

The Donington Cowley Endowed Primary School

Towndam Lane, Donington, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE11 4TR

Inspection dates

4–5 June 2019

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

- Leaders responded quickly and decisively to the recommendations from the last inspection. Their actions have resulted in significant improvements to the quality of teaching and pupil outcomes.
- Middle leaders are effective in their roles as a result of the training and support provided for them. Leaders at all levels have strong capacity to ensure sustained improvement.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and consistently high expectations of pupils. Pupils' attitudes to learning are strong and these are reflected in the high quality of work in their books across a range of subjects.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils state that instances of bullying are rare and that they value the kindness and support of staff if they have any worries or concerns.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and their conduct around school are consistently good.
- Rates of progress and standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in key stages 1 and 2 are at least in line with national averages and improving over time.
- Occasionally, teachers do not set work that is well matched to pupils' abilities. This puts a limit on their potential.
- Leadership and teaching in the early years are strong. Children make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for Year 1. However, children's awareness and understanding of diversity is not as advanced as other aspects of their learning and development.
- Leaders' work to review and revise the curriculum has not yet been completed. There is more work to do to ensure that their chosen approach is consistently implemented throughout the school.
- Attendance has been below average for the last three years. Rates of persistent absence are above average and increasing, especially for disadvantaged pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by concluding the work to review and revise the curriculum and ensuring that teachers implement the revised curriculum consistently across the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment to set work consistently that closely matches pupils' needs and abilities.
 - making sure that pupils in Years 1 to 4 have sufficient opportunity to develop their own learning skills.
- Improve pupils' attendance and reduce the rate of persistent absence, especially with regard to disadvantaged pupils.
- Ensure that staff give pupils in the early years more frequent opportunities to develop an awareness and appreciation of each other's differences and a range of cultures beyond their immediate experience.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders were quick to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Their actions have resulted in significant improvements to the quality of teaching, leading to higher standards of attainment and stronger progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school.
- Leaders have developed a set of clear and measurable plans for improvement. The impact of these plans is reviewed by means of a systematic programme of checks, carried out by leaders at all levels and widely shared between stakeholders. Consequently, leaders, staff and governors have an accurate and up-to-date overview of strengths and weaknesses across the school.
- Middle leaders are effective, as result of the enhanced opportunities for training and professional development which have been provided over the past two years. Subject leaders speak confidently about their roles, based on their expertise gained through training and the findings of their regular checks on the quality of teaching in their subject areas.
- The leader with responsibility for provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is experienced and effective in her role. She makes sure that pupils' additional needs are assessed and reviewed on a regular basis. As a result, pupils with SEND receive timely and effective support for their learning and welfare needs and make increasingly strong progress from their starting points.
- The headteacher leads the provision for disadvantaged pupils effectively. She ensures that the impact of the additional support for disadvantaged pupils is reviewed regularly, so that it can be precisely targeted to address pupils' barriers to learning. However, actions to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils have not had enough impact on their rates of persistent absence, and this remains an area of focus.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported through the curriculum. It is reflected in work in subjects such as religious education and in the consideration of environmental issues. For example, pupils in Year 3 have written about themes such as the lives of children around the world and the concept of pilgrimage. In Year 6, pupils have produced well-presented and detailed booklets about the life journey of a Muslim, Hindu, Sikh or Christian. During a lively session observed in Year 6, pupils were fully absorbed in skilfully-guided discussions about big questions such as 'What is religion?' and 'Do you have to believe in God to be good?' The curriculum is further enriched by a broad range of clubs for pupils of all ages. The provision for extra-curricular sport and music are particular strengths of the school, and funding is available to ensure that opportunities are open to all pupils.
- Since the last inspection, leaders and staff have improved pupils' social development by ensuring that they receive increased opportunities to learn about British values. This means that pupils are increasingly well equipped for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders and staff are currently reviewing the school's curriculum to make sure that it is broad and balanced and adapted to the needs of pupils and the context of the school.

