

Great Doddington Primary

Church Lane, Great Doddington, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN29 7TR

Inspection dates

31 October–1 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The caring and determined leadership of the headteacher has secured significant improvements in the past two years. She has kept an unwavering focus on improving outcomes for every pupil.
- The headteacher has used her deep understanding of staff and pupils to sensitively tackle difficulties. She has been successful in uniting a team that has moved the school forward.
- Other leaders have received effective training and support to undertake their roles successfully. They have been instrumental in securing improvements to the teaching of English and mathematics and in the early years.
- Governors are highly committed and use their range of skills and accurate understanding of the school's work well. They effectively challenge and support to contribute to a collective drive for improvement.
- Leaders provide effective staff training that has made sure that teaching across the school is now consistently good. Leaders know where there is strong practice and use this well to support others to improve.
- Pupils now make good progress. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as others.
- Pupils are keen to learn because the school's curriculum interests them. They particularly relish sporting opportunities and are proud to represent their school.
- Pupils behave well across all aspects of the school day. Pupils say they feel safe. They cooperate well and are caring of each other.
- The teaching of phonics has not been consistently strong. Leaders have taken effective recent action and have identified that the improvements made are not embedded.
- Teachers are not equally skilled at ensuring that pupils know how to tackle more complex tasks with confidence.
- Leaders are not ensuring that assessment information is being used consistently well to secure more rapid progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed improvements to the teaching of phonics so that pupils become confident and accurate writers in Year 1 and Year 2.
- Develop teachers' approaches to ensure that pupils know how to tackle complex work confidently to deepen their understanding.
- Ensure that assessment information is used precisely to move learning forward rapidly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has an unwavering determination to secure the best for every pupil. She has used her deep understanding and fine-tuned interpersonal skills to sensitively bring together long-standing and new staff as an effective team. With a clear vision of care and high expectations, she has kept the school moving forward, against the backdrop of continued staffing challenges and turbulence.
- The headteacher has carefully used her prior experience, external advice and research to overhaul school systems and policies to secure considerable improvement. The school has been proactive in engaging with effective support and guidance from the local authority.
- The headteacher has enabled subject and phase leaders to develop the confidence and skills to fulfil their roles successfully. They have been instrumental in supporting staff across the school to develop their subject knowledge, skills and approaches, to achieve consistency in line with school policies. Long-standing staff reflect on the considerable change of approach from their previous experience, commenting that they feel 'trusted' but challenged and supported 'in the right way'.
- The headteacher has made sure that assessment and tracking of how well pupils are learning are closely linked to effective performance management of teachers and inform appropriate school improvement priorities and actions. Leaders recognise that the wide range of assessment information is not used consistently precisely by all staff to secure more rapid progress.
- Leaders shape curriculum decisions around the school values of 'inspire, enjoy, achieve'. Pupils are enthusiastic about the use of trips, activity days and visitors to support purposeful learning. During the inspection, pupils enjoyed dressing up and entering into the spirit of a 'Norman Day'. They asked intelligent questions of the visiting character at the centre of the day. Recent homework tasks required pupils to research and carefully construct appropriate accessories for their outfits.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, teaching British values that are equipping pupils to be thoughtful citizens. Pupils particularly value opportunities to lead through roles such as school council and supporting younger pupils. The new roles of head girl and boy are valued by other pupils who say 'we can talk to them and express our views'. There are many examples of world events and news being used well to develop pupils' awareness and understanding of diversity and equality, such as an assembly about the Invictus Games, artwork to explore Diwali and the celebration of a Black History Week.
- Leaders use the additional pupil premium funding effectively. Direct adult support within the classroom and for specific interventions, including pastoral support, is targeted to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders are particularly alert to the need to carefully and sensitively support pupils who have fragile self-esteem or more complex needs. Numerous successful examples of this were seen during the inspection. Leaders have ensured that all pupils have every chance to participate and be successful in all aspects of timetabled and extra-curricular activities.

