

Inspection of Dosthill Primary Academy

High Street, Dosthill, Tamworth B77 1LQ

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Dosthill Primary Academy. They are enthusiastic and eager to learn new things. Leaders have placed a sharp focus on helping pupils become better readers and mathematicians. This work is proving successful, but further improvement is required to ensure that pupils learn well in a broader range of subjects.

Pupils value their friendship groups and most are very happy in school. Adults know pupils well and care about them. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils are confident to talk to staff when they are worried about things. This helps them to feel safe.

Pupils welcome visitors to school and express positive attitudes towards their education. They engage well in lessons and focus on tasks. As one pupil said, 'We come to school to learn – most people listen and try their best.'

Pupils take part in some activities that extend beyond academic lessons. For example, pupils enjoyed participating in an 'eco-day' project when they discussed environmental issues such as pollution. However, the range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils to experience doesn't fully reflect pupils' interests. The school's approach to promoting pupils' character development is not yet fully developed.

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

There have been considerable changes in school leadership since the school opened as an academy in 2018. Leaders have focused on fulfilling their statutory duties. They worked hard to manage the challenges presented by the pandemic. In addition, they have prioritised developing the quality of the curriculum in mathematics and English. However, leaders have not ensured that pupils access a good quality of education in all subjects. For example, pupils in key stage 2 do not learn a foreign language. Leaders recognise this. The new executive headteacher, well supported by the senior leadership team, has many plans to address these weaknesses. These plans are in the very early stages of being introduced.

Curriculum leaders have not set out clearly enough the key information that pupils need to know and remember in many subjects. This means that the sequences of work teachers plan do not always build on what has come before. As a result, pupils, including children in the early years, do not learn as well as leaders expect. For example, in art, pupils produce pieces of work and enjoy creating and making. However, the curriculum does not sufficiently build pupils' knowledge of the methods and techniques they need to become better artists over time.

There is variation in staff's expertise, especially in subjects where the curriculum is less well developed. For instance, in history, opportunities for teachers to expand their subject knowledge have been limited. This means that some teachers are not confident to teach the subject well.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of early reading. Reception-age children begin to learn phonics early in their education. The approach is carefully organised. Pupils learn to read in small groups and have reading lessons each day. Staff understand how to teach these lessons well. Pupils practise reading regularly, both in school and at home. As a result, most pupils are fluent readers by the end of Year 2.

Adults make regular checks on what pupils know and remember in lessons. These checks help staff to identify pupils who need help. Some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive extra support. This support ensures that all pupils can learn the curriculum.

Leaders have recently refined the school's approach to managing behaviour. Staff and pupils understand the approach well and say it is making a positive difference. Pupils reflect the school expectations of 'respect, responsibility and being ready'. This makes the school a positive environment in which to learn.

Staff promote equality and respect for all through lessons and school assemblies. Pupils learn about the features of positive friendships and healthy relationships. However, the school's work to promote pupils' personal development is not well coordinated. Initiatives to promote pupils' confidence and independence have been limited. Pupils are eager to take an increased share in making decisions about their school. Leaders intend to enhance such opportunities, but these plans are not yet realised.

Leaders are starting to make changes in how they engage with staff and parents. Staff feel valued and are proud to work at the school. The majority of parents also express positive views about their children's experiences. However, leaders' communication with parents, particularly regarding how well pupils learn, has not been sufficiently effective.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their role in keeping pupils safe. They are alert to any signs that a child may need help. Leaders follow up on concerns and take necessary action when required. They work with external agencies and communicate well with families who need extra support.

Leaders make appropriate checks on adults' suitability before they start working with children at the school.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in a range of circumstances. The curriculum includes lessons that teach pupils how to keep safe when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- School leaders, including those responsible for governance, have not prioritised developing the quality of curriculum intent in foundation subjects. Some subjects are not well planned and sequenced. Pupils in key stage 2 do not learn a foreign language. Leaders should ensure that the school's action plan clearly sets out what is required to make curriculum improvements in foundation subjects and that the curriculum is comparable to the breadth of the national curriculum.
- The knowledge that leaders expect pupils to learn in some subjects, such as history and art, is not yet described clearly. This means that pupils do not build up their knowledge and skills as well as they might. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is well planned and sequenced in all subjects so that pupils build their knowledge logically over time.
- There is variation in staff's subject knowledge. Staff do not always plan lessons that build on pupils' prior learning. Leaders should continue to develop staff's subject knowledge to become more expert in all the subjects they teach
- The pandemic has disrupted communication with stakeholders such as parents. Some parents feel they do not receive enough information about what their children are learning. Leaders should continue their work to improve communication with stakeholders.

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	145414
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10227754
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	555
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joanne Smith
Headteacher	David Shakeshaft
Website	www.dosthill.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The trust made changes to the structure of the school's leadership team in November 2021. They decided that the school should be led by an executive headteacher. An interim executive headteacher led the school between November 2021 and April 2022. A new permanent executive headteacher started in April 2022.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

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 this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and senior leaders. The lead inspector also met with executive leaders of the trust and a representative of the governors and trustees.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and history. 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 some 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 the 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 Parents View, including parent free-text responses. They also took account of responses to staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Jonathan Leonard, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Michelle Johnstone	Ofsted Inspector
Karen O'Keefe	Ofsted Inspector

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