

# Dawley Church of England Primary Academy

Doseley Road North, Dawley, Telford, Shropshire TF4 3AL

## Inspection dates

2–3 April 2019

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' actions have not yet brought about a consistently good quality of teaching and learning. Pupils' progress is too variable across subjects and year groups.
- Leaders do not have a precise enough understanding of the quality of teaching and current pupils' achievement. This is because checks on teaching do not focus sufficiently on the quality of pupils' work and pupils' progress.
- Leaders do not evaluate closely enough whether improvement actions are making a difference to teaching and pupils' outcomes. Training and support for teachers are not sufficiently tailored to help them to improve their practice.
- Checks on the effectiveness of additional support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and for disadvantaged pupils are not thorough enough.
- Teachers do not use assessment information consistently well to plan sufficiently challenging activities that build on what pupils know.
- Teaching does not equip pupils with the spelling, grammar and punctuation skills needed to write well. Teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting are not high enough.
- The wider curriculum is broad, but it does not deepen pupils' knowledge and skills in a range of subjects.
- Although pupils attain well in the Year 1 phonics screening check, the phonics skills of low-attaining pupils and pupils with SEND are not secure.
- Activities in the early years are not sufficiently challenging to enable all groups of children to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils' attendance is improving. However, absence and persistent absence remain above national averages.
- Trustees and governors are skilled and knowledgeable. However, they do not evaluate the impact of leaders' actions on teaching and pupils' outcomes with enough rigour.

### The school has the following strengths

- Staff know pupils well and provide a caring environment. Relationships are positive. As a result, pupils feel happy and safe at school.
- Leaders promote pupils' personal development and welfare effectively. Pupils develop into confident, well-rounded individuals.
- Strong values underpin the school's work. Pupils behave well and are keen to learn.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Pupils' progress is improving.
- Pupils benefit from an increasingly wide range of enrichment opportunities.

## Full report

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

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - leaders make thorough checks on how their actions are improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress
  - the monitoring of teaching, and the feedback and training that staff receive, result in consistently good or better teaching across the school
  - leaders analyse information about pupils' attainment and progress more precisely to gain a deep and accurate understanding of how well groups of pupils are achieving
  - the difference additional support is making to the progress of pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils is closely evaluated
  - governors and the members of the trust are more rigorous in their evaluation of the school's effectiveness
  - rates of absence and persistent absence continue to reduce.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - teachers use assessment information to plan work that builds on what pupils already know and can do, and challenges them sufficiently
  - there is a cohesive approach to the teaching of spelling, grammar and punctuation
  - teachers have the subject knowledge to teach writing in more depth and with a greater focus on developing pupils' skills
  - the teaching of handwriting equips pupils with the skills to form letters accurately and present their writing well, particularly in key stage 1
  - the teaching of phonics supports low-attaining pupils and pupils with SEND to become fully secure in their phonics skills
  - teaching across the wider curriculum deepens pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in subjects such as history and geography.
- Improve provision in the early years by ensuring that:
  - assessment information is used to plan activities that are sufficiently challenging for all children, including the most able
  - teachers develop children's basic skills more effectively.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders are committed to providing pupils with an education that broadens their experiences and enables them to achieve well. However, changes in staffing have led to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Leaders have not done enough to ensure that teaching is good in all classes. As a result, too many pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- The school's improvement plans are not fully effective in driving improvements. Some targets are not specific enough. Plans do not contain measurable success criteria to enable leaders and governors to evaluate the school's effectiveness with the necessary precision. Leaders' monitoring is too broad. Checks do not concentrate on ensuring that improvement actions are making a difference to the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Senior leaders know where the most effective and least effective teaching is. They have taken action to address the weakest teaching. However, training and support to develop teachers' skills are not sufficiently tailored to addressing the needs of individuals. As a result, there is too much variability in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Leaders have recently introduced a new system for checking on pupils' attainment and progress. They have a thorough knowledge of how well individual pupils are achieving. However, they do not analyse assessment information closely enough to identify trends in pupils' achievement across year groups, subjects and different pupil groups. They do not know enough about how pupils are achieving over time and whether gaps in the achievement of pupil groups are closing.
- Leaders make frequent checks on teaching. They follow up their findings quickly to ensure that teachers act on the advice they are given. However, these checks do not evaluate the impact that teaching has on pupils' learning. Consequently, the feedback that teachers receive does not help them to improve their practice so that pupils make good progress.
- The leadership of English and mathematics is effective. Leaders demonstrate strong subject knowledge and lead with enthusiasm. The mathematics leader has implemented a range of actions to improve teaching and pupils' progress. In just a few weeks, the recently appointed English leader has begun to gain an accurate grasp of the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of reading and writing. However, she has had limited time to make improvements to the quality of teaching and learning.
- There is a clear plan for the use of the pupil premium funding. Disadvantaged pupils receive additional support to address their academic, social and emotional needs. These pupils make strong progress in their personal and social development. However, leaders do not monitor the impact of actions to improve pupils' academic progress carefully enough.
- The special educational needs coordinator is new to the role. She has ensured that detailed 'pupil passports' are in place that identify the individual needs of pupils with SEND and strategies for overcoming their barriers to learning. However, these plans do