- Leaders use the additional funds from the physical education and sports grant particularly successfully. They have ensured that teachers have worked alongside coaches to improve their teaching and coaching skills. The sports premium leader shows exceptional commitment to ensuring that every pupil can represent the school with pride. The school took part in 37 tournaments in the last academic year with considerable success. Pupils reached the county finals for girls' football, tag rugby, quicksticks hockey and girls' cricket. Pupils are incredibly proud of the fact that their school is 'really sporty and everyone gets chosen'.

Governance of the school

- Governors contribute effectively to the school's culture of care and the consistent drive to improve pupils' progress. This is because the headteacher and other leaders work openly with the governing body on tackling problems and planning for improvement.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Minutes from governing body meetings and reports illustrate that they ask school leaders searching and challenging questions.
- The governing body is well-organised and uses governors' skills and expertise effectively. Members are visible and active within school, for example, promoting aspiration for able pupils.
- The governors test out and scrutinise the wide range of information they receive. This allows them to hold school leaders effectively to account to improve outcomes for all pupils.
- Governors have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, the use of the pupil premium, and physical education and sports funding. They have an accurate view of what is working well. They have a thorough understanding of how the headteacher implements the school's policy for managing teachers' performance to hold staff accountable for effective teaching and pupil outcomes.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff receive regular relevant training and reminders, including on radicalisation and extremism. There are clear systems and procedures in place. All adults understand their responsibilities. Leaders keep detailed records to inform effective and timely work with external agencies.
- The culture of safeguarding in the school is evident, with children saying that they feel safe and parents expressing their confidence that this is the case. Learning about how to keep safe is woven into pupils' learning across the school curriculum.
- Case studies and records show that potentially vulnerable children and families are well supported. Leaders rightly prioritise the ongoing importance of early identification and removal of barriers for vulnerable pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school 'goes the extra mile' to be inclusive and to give sensitive care and support. Thorough records show timely intervention and good progress for currently identified pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Since the previous inspection there has been a significant improvement in the consistency and quality of teaching across the school so that it is now good overall. Leaders' decisive actions, with a consistent focus on pupils' learning needs, mean that staffing difficulties have not thwarted the drive for improvement.
- Leaders have introduced changes to teaching approaches and frameworks for English and mathematics that are going well. The effective subject knowledge of the subject leaders and effective links with other schools have been particularly well utilised to provide effective training. This has ensured that teachers are achieving consistency in systematically securing age-appropriate skills for pupils across the school.
- Staffing changes have impeded the development of effective phonics teaching, but decisive action following poor results in June 2017 has brought about rapid improvements. Inspection evidence confirmed that leaders are using rigorous training and monitoring to ensure that improvements are sustained.
- The school has developed effective assessment and tracking systems to ensure that teachers accurately identify what pupils need to learn in reading, writing and mathematics to be able to attain age-related expectations. Most teachers have used this insight effectively to ensure that any gaps in prior learning have been targeted and taught thoroughly.
- Leaders have also worked closely with teachers to plan a range of effective interventions and individual support for those pupils at risk of falling behind. As a result, most identified pupils are making good progress. However, leaders are not ensuring that assessment information is used as precisely as it could be to secure more rapid progress.
- Pupils who have complex special educational needs receive sensitive support which effectively promotes good academic and personal progress for them.
- Effective teaching of grammar and punctuation is used well to improve pupils' written responses across the curriculum. Teachers are linking this effectively with interesting texts and topics to give purposeful writing opportunities that have improved pupils' enjoyment and engagement with their writing. A Year 5 writer was keen to explain to the inspector how he had edited and improved his sentence order for effect: 'As I slither towards the small hole, out of the corner of my eye, I spot something.'
- Teachers are implementing the school's chosen approach to teaching reading consistently. They are building pupils' ability to develop effective comprehension skills, including using specific evidence from the text to support their responses. An able Year 6 reader was able to explain the benefits of taking part in a specific extension group.
- The inspector heard a sample of pupils, from across the school, read. They expressed a positive attitude to reading. Their books were suitably matched to their abilities and they were able to explain their book choices.
- In mathematics, teachers have sound subject knowledge and explain things clearly. They consistently support pupils' development of their understanding through a range of strategies in line with school policy. These include, for example, using a range of equipment to model or pictorially represent mathematical ideas.

