

Inspection of a good school: Dogsthorpe Infant School

Central Avenue, Dogsthorpe, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE1 4LH

Inspection dates:

3–4 December 2019

Outcome

Dogsthorpe Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and teachers have established an ambitious curriculum which is designed to meet the needs of all pupils so that they can do their best. From their start in Reception, children are immersed in a language-rich environment. They benefit from expert help so that nearly all learn to read fluently and to write proficiently by the end of Year 2. Many of the pupils for whom English is an additional language are given all the necessary support needed to acquire language skills and vocabulary rapidly so that they can read fluently by the end of Year 2.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy attending school. They learn and play in a safe and secure environment. Teachers have high expectations of the behaviour of all pupils. Pupils behave responsibly in lessons and around the school. There is very good provision to support the few pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour. This means that they can take part in all lessons without causing disruption to other pupils.

Incidents of bullying remain rare. When they occur, leaders take them very seriously and manage them appropriately. Pupils spoken to demonstrate that they understand what bullying is and the steps that they need to take should it happen.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The headteacher and governors have developed a very effective team. They have established a shared common purpose among all staff to strive to develop an outstanding quality of education. The steps they have taken so far show that they are heading in the right direction.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have worked effectively in order to develop a curriculum that is tailored to meet the needs of all the pupils in this community. Teachers and support staff have been well trained to make sure that the curriculum is taught well and that the significant number of pupils who have barriers to their learning are able to take part in all activities.

The quality of the education for reading and writing has been thoughtfully designed to make sure that when pupils are learning something new they get practice to remember it. For example, at the start of Year 2, teachers have realised that they no longer have to remind pupils about basic sentence structure because they have remembered this and write sentences correctly. This has given pupils a great start to the further development of their writing in Year 2.

A year ago, leaders and governors were concerned that not enough pupils in Year 1 gained the phonics skills to become fluent readers. The steps that they have taken to rectify this have been successful. The curriculum and teaching of reading and phonics are now a strength of the quality of education. In Reception, children start with a highly structured approach to learning letters and the sounds they represent. They learn strategies to help them to remember how to read words and to form letters. Any child who may be struggling to learn a new sound or letter is given immediate help because of the close attention teachers and teaching assistants pay to each child's development.

Forest schools and the learning journey bus add an exciting dimension to the curriculum. Pupils take part in activities in forest schools to support topic work. For example, in art in Year 1 pupils drew on the work of the artist Andy Goldsworthy to create attractive pictures using natural materials. In the learning bus, pupils can enter a virtual world where, in history, for example, they can explore a castle, or, in science, the various habitats of different animals.

All pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have adjustments made or additional support given so that they can fully take part in all lessons. For example, the Attention Autism provision equips a group of pupils to be able to concentrate and learn much better than they were able to do in the past.

In some subjects, such as history and geography, the sequencing of learning is not as sophisticated as it is in reading, writing, mathematics, science and art. Teachers are rectifying this. Alongside this development they are revising the assessment procedures so that they match any changes they make to the curriculum in these subjects.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All procedures for the safe recruitment of staff are in place. Safeguarding training is up to date, and staff use the child protection procedures conscientiously.

The system for safeguarding vulnerable pupils is used very effectively. Staff have a high degree of expertise when working with families and outside agencies in order to keep pupils safe. Relationships with most families are grounded in trust, and staff act as advocates for parents to ensure the safeguarding of pupils.

Procedures to check on pupils that are absent are secure so that leaders know quickly the whereabouts of pupils if they are not at school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The expectations of learning in each year group for a few subjects are not as explicit as they could be. This means that when planning the next steps in learning there is a danger that these are not building securely on what has gone before. Leaders need to ensure that the model for development used in subjects like art and science are used in subjects such as history and geography.
- The assessment procedures in the newly developed subjects will need to be revised so that they match the expectations established in subjects like art and science. The simple but effective system in art, where one or two pieces of work are used to demonstrate what has been learned and what the next step for pupils should be, provides a good model to replicate. This also has the benefit of having a minimal impact on teacher workload.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Dogsthorpe Infant School to be good in February 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	110719
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10110286
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	293
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Hartropp
Headteacher	Rebecca Waters
Website	www.dogsthorpeinfants.com
Date of previous inspection	24–25 February 2016

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized infant school.
- The proportion of pupils who have English as a second language is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above average.

Information about this inspection

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, members of the safeguarding team, the special educational needs coordinator and the early years leader.
- The inspector also had a phone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector did deep dives in these subjects: reading, writing and art. These entailed visits to lessons, meetings with pupils, teachers and leaders and an examination of curriculum plans and pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding, meetings were held with the safeguarding team, pupils, teachers and governors. Child protection records, and logs for behaviour and bullying were also examined.

Inspection team

Tim Bristow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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