not contain pupils' targets, which makes it difficult for leaders to monitor pupils' learning and progress.

- Leaders make effective use of the primary physical education (PE) and sports premium to increase pupils' involvement in physical activity and to develop the skills of staff in teaching PE. For example, sports coaches model effective teaching, and pupils take part in the 'daily mile' to improve their fitness. There is a range of sports clubs on offer, including football, hockey, athletics, dodgeball and rugby. Participation in these clubs is high. Pupils experience success in sporting competitions, for example in cross-country running.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Leaders have begun to develop the wider curriculum to enrich pupils' experiences and improve their learning in subjects such as history and geography. An increasing range of trips and visitors to school are beginning to ignite pupils' interests. However, plans are at an early stage of implementation.
- Leaders have successfully developed positive relationships with parents and carers. Almost all of the parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and those who spoke to inspectors said that their children are happy at school and that the school is well led and managed.

### **Governance of the school**

- The trust has successfully built a committed and effective local academy committee. Governors are passionate about the school and its place in the local community. They understand the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Thorough systems are in place to check on the school's work. The headteacher reports to the local academy committee each half term. Through the trust's 'raising achievement board', the chief executive officer maintains a detailed understanding of leaders' actions. However, trustees and governors do not check thoroughly enough that leaders' actions are improving teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Governors know how the pupil premium funding is spent. However, they are less clear about the impact that this is having on disadvantaged pupils' progress. This is because leaders do not evaluate the effectiveness of this funding precisely enough.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding updates. As a result, they have a clear understanding of what to do if they are concerned about a pupil. They know pupils well so are alert to changes in their appearance, mood or behaviour. Staff are attentive to pupils' needs and look after them well.
- When staff raise a concern about a pupil's safety or welfare, leaders take thorough action to ensure that the pupil is safe. They liaise effectively with external agencies, seeking advice and making referrals when necessary.
- Leaders complete all statutory checks to ensure that staff, governors and volunteers are safe to work with children. The single central record is maintained well. Governors review this regularly to assure themselves that all checks are up to date.

- Almost all parents who shared their views with inspectors said that their children are happy, well looked after and feel safe at school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good across year groups and subjects.
- Work is not consistently challenging for pupils. Teachers do not use their knowledge of what pupils understand and can do to plan activities that meet pupils' needs closely enough. As a result, some pupils find the work too easy or too difficult. Sometimes pupils repeat work that they have already shown that they can do, which limits their progress.
- The teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar is not systematic enough. Teaching does not equip pupils with the skills they need to punctuate their writing accurately and to spell correctly. Pupils' writing is not well developed in terms of grammatical structure. Teachers do not routinely address errors in pupils' spelling and punctuation, which means that mistakes are repeated.
- Teachers plan purposeful opportunities for pupils to write at length. However, teaching focuses too much on the organisational features of different text types and not enough on developing pupils' composition skills. This limits pupils' progress, particularly the most able pupils, who are not taught the skills needed to write at greater depth.
- Handwriting is not taught well enough. In key stage 2, teachers do not insist that pupils join their letters when writing. In key stage 1, too many pupils do not form their letters correctly and with clear ascenders and descenders. The presentation of their work is poor as a result.
- Phonics teaching provides pupils with the skills they need to decode words. However, pupils' reading books and texts in lessons are not matched closely enough to the needs of low-attaining pupils and pupils with SEND. These pupils struggle to apply their phonics skills to read fluently and to spell accurately.
- Teachers do not have consistently high expectations of the most able pupils. Often tasks are not sufficiently challenging to deepen these pupils' understanding. As a result, many of these pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers plan interesting activities across the wider curriculum. However, teaching does not develop pupils' knowledge and skills in subjects such as history and geography in sufficient depth.
- Some teachers' subject knowledge is secure. Where this is strong, teachers provide clear explanations and use subject-specific vocabulary well.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Teachers plan activities that routinely require pupils to reason mathematically and use their calculation skills to solve problems. As a result, teaching is having a positive impact on improving pupils' progress.
- Teaching assistants work well alongside teachers to support pupils' learning. They intervene to reshape learning when pupils need extra support.
- Teachers ask effective questions to check pupils' understanding. Where teaching is strongest, teachers ask challenging questions that deepen pupils' thinking and understanding.