- Teachers are not consistently skilled at ensuring that pupils know how to tackle more complex tasks systematically.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. All adults contribute to a family ethos of care. This ethos is appreciated by pupils. Pupils spoke warmly to the inspector about their school. One said: 'There's always someone with a friend, never anyone on their own.'
- Staff teach pupils about how to keep themselves safe from a wide range of risks. Pupils are knowledgeable about keeping safe online and 'stranger danger'. All pupils, including the youngest, understand about the importance of physical exercise and keeping healthy.
- Pupils say that incidents of poor behaviour, bullying and the use of discriminatory or derogatory language are rare. They know who to talk to if they have a worry or they can use the 'worry box'. Pupils trust adults to take appropriate action. They were reflective about what they were learning from a range of class activities and assemblies about diversity. One said to the inspector: 'It makes sense.'
- Parents who spoke to the inspector and the majority who responded to Parent View agreed that their children are safe, happy and looked after well. Historical staffing disruptions had caused some parents to be concerned about behaviour. However, leaders have responded effectively, ensuring that they stringently log and follow up on concerns. Incidents of poor behaviour are small in number. Leaders ensure that parents are suitably informed and support is effective in reducing further incidents.
- Pupils collaborate well. They are increasingly able to develop their learning independently where teachers skilfully plan purposeful tasks and ask questions that keep the learning moving forward.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils follow consistently high expectations that are set by all staff. They show courtesy and consideration towards each other and adults, including visitors in school.
- Pupils behave well around the school and at playtimes. They cooperate well, play happily and show care and responsibility towards each other. This ensures a calm and well-organised approach across the school day.
- Pupils show pride in wearing their smart school uniform. There is also a consistent pride in their books and the range of learning that is celebrated around the school. Pupils understand and take responsibility for school expectations and rules. Older pupils enjoy the responsibility of helping and guiding younger pupils.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive, consistently showing that they want to do their best and take pride in their work. Pupils showed best engagement and took the greatest responsibility for their learning when teachers gave them opportunities to

explain and demonstrate their understanding. These opportunities are not consistent across the school.

- Attendance is close to the national average. Small numbers in groups and cohorts mean that specific needs and circumstances can lead to variability in data. However, leaders ensure that all absence is monitored closely and dealt with appropriately.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are now good overall and improving in all years.
- Effective teaching, particularly by subject leaders in key stage 2, drove necessary improvement to address a dip in 2016, particularly in reading. This secured attainment slightly above and progress in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2017, the proportion of key stage 2 pupils reaching high measures of attainment rose to be better than national averages. This shows good progress for the most able pupils and reflects increased specific interventions for these pupils. However, other pupils are not benefiting often enough from opportunities to develop skills to tackle more complex tasks.
- In key stage 1, as with early years, there have been staff changes and instability since the last inspection. In 2017, effective action and improvements to teaching meant that the school managed to improve progress from prior variable early years outcomes. The majority of pupils made good progress overall, with particular improvements in writing and mathematics attainment to above national averages.
- Leaders have taken decisive action following 2017 phonics attainment falling well below national averages. Leaders used external expertise to support them to overhaul the school's approach to phonics teaching, securing effective training and updated resources. Careful analysis of the gaps in pupils' learning has driven focused intervention, which has quickly ensured that many pupils have caught up. The school knows that these recent improvements now need to be embedded.
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is now used effectively. The school's detailed assessment information for these pupils, together with work in pupils' books, shows that pupils in both of these groups are making good progress.
- The school's performance information and work in books show that current pupils are making good progress overall. Leaders know where progress is strongest and are using this and a number of external opportunities to raise the expectations of all staff. Although all classes have 'challenge tasks', evidence of adults ensuring that pupils know how to approach and confidently tackle complex learning is not a consistent feature.
- Leaders collect a wide range of useful information about pupils' learning. However, this is not used consistently well across the school to adapt tasks to ensure that progress is as rapid as it could be.
- Work in books and on displays shows that opportunities to develop skills across the

