

Daven Primary School

New Street, Congleton, Cheshire CW12 3AH

Inspection dates

8–9 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, the school has experienced turbulence in leadership and staffing, which has led to inconsistencies in teaching. As a result, pupils do not make good progress across all year groups in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Information from assessment is not used consistently to enable teaching to build on pupils' skills.
- A few teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils. Pupils, particularly the most able, are not sufficiently challenged.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills on extended pieces of writing.
- Pupils' attendance is improving. However, it is still not high enough.
- Some middle leaders are new to post. They have not had sufficient opportunity and training to monitor their subjects effectively.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make varied progress across the school.
- The progress of children in the early years is variable. Teaching does not routinely challenge the most able children. Adults do not provide children with enough opportunities to promote their vocabulary and speaking skills.
- Governors do not challenge leaders sufficiently to secure good outcomes for all groups of pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has established a caring and inclusive school. She has provided stability after a period of turbulence. Staff are committed to the school and its pupils.
- The school is an inclusive community. Pupils are nurtured and cared for well.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Safeguarding is effective.
- Pupils are polite, articulate and friendly.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils participate in a wide range of trips and activities, which has a positive effect on their personal development.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - using assessment information to plan activities which provide pupils, particularly the most able, with sufficient challenge
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to practise and develop their skills in writing at greater length.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - developing the skills and knowledge of middle leaders to enable them to lead and monitor their subject areas effectively and ensure high-quality provision across the curriculum
 - ensuring that governors are more effective in challenging school leaders
 - building on actions taken to improve pupils' overall rates of attendance
 - reviewing the use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities so that the strategies in place make a positive difference to the outcomes of eligible pupils.
- Improve teaching in the early years by:
 - making sure that activities provide greater levels of challenge, particularly for the most able children
 - providing more opportunities for children to develop their vocabulary and speaking skills.

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

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how the school may improve this aspect of its work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The school has experienced a significant number of leadership and staffing changes since the last inspection. This has had a detrimental impact on teaching and pupils' progress. The current headteacher has provided much-needed stability. She is passionate and determined to improve opportunities for pupils at the school. Staff work well as a team and morale is high. They are committed to improving the standard of education for pupils in the school.
- The school is an inclusive community. A relatively high number of pupils join the school mid-year. Some are new to the country, and many have gaps in their education. Staff go out of their way to ensure that these pupils settle quickly into school life.
- Many subject leaders are new in post and have little experience in reviewing work in their area. They are enthusiastic about their roles. However, they have not yet had training to help them to monitor their areas of responsibility to gain a precise picture of priorities in their subjects.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is being used more effectively than in the past. In some classes, disadvantaged pupils are making swift progress. However, this is not the case in all year groups. This is because the needs of these pupils have not been considered closely enough.
- The funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is not used as effectively as it should be. It has a positive impact for some pupils, but not for all. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) was appointed recently and is fully aware of the improvements that are needed.
- Leaders check the performance of teachers regularly. Leaders set and review teachers' targets. Staff and school leaders are eligible for pay progression only if these targets are met. Staff who are new to the school receive a comprehensive induction and are well supported. Leaders provide appropriate professional development opportunities for staff to enhance their teaching skills.
- Leaders welcome the support and challenge from the local authority. Specific training and development activity has been provided in partnership with other schools. For example, teachers have worked together to improve assessment and the teaching of mathematics.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils study a range of subjects including music, Spanish, religious education and science. There is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs that enhance pupils' social development well. These include football, netball and science clubs.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is promoted effectively. Leaders place a strong emphasis on learning about and respecting differences. Pupils learn about other cultures and faiths, and many different religious festivals are celebrated in school. Pupils develop a good understanding of fundamental British values, such as democracy and respect, through the personal, social, health and economic education programme. They also take part in elections for the school council. Pupils are prepared

well for life in modern Britain.

- Leaders use the physical education (PE) and sports funding effectively. They have provided an increasing number of opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting activities. For example, pupils regularly take part in football lessons. Leaders have also improved teachers' skills by providing specialist coaches to work alongside them during PE lessons.
- The vast majority of parents who spoke to inspectors were positive about the school. One parent commented, 'My child loves it here and has settled in very well.'

