school. A small number expressed concerns about behaviour, the quality of teaching and leadership. Most parents spoken to feel that things have improved since last year.
- The views of staff are also positive. Most of those who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire enjoy their jobs and are proud to be a member of staff at Dosthill. A very small minority feel that leaders do not motivate them or trust them sufficiently.
- The local authority agrees that the school is not providing a good standard of education for its pupils. They have carried out three reviews and set leaders areas for improvement. Support has been provided to senior and phase leaders but this has not been effective to date. The school has also commissioned its own support from an external consultant. This has provided additional areas focused more precisely on individual staff and their areas of responsibility. However, leaders have been overly reliant on external support rather than detecting for themselves where weaknesses lie and addressing them sooner.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- The impact of governance is inadequate. Over time, governors have not held leaders to account effectively for school improvement and have lacked sufficiently robust procedures for monitoring the school's performance.
- Governors' knowledge of assessment information is weak. They did not detect the decline in standards early enough or challenge staff robustly about this decline. This is

because assessment systems are overly complicated and governors are provided with too much detailed information to gain a clear understanding of the key issues. Data is provided for each of the 18 classes in Years 1 to 6. It is not summarised clearly enough, particularly for different groups.

- Although governors know what the pupil premium funding is spent on, they have not challenged school leaders well enough about its lack of impact on standards for eligible pupils.
- Governors have continued to monitor the well-being of staff. They have appointed new teachers and are reassured that newly qualified teachers are suitably supported. Governors visit the school and meet with phase and senior leaders to check on different subject areas. During meetings, governors ask suitable questions about the wide range of information provided by the headteacher. Nevertheless, they do not carefully check that actions taken are making a difference to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The headteacher ensures that all staff have received training and know what procedures to follow if they have any concerns about pupils. Appropriate referrals are made where further advice is needed. The school engages well with parents to make sure appropriate support is accessed in terms of keeping children safe. Record-keeping is efficient and secure.
- Safer recruitment processes are robust. Appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that adults employed are suitable to work with pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Over time, teaching has not enabled pupils to achieve as well as they should. The impact of teaching has led to declining standards and inadequate achievement, especially in key stage 2.
- The quality of teaching varies considerably across the school. There is good teaching in the early years but basic skills in English and mathematics are not built on sufficiently after children enter Year 1. Weaknesses and ongoing misconceptions are not picked up and addressed quickly enough so pupils adopt poor habits; for example, number reversals in key stage 1 and incorrect use of punctuation in key stage 2.
- Much teaching lacks sufficient pace and challenge to sustain pupils' interest and move learning forward. When pupils lose focus, their progress slows. Teachers do not take account of what pupils know and can do when planning tasks. Consequently, work is not set at the right level of difficulty for different ability groups, including the lower, middle and most able pupils.
- Teachers' expectations for the rate at which pupils learn are too low. Pupils spend too long on some activities and are not moved on swiftly enough. For example, inspectors found evidence in workbooks of Year 2 pupils carrying out simplistic calculations. Additionally, teachers provide too much help and this limits pupils' ability to think for themselves or complete tasks independently.