- Pupils are enthusiastic learners. When teachers plan activities that are interesting and match pupils' needs, they respond very positively. For example, in a lesson about the 'Day of the Dead', pupils were highly motivated and could readily recall facts they had learned.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have strong relationships with pupils. Classrooms are calm and orderly, which enables pupils to concentrate. Pupils work hard and are keen to please.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff know pupils as individuals and care for them well. Pupils value the care and support they receive. They feel safe at school and are certain that adults will help them if they are worried or upset.
- The school's values of love, peace, hope and trust underpin its work. Pupils have a strong understanding of these values and demonstrate them in the way in which they interact with one another and with adults.
- The 'Dawley mindset' encourages pupils to become resilient learners who are not afraid to make mistakes. Pupils talk about the importance of not giving up when they find something challenging. They know that their learning in school will open doors for them in the future. Pupils are aspirational about what they can achieve. For example, pupils can talk about the jobs they think they would like to do when they are older, including starting their own business and working in insurance as well as becoming an author, a policeman, a nurse and a teacher.
- Pupils learn how to stay safe both inside and outside school. They know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet, for example by not sharing their personal details and refusing to arrange to meet people they do not know. Pupils learn about road safety. In key stage 2, they complete a 'bikeability' course, which teaches them how to stay safe while cycling on the road. Pupils also learn first aid.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and the different types of bullying that can occur. Most pupils spoken to during the inspection said that bullying is rare, and leaders' records support this. Those pupils who said that bullying sometimes happens are confident that adults resolve this successfully.
- Staff teach pupils to be responsible British citizens who care about their local community. Pupils regularly litter pick in the local area and sing at homes for the elderly. They have designed posters to discourage dog fouling, which are on display in the local park.
- Pupils have opportunities to take responsibility. Older pupils support younger pupils well, particularly at breaktimes and lunchtimes. The school's fellowship council has been instrumental in purchasing new playground equipment. Some pupils have been trained as librarians as part of the school's drive to promote reading for pleasure.
- Pupils who join the school partway through a year are welcomed. New pupils and their parents comment on how they were made to feel at home, which helped them to settle quickly and make friends.

- The school provides good support for families at the beginning and end of the school day, with a before- and after-school club. Pupils enjoy spending time with their friends and engaging in the interesting activities on offer.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders and staff share high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond positively to these and behave well. Pupils listen carefully in lessons and work hard. At breaktimes and lunchtimes, they play happily together, sharing the playground equipment and taking turns.
- Pupils are welcoming and friendly. They are proud of their school and are keen to share their work. Pupils have good manners and are polite and courteous to adults.
- Leaders maintain careful records of behaviour incidents. These show that there are few incidents and that pupils' behaviour is continually improving. Any use of derogatory language is swiftly addressed.
- Pupils move around the school in a calm and orderly manner, including when they are not directly supervised. For example, pupils walk up the ramp to the playground sensibly, making way for other pupils to pass in the opposite direction.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve pupils' attendance. Incentives such as book tokens, cinema tickets and scooters encourage pupils to attend school regularly. As a result, attendance is improving. The number of pupils who have 100% attendance has risen considerably over the past 12 months. The proportion of pupils who are frequently absent from school has reduced. However, absence and persistent absence remain above national averages.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Current pupils are not making consistently strong progress across the school because the quality of teaching in some classes and subjects is not good enough.
- In 2018, pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 declined. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was below national averages. Current key stage 1 pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable, particularly in reading and writing.
- Published information for 2018 shows that pupils leaving the school at the end of Year 6 made average progress in reading and writing. The proportions of pupils attaining the expected standard in these subjects were in line with national averages. However, pupils' progress in mathematics was below average. Pupils' attainment in mathematics was also below that seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been at least in line with national averages for the past two years. Pupils are able to use their phonics skills to decode words. However, low-attaining pupils do not have secure enough skills to read fluently. Pupils do not apply their phonics skills consistently well to spell.



