

Inspection of Downham Feoffees Primary Academy

Main Street, Little Downham, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB6 2ST

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils learn in an environment that supports them to have aspiration for their futures. Pupils enjoy the interesting learning in lessons. They are excited to share what they know. Pupils value the wide range of clubs and activities, such as sports and creative clubs. These help them become confident learners.

Pupils are exposed to many high-quality texts through their learning. They use these to practise and develop their wider reading skills. Pupils understand the importance of reading. They like to read the high-quality texts provided for them.

Pupils play happily at playtimes. They have fun using the wide range of outdoor play equipment, including sensory and music resources. Older pupils in the school benefit from having the chance to take on a 'buddy' role to support younger pupils.

Pupils feel listened to, safe and cared for. They are kind to each other. They are aware of different types of bullying that could happen, although this is not something they say happens often. They are confident that adults in school will sort out problems quickly if they arise.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. Pupils gain a secure knowledge of many subjects. Teachers encourage pupils to make connections between the different parts of the curriculum. This helps pupils to draw quickly and naturally on what they have learned.

From the moment pupils start school, they follow a curriculum that sets out the important things they should know at each stage. Staff make sure pupils revisit and recap information that they have studied before, so this knowledge sticks. Teachers use assessment well to spot when pupils need more practice.

Teachers generally teach the content of the curriculum well. They have sufficient subject knowledge and confidence to deliver and adapt planning so that pupils learn effectively. However, this is not consistently the case in some areas. Leaders' actions to improve the quality of teaching in these few subjects are improving the quality of pupils' learning.

Leaders are quick to identify and support the needs of individual pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders seek advice and support from external professionals. They make sure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support. Pupils with SEND access the curriculum alongside their classmates and progress in their learning. Adults model speaking and listening skills well, and this helps all pupils develop their ability to communicate.

Phonics is taught well. Pupils read books that interest them and allow them to practise sounds they know. Most pupils are quick to pick up early reading skills.

Some pupils need extra help to learn to read. Adults offer timely support to these pupils. However, some adults are still getting to grips with how best to help pupils with their reading. Training and additional support are already in place to address this.

Pupils' orderly behaviour in class creates an environment where they can think, listen to others and share their personal views. Staff emphasise the established routines that support pupils to behave well. Incidents of disruption are not common. Where they do happen, teachers respond quickly to ensure learning is not disturbed. In the early years, children develop positive attitudes to learning. This is evident through their focus and absorption in the activities they complete.

Leaders emphasise the importance of democracy, diversity and equality. Pupils' developing understanding of these values is plain to see in their work on the school council. Pupils know they can influence change through having a voice in joint decisions. Their views have contributed to the choice of lunchtime clubs on offer. Many pupils complete an award scheme, devised by the trust and the academy. This recognises their wider achievements both in school and at home.

The trust, academy council and school leaders have formed an effective partnership. Together they have made the right decisions to bring about the many improvements evident throughout the school. Leaders have considered the well-being of the staff, and take on board feedback before making decisions that impact their workload. Staff appreciate this and are proud to work in their school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are maintaining a strong safeguarding culture. The trust and academy council monitor this effectively. All staff understand that keeping pupils safe is a shared responsibility.

Regular training ensures that staff have clarity about the procedures to follow when sharing concerns. When a concern is raised, leaders act swiftly, involving external agencies as required. As a result, the right support is provided for the most vulnerable pupils.

The curriculum supports pupils to gain knowledge about keeping themselves safe. For example, pupils know how to keep themselves safe when playing games online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers are not confident to deliver aspects of the curriculum effectively. As a result, on occasion, pupils are not supported to learn new knowledge in the most efficient way. Leaders must continue with their work to ensure that there is consistency in the standard with which the curriculum is taught and so make sure that pupils do not develop gaps in what they know and remember.
- Some staff supporting pupils to practise reading have less expertise to know how to help them most effectively. Leaders should continue with the training and support being provided and make sure that all staff are equipped and confident to provide pupils with the best possible support, especially those pupils with the biggest gaps in their reading knowledge.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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	144947
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10212061
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	153
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Mark Hollington
Principal	Susan Jaques
Website	www.downhamfeoffees.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school uses alternative provision to support the needs of pupils where necessary.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the principal and assistant principal, as well as the special educational needs coordinator and leader of the early years foundation stage.
- Inspectors held meetings with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust and the executive principal (primary).
- Inspectors met with trustees and members of the school's local governing body and the academy council, including the chair of the academy council.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in four subjects: early reading, geography, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and, where relevant, looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector met with designated safeguarding leaders, the human resources and finance manager and other staff to discuss safeguarding.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including curriculum plans, school development plans, safeguarding and behaviour records.
- An inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil in their school. Inspectors also observed the behaviour of pupils across the school site at different times of the day, including playtime.
- Inspectors considered 38 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 35 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the 14 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Kristian Hewitt, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sebastian Gasse

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022