

# Dogsthorpe Academy

Central Avenue, Dogsthorpe, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE1 4LH

## Inspection dates

14–15 June 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders and governors are united in developing a strong culture of ambition for Dogsthorpe Academy pupils. Their well-considered strategic plan to address pupils' previous underachievement is working because they are determined and relentless in implementing it.
- The new headteacher and new deputy headteacher promote improvement effectively with demonstrable impact.
- Leaders' and governors' evaluation of how well the school is performing is accurate. Importantly, they know where the weaknesses are and how to put them right.
- At all levels, leaders are clearly focused on raising pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. The actions they are taking to accomplish this are working well.
- Teaching is good because leaders set clear targets for staff to work towards and give them good-quality training to help them to improve.
- Teachers use a range of ways to check pupils' learning in lessons and at regular intervals during each term. They know how well pupils are learning and what they need to learn next.
- Most pupils behave well consistently. They are proud of their school and arrive at school ready to learn. Attendance is improving steadily and it is currently average.
- Staff and most parents agree that pupils are safe at school. Pupils are particularly knowledgeable about how to stay safe online. Safeguarding is effective.
- Leaders have secured better progress for all pupils in English and mathematics since September 2016. The proportion of current Year 6 pupils working at the standard expected for their age has doubled since last year but attainment is still below average.
- Pupils are not using the skills they learn in English when they are writing in other subjects.
- Parents' views about the school are mixed. Most are complimentary, some are less positive and a very few are critical. Leaders acknowledge that they could do more to encourage parents to engage positively with the school.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 to at least the national average.
- Ensure that pupils' learning in other subjects matches their achievement in English and mathematics by:
  - implementing and embedding the school's new system for checking at regular intervals how well pupils are learning in non-core (foundation) subjects
  - developing the role of teachers who are new to leading their subjects so that they become as effective as the leaders of English and mathematics
  - raising teachers' expectations for pupils to apply the skills they learn in literacy when they are writing in other subjects.
- Develop parental involvement in school-based activities and their engagement in working with teachers to improve children's learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have formed an effective professional partnership that motivates, challenges and influences staff continuously to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The school's inclusive ethos, coupled with strong community and British values, promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- Staff morale is high. Everyone is on board and working hard to meet leaders' high expectations. Comments in the staff survey confirmed this. Staff said, 'We are a school of triers and hard/smart workers' and, 'We are a close-knit team that encourage and support each other whenever we can, at all levels.'
- Teachers and trainee teachers who are early on in their career confirmed that they receive high-quality support from their nominated mentors that helps them to develop their teaching skills. Leaders are skilful in encouraging staff to develop their skills and study for additional qualifications. Some teachers are 'home-grown' having first been employed as support staff then trained as teachers or started as trainee teachers and have subsequently been employed on permanent contracts.
- The headteacher has implemented effective systems for appraisal, with specific targets linked to the school's priorities for improvement. This ensures that all staff understand their contribution to raising pupils' achievement and ensuring pupils' good behaviour and personal development.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness is accurate. A wide range of information is gathered through effective systems for monitoring the school's work that informs leaders' judgements. They set goals for improvement that are the right ones. Monitoring by the trust's senior education adviser provides a valuable external view that endorses or challenges leaders' judgements.
- All of the school's priorities are rightly linked to pupils' progress and attainment. Leaders gave the significant decline in the 2016 key stage 2 national test results immediate attention, especially as the government's floor standards for pupils' progress and attainment had not been met.
- Leaders have implemented a clear, pithy and challenging plan of action to halt the decline and it is working. Good teaching is ensuring that pupils are making enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics to catch up. Even so, across the school, pupils' attainment is not as high as it should be.
- Pupil premium is being used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. Diminishing the difference between disadvantaged pupils' achievement and other pupils nationally features as a priority in the school's improvement plan. Disadvantaged pupils are doing well this year. Leaders track their progress diligently and ensure that teachers design a plan of action to meet their needs. Currently, their progress rate is at least the same as other pupils in the school.
- Work seen in pupils' books and the school's information about pupils' learning confirm that the proportion of Year 6 pupils currently working at the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics has more than doubled in comparison with last year's

Year 6.