Governance of the school

- Governors have not been effective in holding school leaders to account. Records of meetings show a lack of challenge to leaders from governors in the past. Governors have not had an accurate view of the school's performance. Recent appointments to the governing body have increased the level of expertise, but governors recognise that much still needs to be done.
- Governors want the best for the school. As one governor commented, 'We want to give children the best life chances.' Governors make regular visits and contribute time and expertise to school events.
- Governors meet all of their statutory duties related to safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safety in the school. The headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding leader, sets an excellent example. The single central record is kept up to date and all required checks are in place. All staff and governors are trained effectively, and there are clear procedures for reporting concerns about pupils' welfare. Leaders work effectively with parents and external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils have access to the support that they need at the earliest possible stage.
- All pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they like coming to school and that they feel safe. The overwhelming majority of parents who spoke with the inspector feel that their children are safe and that bullying is dealt with effectively. However, a very small minority of parents expressed their dissatisfaction with communication between the school and parents and with how leaders deal with bullying.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that pupils make good progress as they move through the school.
- Some teachers do not always expect enough of what pupils can achieve. They do not use assessment successfully to plan learning activities which are closely matched to pupils' abilities. Too often they do not move pupils, particularly the most able, onto more challenging tasks soon enough.
- Strategies to improve the teaching of writing are beginning to have a positive impact

on pupils' progress. Pupils' work in books shows that teachers are giving more attention to teaching writing skills. Inspection evidence shows an improvement in the way that pupils apply their knowledge of grammar and punctuation. Pupils' handwriting skills also show improvement over time across the school. However, pupils have limited opportunities to practise writing at length. Leaders have provided training for staff to improve the teaching of writing.

- Leaders ensure that assessments are accurate by working with teachers from a local cluster of schools. Teachers also regularly share pupils' work at staff meetings in order to improve their understanding of how to measure pupils' progress.
- A more structured approach to reading is having a positive effect. Pupils enjoy reading. They benefit from having regular opportunities to read with adults in school. During this inspection, pupils were seen reading aloud during a weekly assembly attended by parents. Inspectors also listened to pupils reading, which they did with fluency and expression.
- Teaching in mathematics is improving. Teachers now have good subject knowledge. The work seen in pupils' books demonstrates that their understanding of mathematical fluency and reasoning is developing well.
- Staff have positive relationships with pupils, and this contributes significantly to the quality of pupils' learning. One comment included, 'Teachers are kind and helpful.' The work in most pupils' books is neat and well presented.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to explain things clearly to pupils. Most teachers use questioning effectively to deepen pupils' understanding and extend their learning.
- Teachers set homework to support learning in school. Regular tasks include learning spellings and practising mental calculations that are helping pupils to improve their knowledge and skills.
- Most teaching assistants are well deployed to provide effective support for pupils. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and know what is expected of them so that they are able to support pupils' learning effectively.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders provide effective care and support for vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils understand the risks associated with social media and know whom to go to should they feel unsafe.
- Pupils are friendly, welcoming to visitors and talk with confidence.
- Most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. They appreciate the educational visits and trips that leaders provide to make their learning more exciting.
- Pupils have a good awareness of the different types of bullying. Leaders ensure that the responsibility for the approach to bullying is shared by the whole school

community. School records indicate that there are few recorded incidents of bullying. Pupils said that bullying is rare and they believe that if any occurs it is dealt with quickly and effectively.

- Leaders have ensured that a comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and economic education is in place. Pupils learn about the importance of eating healthy foods, road safety awareness and a range of other factors important to their well-being. There are good links with the local community police officer, who helps pupils to understand important aspects of personal safety.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility, for example on the school council and as part of the 'safe around school squad.' The school council has been active in promoting healthy meal options and raises funds to help charities. Pupils are rightly proud of their achievements.
- Leaders carefully check that pupils at alternative provision attend regularly and are well supported.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The main reason for this is that attendance is below the national average. Leaders provide good support to families with first-day response and visits to homes. Absence is reducing as a result. However, leaders recognise that improving attendance remains a priority for improvement.
- Pupils' behaviour in class is mostly good. They take pride in their work and their school. On occasions, when teaching is not fully challenging them, some pupils can lose concentration.
- Pupils generally behave well during playtimes. They socialise well together during lunchtimes. Most pupils arrive promptly for the start of lessons. There are a small number of pupils who present challenging behaviour. They are well supported by staff.
- Pupils told inspectors that behaviour is much better this year than it was previously in school. Behaviour logs show that there are a few instances of poor behaviour, but these continue to decline. Exclusions are rare.
- Pupils respect their school environment. There is no evidence of litter or graffiti.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Current information shows that pupils' achievement is improving. Nonetheless, pupils' achievement is not yet good because of the variation between classes. In some classes, pupils' gains in reading, writing and mathematics are not as swift as they should be. For some pupils, there are still gaps in their knowledge and skills as a result of underachievement in the past.
- The key stage 1 results, in 2016 and 2017, show that pupils' attainment was below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders point to a number of reasons for this, including staff turnover and a high number of pupils joining during the school year. The school's current records and a review of pupil's books show that

pupils are making much better progress. A greater proportion of pupils in key stage 1 are currently working at the expected standards for their age.

