

Inspection of a good school: Darton Primary School

Station Road, Darton, Barnsley South, South Yorkshire S75 5AD

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2022

Outcome

Darton Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff have very high expectations of pupils. Pupils are enthused by the ambitious curriculum they are taught. The curriculum is enhanced with visits to interesting places, such as a recent trip to the Jorvik centre. Leaders aim for pupils to be aspirational for their future and work under their own initiative. These aims are achieved. Pupils are highly engaged in learning. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school is a calm and friendly place. Pupils are welcoming and polite. They attend school well. On the rare occasion that bullying happens, leaders manage it well. Pupils say that adults always help them if they need it.

Leaders provide many opportunities to develop pupils' wider interests. A range of clubs, such as cheerleading and drama, build towards performances and participation in competitions. Older pupils give their own time to help younger pupils during after-school clubs.

There are many opportunities to develop pupils' character. Leaders encourage pupils to be advocates for others. Pupils raise money through the school's tuck shop to fund education for children in Nepal. Pupils take on leadership roles in the school. For example, at lunchtime, reading ambassadors help their peers choose books from the library.

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

Leaders have ensured that pupils develop a love of reading. Teachers read to pupils at the end of each day from a carefully chosen list of books. A half-termly focus on a significant author enables pupils to deepen their understanding of a range of quality literature. Recently, pupils have studied the work of Isabel Vega and written their own books in her style. This has helped pupils to reflect on their own aspirations.

Leaders have introduced a new programme to teach pupils how to read. Staff have had training to ensure that they teach this programme well. Leaders regularly evaluate the

teaching of reading and coach staff to make the teaching of reading even better. Pupils who need help in reading are well supported by skilled adults. The effective implementation of the new programme is leading to pupils quickly learning to read with fluency and confidence.

Pupils achieve well in mathematics. Children make a good start in the early years. Teachers' explanations are clear. They use appropriate images and apparatus to help pupils to understand new concepts. Pupils independently check their own work before moving on to more complex reasoning and problem-solving tasks. They do this with great maturity. However, at times some less able pupils run out of time and do not have the opportunity to apply their knowledge to solving problems. This hampers their achievement in mathematics.

Subject leaders have been well supported by senior leaders to design the curriculums for their subjects. These curriculums clearly identify what pupils should learn and how their knowledge should build over time. Subject leaders provide effective support and training for staff. This means these curriculums are well taught. Teachers design tasks that help pupils to build on their prior knowledge. This helps pupils develop a deep understanding of the subjects they study. Teachers start lessons by recalling pupils' prior knowledge to help them make links with new content. However, some subject leaders have not established consistently effective systems to check that pupils have remembered the specific knowledge identified in their curriculum plans. This means some gaps in pupils' knowledge could go unnoticed.

There are detailed plans of support for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have ensured that these plans have the information staff need to meet pupils' needs. As a result, pupils with SEND are well supported. For example, tasks are broken down into small steps for them and some sensory adaptations, such as the use of ear defenders or safe spaces, are made. This enables pupils with SEND to successfully access the curriculum alongside their peers.

Pupils have a thorough understanding of the protected characteristics. Visits to places of worship, such a recent trip to a gurdwara, help pupils to understand more about people who are different to themselves. They show understanding and respect for people from different faiths and cultures.

Leaders have an accurate view of the effectiveness of the school. They tackle areas for improvement systematically. Trustees and the local governing body work closely with school leaders to ensure that the quality of education pupils receive is effective. Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and look after their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know vulnerable pupils and their families well. Leaders ensure that staff have the knowledge they need to identify pupils who could be at risk of harm. Staff raise concerns promptly. Leaders act on these concerns quickly, working with external agencies when

appropriate.

Pupils learn about some of the risks to their safety. They understand about the concept of 'consent' and safe relationships. They learn how to cross the road and ride their bikes safely. Older pupils develop an understanding of the risks associated with criminal gangs and substance misuse.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment systems for some subjects in the wider curriculum do not closely align with leaders' intended curriculum. This means that staff cannot be sure whether pupils are learning and remembering the intended curriculum in some subjects over time. Subject leaders should strengthen assessment systems to be assured that all pupils remember the subject knowledge identified in curriculum plans.
- Some pupils do not have the opportunity to apply their knowledge of mathematics to reasoning and problem-solving tasks. Where this is the case, they do not develop the depth of knowledge in mathematics that they could. Leaders should ensure that all pupils apply their mathematics knowledge to reasoning and problem-solving tasks.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on in October 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 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	140602
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10200223
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	293
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Sharon Cook
Headteacher	Jo Lancett
Website	www.dartonprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	12 and 13 October 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEND is less than the national average.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector held meetings with members of the school's leadership team.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited samples of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work. Curriculum leaders were involved in all activities alongside the inspector.

- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and pupils' work in personal, social and health education and physical education.
- The inspector held a meeting with members of the local governing body and a member of the board of trustees.
- The inspector also spoke with the chief executive officer and deputy chief executive officer of the St Mary's multi-academy trust.
- The inspector scrutinised documents related to safeguarding and spoke to the school's designated safeguarding leaders.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View and spoke to parents informally on the playground.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Tim Scargill-Knight, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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