There is a planned programme of training in place, although it is too soon to evaluate the impact of this work.

Governance of the school

- At the time of the last inspection, an external review of governance was requested. Governors ensured that this review took place promptly and that the resulting recommendations were fully enacted. Governors fulfil their statutory functions effectively.
- Governors have undertaken training relevant to their role. As a result, governors are confident to ask challenging questions as they hold leaders to account for the school's performance.
- Governors receive regular and detailed reports regarding the additional funding for pupils with SEND, the physical education and sport funding and the pupil premium. These enable them to make sure that funds are spent wisely and have a positive impact on standards.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Records show that employment checks meet statutory requirements and any welfare concerns are followed up promptly, with appropriate actions taken. The school has worked effectively with a range of external agencies to ensure pupils' safety and well-being.
- The headteacher, in her role as designated leader for safeguarding, has ensured that staff training is thorough and up to date.
- Staff throughout the school adopt a tenacious and vigilant approach to pupils' safety. There is a strong culture of care and concern for pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers have consistently high expectations for pupils' behaviour and attention in lessons, and for the standards they wish to see in workbooks.
- Pupils in all year groups show consistently positive attitudes to learning. They collaborate well with each other and relationships are strong. Pupils who spoke with inspectors aptly commented, 'We want to pay attention to the teacher and get on with our work.'
- Staff encourage pupils of all ages to take pride in their work. Their pride is reflected in the quality of their workbooks across a range of subjects, and in the consistently high standards of presentation and handwriting.
- The teaching of reading is effective, following a focus on reading throughout the school. Leaders and staff have introduced a range of measures to encourage a love of reading and to improve pupils' skills in decoding words and understanding the meaning of texts. Pupils who read to inspectors did so with confidence and accuracy. The teaching of phonics is a strength of the school and has a positive impact on pupils' reading and writing.

- The teaching of mathematics is equally strong, as is the quality of work in pupils' books. Occasionally the middle- and lower-ability pupils have fewer opportunities to practise their mathematical reasoning through problem-solving than those who are more-able learners.
- Pupils with SEND receive effective support from well-trained staff. This enables them to participate in lessons, alongside their peers.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge which they use skilfully to ask questions and set clear expectations across a range of subjects. This enables lessons to flow smoothly, especially in Years 5 and 6. However, in some key stage 1 and lower key stage 2 classes, the work is occasionally too heavily structured, and the level of adult support is too intense. This can sometimes put a limit on pupils' ability to develop their own learning skills.
- In some year groups, teachers do not use assessment to set work that is consistently well matched to pupils' abilities. Work is occasionally too demanding or too easy for pupils and does not allow them to demonstrate their full capability.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils speak warmly about the school, saying that they appreciate the help and support that they receive from staff. Pupils appreciate the wide range of activities provided for them and especially the extensive outdoor facilities. They happily take on a range of roles and responsibilities and are clearly proud of their school.
- Pupils who spoke with the lead inspector confirmed that they participate enthusiastically in extra-curricular activities. They were able to describe an extensive range of activities on offer. These relate to interests such as sport, dance, music, being 'digital leaders' and the popular guinea pig care club.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They told inspectors that they enjoy opportunities to review each other's work. They are keen to improve their writing, for example by using the 'editing stations' available in Years 5 and 6.
- The work in pupils' books shows that they take part in a wide range of activities to support their personal development. They study themes such as friendship from the personal, social and health education curriculum.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and that they have received teaching about personal safety from school staff and through regular visits from the local police community support officer. They showed an appropriate understanding of bullying, which they say is rare, and a respect for each other's differences.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In discussion, pupils described behaviour in lessons and at playtimes as 'really good'. This was confirmed during the inspection by observations in and around school, at all times of the school day.