- The key stage 2 results, in 2016 and 2017, show that pupils' attainment was below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2016 and 2017, pupils in key stage 2 made progress that was broadly in line with that of other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics. Progress in writing was below that seen nationally. A whole-school focus on this weakness is proving to be successful. Scrutiny of pupils' work and current assessment information show that pupils in most classes are now making stronger progress in writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils made slower progress, compared to other pupils nationally, at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2017. Leaders are starting to make better use of the pupil premium funding to provide targeted support to help address gaps in these pupils' learning. This is beginning to help current disadvantaged pupils make better progress. However, in some classes the difference in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and that of others nationally is not diminishing quickly enough.
- The progress made by pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is inconsistent. The progress of some of these pupils is improving but, for others, progress is still too slow. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress when they work closely with an adult.
- The proportions of pupils achieving the expected level in the Year 1 phonics check was above the national average in 2015 and 2016. However, results dipped below the national average in 2017. This was partly due to some pupils joining the cohort during the school year with skills lower than those expected for their age. Leaders are taking positive steps to improve pupils' progress in this area. For example, training has already been used to good effect to improve teachers' subject knowledge.
- There are few most-able pupils in the school. These pupils are not fully challenged in their work and so they do not make enough progress to reach the higher levels.
- Leaders work closely with local secondary schools to ensure that transition arrangements are smooth and effective.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- In 2017, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was below the national average. Children start the early years with skills which are below those that are expected for their age. The progress of children in the early years is variable. Some children make strong progress, but this is not consistent for all.
- Teaching requires improvement. Staff ensure that outdoor spaces and indoor classrooms are bright and well-resourced and have a good range of equipment to enable children to learn. The early years leader uses assessment evidence well to identify interventions for lower-ability children and children who have SEN and/or disabilities. However, teachers do not challenge the most able children enough to extend their learning. As a result, the progress of these children is not fast enough.
- Teachers ensure that most children develop their knowledge of phonics well. However, some children are not provided with enough opportunities to extend their vocabulary

and speaking skills.

- Leaders have an accurate understanding of what needs to be done to improve the quality of the early years provision. More regular training, as well as focused support, has led to some improvements to the quality of teaching. However, it is too early to see the impact of these actions on the proportion of children being well prepared for key stage 1.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Leaders make sure that all necessary checks and documentation, for example risk assessments and first aid provision, are in place.
- Staff attend well to children's social and emotional needs and have created a nurturing environment for them. Records of children's learning provide informative evidence of what children have achieved over time.
- Additional funding has been used to put additional support in place for disadvantaged children. Evidence shows that these interventions are starting to have a positive impact on these children's progress, and more are catching up from their starting points.
- Some children find it difficult to share resources, but most mix and learn well together indoors and outdoors.
- Teachers communicate well with parents through workshops, 'stay and play' events and information meetings.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for children who have SEN and/or disabilities. As a result, these children make good progress.
- Leaders ensure effective transition arrangements so that children quickly settle into school.

School details

Unique reference number	111222
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10043213

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	162
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Acting Chair	Ian Gatie
Headteacher	Sally Whitehead
Telephone number	01260 387356
Website	www.daven.cheshire.sch.uk
Email address	head@daven.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 May 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support in school for their SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan or a statement of SEN is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who leave or join the school at times other than the start of

the Reception Year is above the national average.

- The school uses alternative education provision off the school site at the following provider: The Crescent.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a number of classes. Some of these observations were made with school leaders. Inspectors visited an assembly and observed pupils' conduct at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of pupils' books throughout the inspection to evaluate pupils' learning over time.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils formally and spoke with many more pupils informally. Inspectors heard some pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, a group of middle leaders and staff. Meetings were also held with members of the governing body, including the acting chair and a representative of the local authority. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the school's improvement adviser and representatives of an alternative provider.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance, safeguarding information, minutes of governing body meetings, information on the progress made by pupils, training arrangements for teachers and other staff, the school's checks on the quality of teaching, external reviews by a school improvement adviser and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- There were only four responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. Inspectors considered the responses from five free-text comments. Parents' views were gathered through discussions at the start of the day.
- No responses were received to the questionnaire for pupils.
- No responses were received to the questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Ahmed Marikar, lead inspector

Schelene Ferris

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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