

Inspection of Dawley Church of England Primary Academy

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

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Dawley Church of England Primary Academy is a happy school where pupils learn well. Relationships between pupils and staff are strong. Adults know pupils very well. They care about them. This helps pupils to feel safe and secure. However, leaders have not placed enough emphasis on ensuring robust systems are in place to safeguard children. This places pupils at risk of potential harm.

Pupils enjoy attending school. They make a purposeful start to the school day and quickly settle into morning routines. They display the 'Dawley Mindset' – sticking at tasks and not giving up. This helps to raise pupils' aspirations. They maintain positive attitudes to learning and take an active part in lessons.

The school's distinct Christian ethos is promoted through the school's core values of love, hope, peace and trust. Pupils understand these values. They reflect them in the things they say and do.

Leaders expect pupils to behave well in lessons and at other times. Pupils live up to these expectations. They take care of each other and have strong friendships. Pupils say bullying is extremely rare. Occasionally, when friends fall out, adults sort matters out quickly. This maintains the happy spirit of the school.

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

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, do not carry out some of their responsibilities well enough, especially safeguarding. They do not have a good grasp of their statutory duties for keeping pupils safe. Record-keeping systems are poor. This makes it difficult for governors to hold school leaders to account for keeping pupils safe.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have placed a sharp focus on improving the quality of education. Subject leaders work well with external consultants and collaborate with professionals from other schools. These partnerships are proving successful. Leaders have designed a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils.

Curriculum leaders have set out the essential information, vocabulary and skills that they expect pupils to learn. They have ensured that children in the early years develop useful knowledge in a range of subjects. This means that children are well-prepared for their education in key stage 1. The curriculum builds from these starting points, setting out a series of lessons in a logical order. For instance, in art, pupils practise using colour tones before creating more complex pieces of work. Teachers often revisit key concepts to ensure knowledge sticks in pupils' minds. This helps pupils to learn well.

Teachers explain subject matter clearly. They ask useful questions to check on pupils' understanding. This helps teachers to identify pupils who need extra support. Adults then work with these pupils to address misconceptions. However, some staff are still developing their expertise in teaching the curriculum. Sometimes the activities that they ask pupils to complete are not well-matched to pupils' abilities. Lesson time is not always used as effectively as leaders expect.

Leaders have revised their approach for teaching pupils how to read. This approach is rigorous, taught consistently and is effectively helping pupils to learn to read. Pupils receive daily phonics lessons in small groups. They get lots of practice because the books they read are matched to their abilities. Pupils use and apply their phonics knowledge well and, as a result, become better readers.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively. Leaders make adaptations so that all pupils access the full curriculum. Pupils with SEND achieve well in a range of subjects. For example, in French, some pupils with SEND are keen to use the new words and expressions they have learned. They speak out with great confidence. Their progress through the curriculum helps them become better linguists by the time they reach the end of Year 6.

The school's curriculum broadens pupils' understanding of the wider world. Pupils are encouraged to discuss topical issues and events in the news. Staff ensure this work is approached sensitively and appropriately according to pupils' ages. For instance, pupils in Year 6 have recently debated serious subjects and written persuasive letters to politicians. This has deepened their understanding of free speech and the rule of law.

Pupils are involved in deciding classroom rules. They behave well, listening to adults and focusing on tasks. This means that everyone can concentrate in lessons.

Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This limits their learning opportunities. Leaders work hard to promote regular attendance. They challenge families who do not send pupils to school regularly. This has led to an improvement in some pupils' attendance. Nevertheless, leaders are aware that further work is needed to ensure all pupils come to school regularly.

Leaders are mindful of staff workload. Most staff express positive opinions about working at the school. They value the training they have been given to introduce new features of the school's curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Sometimes, when pupils raise a concern about their safety and well-being, staff do not deal with matters quickly enough. They are too slow to seek advice about the concerns they receive. This potentially puts pupils at risk of serious harm.

Leaders do not have a robust system to investigate and record any allegations made against adults. Leaders do not always log their actions in response to such concerns. They also do not document the outcomes of these actions. This makes it difficult for leaders to review potential patterns or identify potential risks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Those responsible for governance have not maintained sufficient oversight of the school's safeguarding systems. Allegations against staff are not recorded in sufficient detail. In addition to this, sometimes leaders have not acted quickly enough to help pupils who raise concerns. As a result, leaders cannot guarantee that they have done all they can to ensure pupils' safety and welfare. Leaders should review the school's safeguarding procedures and record-keeping systems to ensure that pupils are kept as safe as possible.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This limits their learning. Leaders should continue to work with families to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.
- Staff do not always provide pupils with learning activities to help them learn as well as they might. Leaders should continue to develop staff subject knowledge and teaching skills so that they become more expert in implementing the planned curriculum.

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	142785
Local authority	Telford & Wrekin
Inspection number	10225493
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	230
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Alison Primrose
Principal	Nick Andrews
Website	http://dawley.academy
Dates of previous inspection	2 and 3 April 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is in the Diocese of Lichfield. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place 9 March 2017. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- The governing body manages a before- and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- 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, vice-principal and other senior leaders.
- The lead inspector held meetings with the chief executive of the trust and the chair of the local academy committee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and French. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. They spoke to pupils about their opinions of behaviour at the school.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with leaders responsible for safeguarding. Further discussions took place with pupils, staff and governors to check the school's arrangements for safeguarding. Inspectors also reviewed safeguarding records and checked the school's single central record.
- Inspectors considered responses on Ofsted's Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. They also took account of responses to staff's and pupils' surveys.
- Inspectors visited the before-school provision and spoke to pupils who attend.

Inspection team

Jonathan Leonard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Eve Morris

Her Majesty's Inspector

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