- Staff take a consistent approach to the expectations for pupils' behaviour. All clearly understand the school and class rules.
- Records show that instances of bullying and unkind behaviour are rare. There have been no fixed-term exclusions during the last two years.
- Attendance has been consistently just below the national average for the last three years. Rates of persistent absence have been consistently above the national average, and the current figures show a further increase. A significant proportion of these absences relate to disadvantaged pupils. The school has procedures in place to monitor and analyse patterns of absence and leaders demonstrated the positive impact of their actions on the attendance of some individual pupils. However, leaders' actions have not yet had sufficient impact on the overall rate of attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The school's latest achievement information shows that current pupils in all year groups are making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the majority of subjects. A smaller proportion of current pupils is on track to achieve the expected standard in writing than in reading and mathematics in some year groups. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are making increasingly strong progress from their starting points.
- The standard of work in current pupils' books is equally high across a wide range of subjects in addition to English and mathematics.
- Rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 have been improving for the last three years and are in line with national averages. This trend of improvement also applies to standards of attainment, which improved to be above the national average for the first time in 2018, both at the expected and higher standards. Pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for secondary education.
- Standards of attainment at the end of key stage 1 have been consistently at least in line with the national average. The proportions of pupils attaining at the expected standard and at greater depth have often been above those seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 has been consistently in line with, or above, average for the last two years.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders in the early years are experienced and have high expectations for all pupils. They ensure that the outcomes of frequent assessments are used to plan activities that will build on children's strengths and target areas of weakness.
- Children enter the early years at a stage in their development which is broadly typical for their age. As a result of effective teaching, children make good progress and the proportion who attain a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is consistently above the national average.
- Children get off to a strong start in reading, because the teaching of phonics is

effective. The adults have good subject knowledge. Teaching enables children to build skills systematically, which they apply well to their reading and writing.

- Children have regular opportunities to practise their early writing skills, as part of the rich and varied range of activities that staff provide for them, both indoors and in the well-developed outdoor learning area. Their work shows that children have made good progress in writing over the course of the year. Some are now writing a series of sentences independently, with good attempts at spelling and punctuation.
- Staff promote children's learning and development by adapting the curriculum according to children's needs and interests around a central theme. For example, at the time of inspection the story of 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch' was used as the inspiration for role play, reading, writing and number activities. Staff promoted children's awareness of how to stay healthy imaginatively through an activity planning a healthy lunchbox for Mr Grinling. Positive interactions between adults and children ensure that children make the most of the activities on offer.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Staff have received all of the required training and have established a warm and nurturing atmosphere in the early years class.
- Parents and carers speak positively about the quality of care and teaching provided for their children. Parents make good use of the online tool to share achievements from home and stay well informed about their children's learning and development.
- Evidence from children's workbooks and from the learning environment show that children in the early years do not have enough opportunities to appreciate their differences and begin to learn about diversity beyond their immediate experience.

School details

Unique reference number	120556
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10087358

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	258
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Cole
Headteacher	Marina Faulkner
Telephone number	01775 820467
Website	www.cowley.lincs.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@cowley.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February – 2 March 2017

Information about this school

- The Donington Cowley Endowed Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The school is a Voluntary Controlled primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is in line with the national average.
- A larger-than-average proportion of pupils is of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 18 lessons or part-lessons, some jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at work in a wide range of pupils' books. They considered the school's assessment information on the progress and standards achieved by current pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked with them about their reading.
- The lead inspector met with a group of pupils from Years 5 and 6. Inspectors spoke with pupils informally in lessons and around school.
- An inspector observed a whole-school assembly.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders with specific responsibilities in the school. Inspectors also spoke with a range of other teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector had a meeting with the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day and considered the 15 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. There were no responses to the online staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation, including the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation summary, minutes of meetings of the governing body, attendance records, behaviour and bullying logs, external reports on the work of the school, monitoring and evaluation records and a range of documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rebecca King	Ofsted Inspector
Rob Gooding	Ofsted Inspector

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