- Leaders of English and mathematics, those responsible for the provision and achievement of vulnerable groups and most-able pupils, and leaders of year groups, are all pulling together, sharing best practice, supporting and encouraging staff to raise standards.
- The school is using its special educational needs funding effectively to ensure that individual pupils' needs are met and that they make good progress from their starting points.
- Curriculum provision is broad, balanced and enriched with many exciting and engaging clubs and activities before, during and after school which contribute to pupils' positive attitudes about school. Pupils have around 15 clubs to choose from each term. They appreciate the wide range of clubs available to them. Take-up is high and pupils who would not usually sign up for extra activities are encouraged to do so.
- The sports premium has had a significant impact on increasing pupils' participation in sports and physical activities. Around 45% of pupils attended sports clubs last year. This has increased to 64% this year.
- This school year, leaders have rightly concentrated on tackling pupils' underachievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Checking the quality of pupils' work in other subjects has not been as rigorous. Leaders of some subjects are new to them and their leadership is not as effective as that of the leaders of English and mathematics.
- Leaders and governors acknowledge that too few parents are involved in school life and/or engaging with the school to support their children's learning. This is a priority in the school's improvement plan. Results in Parent View and what parents told inspectors during the inspection provided convincing evidence that leaders have more work to do to gain their confidence and get them on board.

## **Governance of the school**

- The trust board provides effective, well organised and structured governance.
- The board ensures that it fulfils the statutory core functions of governance effectively by setting a clear strategic direction for the school, holding leaders accountable for pupils' achievement and staff's performance and ensuring that its money is well spent.
- Beneath the trust board are three layers of governance, each with a specific role and clear lines of accountability. The first two compare the school's performance to other schools within the multi-academy trust. These layers of governance keep the school under close scrutiny so that underperformance is identified quickly and actions are taken swiftly to address weaknesses.
- The third layer is the advisory council that provides local governance but without legal responsibilities. It supports and challenges the headteacher in equal measure and reviews the school's performance regularly. The advisory council is answerable to a chief executive who keeps a watchful eye on how well the school is performing and reviews the advisory council's delegated powers to ensure that they are being used effectively.

- Governance at all levels is clearly focused on the quality of teaching, pupils' academic achievement and their personal development. Monitoring and evaluation are rigorous, thorough and probing. These contribute to school leaders' extremely realistic and accurate evaluation of the school's performance.
- Spending of the pupil premium, the sports funding and funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is carefully monitored to ensure that it is spent effectively to make a difference to their academic performance.
- Governors ensure that they do not interfere with the day-to-day running of the school. They allow leaders freedom to take decisions about curriculum development in the best interests of the pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, including governors, give safeguarding a high priority and they have developed robust procedures to keep pupils safe.
- Regular and thorough safeguarding training means all staff are vigilant, know what to look for, and fully understand their responsibilities to protect pupils. Clear lines of communication ensure that concerns, however small, are passed on in writing and acted upon quickly.
- The designated lead professionals for safeguarding prioritise their work effectively and monitor the progress of each case vigilantly.
- Record-keeping is of consistently high quality and each file is kept in good chronological order. This enables leaders to retain an overview of open cases and to supervise the actions being taken to support the most vulnerable pupils.
- The designated lead professionals do not hesitate to make referrals to appropriate agencies to keep pupils safe. If leaders consider that pupils may be at risk they are persistent in passing information on to social services to seek intervention.
- Leaders ensure that parents are kept informed about the school's policy and procedures for safeguarding. Parents know that leaders will follow procedures and make a referral to external services and/or agencies if they consider that a pupil may be at risk. The school has made referrals to 'Prevent' to report concerns about families who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism.
- The school acts quickly in response to unexplained absence to ensure that pupils are safe.
- The single central record of statutory checks on all staff and adults working with pupils is completed properly to ensure their suitability to work with children. Requirements for recruiting staff are followed carefully.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Overall, teaching is good and, as a consequence, most pupils are making good progress from low starting points at the beginning of the school year in English and

mathematics.