- Teachers' questioning skills need improvement to ensure that pupils' learning is sufficiently challenged and improved. Too often, teachers ask simple, closed questions, which require limited answers. Pupils are not given opportunities to give detailed answers or explain their thinking.
- In reading, comprehension skills are not taught well enough and pupils do not always understand what they are reading. In writing, weak spelling hampers the quality of pupils' work and pupils do not have the skills needed to draft, edit and improve their written work. In mathematics, pupils are beginning to have more problem-solving activities but this is still developing. Their reasoning skills are, however, limited and pupils do not have a secure understanding of mathematical concepts to explain how they reach their answers.
- Teaching and support for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not consistently effective. Some pupils are withdrawn for intervention work or one-to-one support. However, this support does not ensure that pupils catch up quickly.
- The most able pupils are not challenged enough. Many complete work which is too easy for them. Pupils themselves told inspectors that this was the case. While pupils have the opportunity to select more complex tasks from progressively more difficult success criteria provided, many choose the easy option and then make limited progress. Teachers do not systematically pick this up.
- Pupils' presentation of their work and their handwriting are good. Much effort has gone into ensuring that work is tidy and books are well presented. Pupils are proud of their work and most have a neat and cursive handwriting style.
- The teaching of phonics is improving. Children in the early years have a very good understanding of letter sounds and can break down and blend sounds together. Standards in phonics are beginning to rise as a result.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach. They establish good relationships with pupils.
- Most teachers apply the school's new marking policy consistently in English and mathematics and some provide clear guidance on how pupils can improve their work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their work and proud of their school. They are keen to learn and their self-confidence and self-awareness are developed through opportunities to take on additional responsibilities in the school. For example, older pupils look after younger children and run the school's tuckshop at breaktimes.
- Pupils respect the views of others. They have a good understanding of different types of bullying and know about the impact that it can have on people. Pupils say bullying is extremely rare. They are confident to talk to staff if problems arise and state that issues are resolved when reported. Inspectors found this to be the case.

- Pupils have a good understanding of healthy living. They are encouraged to eat healthy snacks at breaktime and enjoy the physical activities offered through clubs and physical education (PE) lessons.
- Pupils are taught to stay safe through a range of age-appropriate activities. They know how to stay safe when using the internet and they have a secure understanding of road safety due to 'bikeability' training.
- Almost all parents, staff and pupils who made their views known to inspectors said that pupils were safe in the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Some pupils lose interest and go off task when teaching does not motivate or interest them. This hinders the progress they make. In some classes, staff provide too much support and pupils are not given opportunities to work things out for themselves or learn from their mistakes.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, around school and at playtimes. Pupils show courtesy and respect to staff and each other. Most are keen to please and try hard.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of the school rules and follow them appropriately. They know the sanctions and rewards in place and are clear that poor behaviour is not tolerated. Behaviour records confirm that adults follow up incidents appropriately.
- Most pupils' attendance is above average because pupils enjoy school. However, a small number of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not attend as regularly as they should. Occasionally, individual pupils have medical reasons for their absence but this is not always the case. Leaders track and follow up absences well and, as a result, the attendance of these pupils is improving. So far this year, the attendance of these groups is closer to the national average, having previously been below average.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Since the previous inspection, pupils at the end of key stage 2 have made inadequate progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Most groups have underachieved, including the most able pupils, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. For pupils in Year 6, overall, provisional results in 2016 were below the national average at expected level and at greater depth.
- At the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was close to the national average. The proportion of pupils working at greater depth was below the national figures in all areas. However, these pupils did not build on their good achievement in the early years. The attainment for these pupils was above average at the end of Reception in 2014.
- Progress for pupils currently in the school is uneven. The school's own information, visits to classes and work in pupils' books show that there is significant variability in the rates of progress made by pupils in different classes and year groups. In some classes, pupils make good gains in their learning. However, in other classes, pupils regress. This is due

to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Any gains made are not built on effectively when pupils move to another class, resulting in inadequate achievement over time.