- Pupils' progress in mathematics is improving. The introduction of more opportunities to reason mathematically and use their skills to solve problems is enabling more pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils do not make enough progress in writing across the school. Pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling skills are weak, which has a detrimental effect on the overall quality of their writing.
- The school's assessment information shows that in some classes, pupils with SEND make progress that is in line with that of their peers. However, in other classes, they do not. Work in books shows that activities are sometimes not matched closely enough to these pupils' needs, which limits their progress over time.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress is not strong enough. In 2018, these pupils' progress was below that of other pupils in the school and nationally. Although current disadvantaged pupils are making similar progress to other pupils in the school, this is not enough to enable them to catch up. As a result, disadvantaged pupils' attainment in some classes and subjects is too low.
- In 2017 and 2018, boys' attainment in writing at the end of key stages 1 and 2 was lower than girls'. The school's assessment information shows that there continues to be a gap in boys' and girls' attainment in writing across the school.
- The most able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. In 2018, the proportion of pupils working at the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 was low. It was also low at the end of key stage 2 in writing and mathematics. A lack of challenge continues to limit these pupils' progress.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- Children enter the early years with knowledge and skills below those typical for their age. In 2018, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was in line with the national average. However, current children's progress is not as strong as it should be because the quality of teaching is not consistently good.
- Leaders know some of the strengths and weaknesses in the early years provision. However, improvement plans do not focus sufficiently on improving the quality of teaching. Actions are too vague. A lack of measurable success criteria makes it difficult for leaders and governors to evaluate how effective actions have been.
- Children's learning journals show that the curriculum is broad. Adults plan a range of interesting and engaging activities that enable children to make progress across all areas of learning. However, adults do not use assessment information to plan activities that match children's needs and abilities closely enough. As a result, too many children do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Adults engage positively with children during their learning. Some adults model language effectively by describing what children are doing as they play. For example, during the inspection, children were engrossed in filling plant pots with soil. An adult encouraged them to count out loud as they put scoops of soil into the pots and described the pots as full, half full and empty. Children then repeated these phrases.



Some adults ask questions to explore children's understanding and encourage children to answer in full sentences. However, not all adults consistently do this.

- There are not enough opportunities for children to practise and develop their skills in writing and mathematics. Adults do not insist that children apply their phonics skills in their writing, which means that children's progress in writing is not as good as it could be. On occasion, adults' modelling of writing is inaccurate, for example not using capital letters at the start of sentences.
- Activities lack challenge, particularly for the most able children. They do not deepen children's understanding and extend their thinking sufficiently.
- Children engage enthusiastically in activities. They play happily together and share resources. In Reception, children access resources independently. However, children's independence in Nursery is underdeveloped and children rely on adults to provide them with the resources they need.
- Most children behave well and listen attentively in adult-led sessions. However, on occasion, a small number of children are over-boisterous in their play and are slow to respond to adults' instructions.
- Relationships between adults and children are positive and caring. Adults know children well and provide them with the support and guidance they need to develop into confident learners. Adults ensure that children are safe and look after them well.
- Adults work actively to involve parents in their children's learning. Home visits by staff help Nursery children to settle quickly when they start school. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their children's learning journals. They are also invited into school to enjoy special events such as Mother's Day and class lunches with their children. A recent workshop has helped parents to develop their storytelling skills.

## School details

Unique reference number	142785
Local authority	Telford & Wrekin
Inspection number	10088454

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Alison Primrose
Principal	Nick Andrews
Telephone number	01952 386280
Website	<a href="http://dawley.academy">http://dawley.academy</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:a3317@telford.gov.uk">a3317@telford.gov.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Dawley CofE Primary Academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of St Chad's Academies Trust, which comprises 16 schools. The school is governed by the board of trustees. There is a local academy committee that oversees aspects of the school's work. This is the school's first inspection since it became a sponsored academy in May 2016.
- A high proportion of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average. The number of pupils with education, health and care plans is also above the national average.
- There is one Nursery class and one Reception class. There are two mixed-age classes in Years 1 and 2, in Years 3 and 4, and in Years 5 and 6.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in parts of 16 lessons. One inspector visited the before-school club.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke formally with three groups of pupils as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around the school.
- An inspector listened to a group of pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- Inspectors examined the quality of work in pupils' English, mathematics and topic books. An inspector also reviewed work in children's learning journals.
- Discussions were held with the principal, vice principal and other school leaders. One inspector met with a group of staff to gather their views on safeguarding, professional development and pupils' learning.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer, head of school performance and diocesan improvement adviser from St Chad's Academies Trust. A telephone conversation was held with the chair of governors and a meeting was held with a member of the local academy committee.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and academy improvement plan, information about current pupils' attainment and progress, records of checks made on the quality of teaching, records relating to safeguarding and attendance, information on the school's website and minutes of meetings of the local academy committee and raising achievement board.
- Inspectors took into consideration the 33 responses to Parent View. An inspector spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.

## Inspection team

Claire Jones, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Michael Appleby

Ofsted Inspector

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