- Teachers choose to use a variety of ways to make learning enjoyable and keep it fresh, such as arranging visits, speakers, dressing up, role play, drama and opportunities to learn outdoors. They give pupils interesting challenges for homework linked to the topics.
- Teachers ensure that pupils' work is not too easy or too difficult. They provide 'chilli challenges' for extra practice that consolidate and extend pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Time is generally used effectively in lessons. Expectations are high for pupils to show positive attitudes, apply themselves and complete their work conscientiously.
- Ongoing good-quality training for teaching assistants has moved their practice forward in promoting good learning. Some teaching assistants are expert at adjusting learning on the spot to help pupils who are struggling to grasp new ideas and concepts.
- Pupils who have physical or medical disabilities receive excellent support to ensure that they have full access to all that is provided for other pupils and that provision is adapted well to meet their needs.
- Most teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and use technical vocabulary accurately in their teaching. They use a wide range of methods to check pupils' understanding and thinking including targeted questioning and 'show-me boards' that pupils use to write down and hold up their answers for the teacher to see.
- Classrooms are well-organised, inviting spaces for learning with many prompts and reminders on display that teachers and pupils use and refer to while they are learning.
- Teachers promote reading at every opportunity as this is a priority for school improvement. Pupils are developing a keen desire to engage in reading activities as seen in the large number of pupils who are using the well-stocked, inviting library during the day. In particular, some boys who were previously reluctant to read have re-engaged with reading with the purchase of a range of new books that appeal to them.
- Teachers allow time in lessons for pupils to talk about and explain their thinking.
- Effective specialist teaching in physical education contributes to pupils' enjoyment in physical activities. Participation rates are high.
- Leaders and teachers use a range of strategies at regular intervals to check how well pupils are learning in English and mathematics. Their judgements are confirmed by others to ensure their accuracy. This information is used well to identify any pupils who are falling behind and an action plan for additional support follows quickly to help them to catch up.
- Assessment in other subjects is not as comprehensive. In recognition of this, leaders are in the process of implementing a new package from September 2017 that is designed to enable staff to track pupils' progress and attainment with more accuracy across the full range of subjects.
- Most teachers are not setting high enough expectations for pupils to apply their literacy knowledge and skills across the full range of subjects. However, in their curriculum planning, teachers do check that they teach the required content in each subject so

that pupils learn all that they should.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils take pride in their school and enjoy talking about school life. They treat the building and resources with respect.
- At breakfast and after-school clubs pupils of all ages mix together well. Older pupils help the younger ones.
- Pupils are responding well to incentives such as collecting badges for learning their multiplication tables, raffles, treats, trophies, competitions and many others. These have increased pupils' motivation to work hard and become successful learners.
- In lessons, pupils have regular opportunity to work in a group and they offer help willingly when others are finding the work difficult.
- Older pupils showed maturity in the in-depth understanding of personal safety and, in particular, e-safety. They practise fire drills regularly and lock-down procedures in the event of an emergency. Pupils were sure that they feel safe, and they are safe.
- Pupils ensure that no-one is left out. They are inclusive and respectful of individual differences.
- Pupils develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in 'forest school' which they value highly.
- The academy council takes its responsibility seriously. Councillors' ideas contribute to pupils' better learning and welfare. For example, they organised a reading challenge involving book reviews and purple target cards for staff and pupils to complete when individual targets are achieved. Both ideas were well received by other pupils.
- Pupils confidently told inspectors that bullying is rare. They said that staff sort out any problems, help them if they are struggling and take bullying very seriously. Even so, in their responses to Parent View, a few parents were less sure or disagreed that the school deals effectively with bullying.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of most pupils is consistently good.
- Most pupils arrive on time each day, well-presented in the uniform, keen and ready to learn.
- Pupils move around the building sensibly and safely.
- Breaktimes run smoothly. Adult supervision levels are high. Staff join in and organise games to play that pupils enjoy. There is a positive atmosphere in the playground. Pupils show a strong sense of fair play and teamwork.
- Older pupils told inspectors that behaviour has improved significantly over time.

- The member of staff leading on attendance is extremely vigilant in checking pupils' attendance. The attendance for each class is on show outside each classroom and the class with the best weekly attendance wins the attendance trophy. Until this school year, attendance was slipping further and further away from the national average but it is now average.
- Some pupils have challenging behaviour needs. These are being addressed with marked success in increasing their engagement in learning and reducing the number of fixed-term exclusions and incidents.
- Pupils confirmed that staff manage poor behaviour well and ensure that it does not get in the way of their learning. Even so, a few staff and parents still have concerns about the behaviour of a very small number of pupils.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- The main reason why outcomes require improvement when other aspects of the school's work are good is that, overall, pupils' current attainment is lower than it should be. The better progress that most current pupils are making, from low starting points, is enabling them to catch up quickly. Consequently, attainment this year is showing consistent improvement in most classes and especially in Year 6.
- There is some unevenness across year groups. Almost all pupils in Year 6 have made good progress since September 2016. In Years 3, 4 and 5 around one pupil in four is not making such speedy progress.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is lower than it should be but it is improving discernibly. Around half of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are now working at expectations for their ages which is an improvement on last year.
- On entry, the attainment of Year 3 pupils was particularly low and although Year 3 pupils are making strong progress especially in mathematics, only a third are currently working at expectations for Year 3 in reading and writing.
- Many pupils struggle with spelling. In subjects other than English, pupils regularly make mistakes when spelling key words that are specific to each subject.
- Pupils take care in the presentation of their written work in English and mathematics but they do not routinely apply the skills they learn in English when they write in other subjects.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 6 currently achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined has more than doubled from extremely low outcomes in the 2016 national tests. Even so, this is still below average.
- In 'long write' books pupils' fluency in written English and in their choice of language has improved considerably over time. Work in their mathematics books shows that pupils are developing skills in using and applying mathematics. They are learning to reason and solve different types of problems with increasing confidence.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. The difference between their attainment and other pupils has diminished considerably so that it is in line with their peers. The extra provision and nurture they