curriculum are consistently planned for and that teachers make purposeful links between reading, writing and interesting topics. Where appropriate, some opportunities are taken to link mathematics to other curriculum areas, an example being calibrating a water clock in a history topic on Ancient Greece.

Early years provision

Good

- There has been considerable staffing turbulence since the last inspection. This led to a drop to below national averages in early years outcomes in 2016. Leaders' effective actions, especially the recruitment of a highly skilled early years leader in September 2016, brought about rapid improvements. Outcomes in 2017 rose rapidly to close to national averages. Taking into account children's variable starting points, this represents good progress.
- The context of the school means that cohorts of children can vary widely year on year. Around half of the children in the early years enter with skills and abilities broadly typical for their age. Some enter with skills above, while a number of pupils arrive with skills lower than this, particularly in the areas of speaking, reading, writing and numbers.
- The early years leader has made sure that accurate assessments of what children can do at the start of Reception are being used to rapidly move learning forward for individual children. Although it is early in the school year, she already has a clear focus on ensuring that the steps of progress are geared towards readiness for Year 1. This was clear in the range of engaging opportunities on offer including the ongoing weaving in of phonics learning, letter formation and the development of number skills.
- The early years leader has also used baseline and ongoing assessments to put in place timely and responsive support for those who need it. This includes disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Children settle quickly into the welcoming environment. The adults working in the early years provide a variety of interesting, stimulating and well-organised activities. This means that children work purposefully and maintain concentration on tasks, with or without adult support. An example of this was children engrossed in cooperative role-play, pretending to be witches and using language about 'spells and cauldrons'.
- Adults encourage safe play and the safe use of resources. Children are kept safe at all times and are well looked after by caring staff. This ethos ensures that children play happily and fairly together.
- Parents are rightly positive about the good start their children make in Reception. Parents value the helpful information they receive and the careful transition, including visits to see children in their previous settings and home visits. The infectious enthusiasm of the teacher and the approachability of staff are particularly valued by parents. They are rightly confident that their children are safe and well cared for in this environment.
- The early years is now well led and managed. The highly-skilled and focused leader involves the other early years staff in securing high-quality teaching and learning from the start. She actively seeks further ideas and development from beyond the school.

The rapid recent improvements are securing immediate and strong progress.

School details

Unique reference number	121821
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10036066

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	133
Appropriate authority	Governing body
Chair	Karen Dean
Headteacher	Teresa Davis
Telephone number	01933 225 814
Website	www.greatdoddingtonprimary.co.uk
Email address	head@gt-doddington.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 October 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special education needs is below average. However, the proportion of pupils with a statement, or an education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.
- In 2017, the school met the current government floor standards, which set the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed each class in the school, most on at least two occasions. In total, she visited 13 lessons, or parts of lessons, including seven joint observations with the headteacher and middle leaders. The inspector observed the teaching of early reading skills and heard pupils reading. The inspector talked to pupils about their school and looked at pupils' books while visiting lessons. The inspector scrutinised a large sample of pupils' work jointly with the headteacher and the leadership team, to gain a view of the impact of teaching over time.
- The inspector held discussions with the school's senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke to parents informally at the start of the school day and considered the 23 responses to the Ofsted online parent questionnaire, Parent View. She also considered three responses to the staff questionnaire and 13 responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, the most recent information on pupils' achievement and progress and information relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and punctuality.
- The inspector considered the range and quality of information provided on the school's website.

Inspection team

Mandy Wilding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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