- The most able pupils do not make the progress they should, especially in key stage 2. This is because work is not challenging enough and pupils are not moved on when they show that they are ready for more difficult work.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, underachieve. Provisional data for 2016 shows that the progress for pupils who left Year 6 was significantly below average and in the bottom 10% of all schools nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, the differences between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in the school and pupils nationally are not diminishing.
- The school's most recent assessment information for Years 1 to 5 shows that differences between disadvantaged pupils and their peers have diminished in less than half of the classes in the school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make enough progress. The support pupils receive from teachers and support staff is not effective as pupils do not make as much progress as other pupils nationally or make the progress they are capable of.
- In the Year 1 phonics check, the proportion who reached the required standard in 2016 was close to the national average. This is a marked improvement on previous years' results and demonstrates the positive impact of the phonics programme introduced.
- Pupils make better progress in science because work is practical and investigations are carried out. Pupils also make good progress in PE due to the range of activities provided and specialist coaching available.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make good progress in the early years because this key stage is well led and managed and teaching is consistently good.
- Children join the Nursery or Reception classes with skills and knowledge which are typical for their age. They are more advanced in their early reading and mathematical development on entry than in their early writing. Leaders plan interesting and exciting activities to accelerate all areas of learning and, by the end of the early years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development is above average. This has now been the case for the last three years.
- Teachers skilfully plan learning so that it meets the children's individual needs and interests. Most activities, indoors and out, have a very clear learning focus and timely intervention by adults ensures that children quickly develop and build on their starting points.
- Adults encourage children to become independent and take responsibility for putting equipment away and dressing themselves. Children participate fully in all activities and show good levels of ability in working on their own or alongside others. They sustain concentration well, for example making mathematical shapes out of construction straws to develop their fine motor skills and knowledge of 2D shapes. They show a high degree of curiosity and imagination as they work and play together.

- The outdoor environment is well set up to encourage all aspects of learning. For example, children are successfully encouraged to solve problems, such as how to connect guttering together to get objects to roll down a long run. Similarly, the mud kitchen, sandpit and construction kits all add to children's exploration of materials and opportunities to be imaginative.
- In all activities, there is a strong focus on developing communication skills. Adults play a crucial role in this, constantly talking to the children, checking their levels of understanding through open questioning and modelling full sentences.
- Staff are effective in assessing and recording children's progress and using the information gathered to inform their planning. Learning journals are used well to document the children's starting points and map their progress. Some of the most able children are not, however, moved on as rapidly as they could be.
- The early years pupil premium funding is used extremely well to cater for the needs of the small number of disadvantaged children in Nursery or Reception classes. Close attention and support provided to these children ensure that they achieve as well as their peers. In 2015 and 2016, all disadvantaged children reached a good level of development.
- Good leadership and management ensure that the safety and welfare of children are paramount. During the inspection, due care was taken to cone off areas of the playground which were icy so that children did not hurt themselves. Expectations of behaviour are high and, from the outset, children learn to respond quickly to adults' instructions and show respect for each other.
- Children's learning is at the forefront of all planning. Good contact with parents is maintained on a daily basis, and this enables any emerging issues or concerns to be dealt with efficiently. Consequently, parents express a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of care and education provided.

School details

Unique reference number	124154
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10008244

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	660
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julia Jones
Headteacher	Tony Hand
Telephone number	01827 475 155
Website	www.dosthill.staffs.sch.uk
Email address	office@dosthill.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 March 2013

Information about this school

- Dosthill Primary is larger than the average primary school.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2015, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6.
- Most pupils are White British and almost all speak English.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is part of the Tame Valley Co-operative Learning Trust and works in close partnership with six other local schools.

- In September 2016 six new teachers joined the school, five as newly qualified teachers.
- Children attend the Nursery provision part-time. They attend Reception Year full-time.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out following a risk assessment by Ofsted of the school's assessment information and following a number of complaints made to Ofsted which raised concerns. Inspectors sought to establish whether leadership and management were effective and whether outcomes for pupils were still outstanding.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. They saw 33 parts of lessons, eight of which were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- The inspectors met with pupils and heard a selection of pupils read. They looked at examples of pupils' work in their books and spoke to pupils about their learning. There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and the early years and key stage 1 phase leaders. There were 34 responses to the online staff questionnaire and these were taken into account.
- The inspection team met with three members of the governing body and spoke to the chair of the governing body by telephone. A report about the school's performance, commissioned by school leaders, was also reviewed, together with a report from the local authority representative.
- Account was taken of the school's own parent survey together with 143 responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Letters and messages from parents received during the inspection were also considered.
- Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, development plans and information about managing teachers' performance. Minutes of meetings of the governing body and information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety were also analysed.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Benjamin Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Draper	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Ellis-Martin	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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