receive, funded by the pupil premium, meets their individual needs well.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because their additional provision is well chosen to meet their individual needs.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid progress in acquiring spoken English. Parents of pupils whose home language is not English commented that they are delighted to see the rapid progress their children have made in learning to speak English.
- The most able pupils, including the most able pupils who are also disadvantaged, make good progress. The work that they are given stretches them and they are encouraged to run the school's newspaper. They told the lead teacher for more able pupils that 'I didn't think that mathematics was hard but now it is', 'I am enjoying being challenged' and, with reference to the 'chilli challenges', one most-able pupil said 'I like the spicy ones. They make my brain hurt!'
- Some pupils are new to the area (new arrivals) from other countries, and a few have had no previous education. The school's strong inclusive ethos and good arrangements for induction enable them to settle in quickly, make friends and make rapid progress in their learning.
- Pupils are reading more widely and they are showing a keen interest in books. In reading, pupils are improving their resilience and interpreting challenging texts. Year 3 pupils were given some challenging poetry to interpret about pebbles on a beach. A pupil explained that this poem was written as if pebbles had written it 'but they didn't really'. In Year 6, an able reader recognised and pointed out to an inspector the author's use of personification.
- Pupils acquire good life skills through the school's effective programme for personal, social and health education. They learn about first aid, fire safety, how to ride bicycles safely, the dangers associated with drug and alcohol abuse, anti-bullying and e-safety.
- In discussions with inspectors, pupils were able to explain their learning articulately and they recognised how much they have improved this year academically and in their personal development.
- Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated that they are mature and have developed good personal and social skills and attitudes to learning to take them forward to the next stage of their education. Academically, this year's group is moving on to secondary school with better knowledge, understanding and skills than Year 6 pupils previously.

## School details

Unique reference number	141124
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10031346

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	David Shelton
Principal	Julie Cranke
Telephone number	01733 343581
Website	<a href="http://www.dogsthorpeacademy.org">www.dogsthorpeacademy.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@dogsthorpeacademy.org">admin@dogsthorpeacademy.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school converted to academy status on 1 September 2014. It is a member of a multi-academy trust, namely, the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust.
- The school is larger than most junior schools nationally.
- The school does not meet the government's floor standards for attainment and progress.
- The proportions of pupils leaving or joining the school at non-standard times is higher than average. Mobility is high.
- The school is multicultural. A wide range of cultures and ethnicities are represented.

- The proportions of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language are above average.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher took up their posts in September 2016.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes.
- Pupils in Year 6 read to inspectors and talked about their books.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' written work in English, mathematics and other subjects in all classes, sometimes with senior leaders. The school provided information about the progress that pupils are making currently and their attainment. Published information about pupils' attainment and progress in relation to all pupils nationally was considered.
- Pupils were observed during morning and lunchtime breaks. Inspectors spoke to pupils while they worked in class and more formally in groups.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, leaders of English, mathematics and other subjects and leaders responsible for different year groups. The lead inspector met with the trust's chief executive, senior education adviser and education director. Inspectors held discussions with teachers new to the profession, trainee teachers and staff responsible for administration.
- Inspectors looked at a range of the school's documentation including policies and record-keeping for safeguarding. The single central record of statutory suitability vetting carried out on all staff, volunteers and governors was checked.
- The school's information about how well it is performing and its plans for future improvements were evaluated. Information about the governors' work was examined.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the end of the school day and took into account 54 responses to Parent View and eight responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Linda Killman, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kerry Grubb-Moore	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lynn Lowery	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

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](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2017