

Inspection of Dallam Community Primary School

Boulting Avenue, Dallam, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 0JG

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is at the heart of the community. Pupils benefit from positive relationships with staff, who know them well. They feel valued, happy and safe. They arrive each day excited and eager to learn. They join in with learning activities enthusiastically.

Children in the early years, including two-year olds, settle quickly. They enjoy the many exciting activities on offer to support their learning. Pupils know that staff will listen to them and provide support and encouragement if they are worried. They say that Winnie, the school dog, helps them to feel better if they feel sad.

Pupils know that their contributions are valued by leaders. For example, pupils enjoyed helping to design the new school logo. They grow in confidence when they become school councillors, librarians and reading buddies.

Leaders have high expectations for the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils work hard and do their best. They achieve well.

Staff help pupils to behave well, and pupils' behaviour is very respectful and courteous. All aspects of the school day are calm and well organised. This means that pupils can learn without disruption.

Pupils develop their wider interests and talents through the wealth of clubs on offer, such as the outdoor explorer, gardening and sports clubs. They play considerably with their friends in the well-resourced play areas. On the rare occasions that bullying happens, leaders act quickly and effectively to put a stop to it.

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

Leaders want pupils to believe in themselves and aim high. The curriculum that leaders have designed is ambitious, relevant and meaningful for pupils. It suitably supports pupils' personal development, as well as their academic achievement.

In most subjects, leaders have set out the essential knowledge they want pupils to learn and the order in which this knowledge should be taught, from the early years to Year 6. This ensures that pupils, including those who attend the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision), can build on what they already know. However, leaders are not as clear about some of the knowledge that children should learn in the early years.

Leaders want all pupils to become confident, lifelong readers. Children in the early years delight in listening to familiar stories and rhymes. They are keen to act these stories out using puppets. The skilled early years team seizes on every opportunity to extend and develop the vocabulary and language skills that underpin children's reading knowledge. This provides a strong foundation for pupils' later learning.

As soon as children start school, in Reception, staff introduce letters and sounds in a logical order. They select books for pupils to read that match the sounds pupils learn in class. Pupils practise their reading regularly. This helps them to become confident readers quickly. Teachers regularly check that pupils know the sounds they have been taught. Extra help is provided swiftly by staff if pupils are struggling.

Pupils' learning is very rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. This means that staff can focus on delivering the curriculum well. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. They explain new ideas clearly in lessons. They regularly recap what pupils have learned previously, ensuring that pupils' recall of earlier knowledge is secure. Staff adapt their teaching appropriately to help all pupils, including those with SEND, learn new subject content well.

Children in the early years, including two-year olds, are well supported by caring and knowledgeable staff. Staff ensure that exciting activities are well matched to children's age and stage of development. For example, children learn about numbers and practise counting when climbing on the stepping stones outdoors. This helps children to build their understanding in readiness for later learning in key stage 1.

In most subjects, teachers use leaders' approaches to assessment to check what pupils know and remember. They use this information well to plan what pupils need to learn next and to provide extra support for pupils when needed. However, in a small number of subjects, leaders have not refined assessment strategies to match the revised curriculums. This hampers teachers in spotting gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding in a timely manner.

Teachers identify pupils with SEND quickly. Staff work closely with parents/carers and specialist professionals to provide the support that pupils with SEND, including those who attend the specially resourced provision, need. Teachers adapt their approaches to delivering the curriculum appropriately so that these pupils can access the curriculum. Pupils with SEND participate in all aspects of school life.

Leaders' commitment to enhancing pupils' personal development is exemplary. Pupils learn about religions and cultures that are different from their own. They learn to value what people have in common rather than the differences between them. Pupils have a strong understanding of fairness. The personal characteristics, skills and attitudes that pupils need to be successful in later life underpin the whole curriculum. These are lived out and rewarded in everything pupils do each day. This helps to prepare pupils extremely well to become well-rounded, active citizens.

Governors know the school well. They hold leaders to account effectively for the quality of education pupils receive.

Staff morale is high. They appreciate leaders' endeavours to support their professional development, workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding is a priority. There is a strong culture of safeguarding. All staff receive regular safeguarding training to keep their knowledge up to date. They know pupils and their families well. This helps them to spot any signs of harm or neglect that a pupil may face.

Staff know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare. Concerns are acted on quickly and diligently by leaders. Leaders are tenacious in following up safeguarding concerns. They work effectively with external agencies to secure appropriate and timely support for vulnerable pupils and their families, when needed.

From an early age, pupils learn what to do if they have any worries. They learn how to stay safe, including when using the internet and social media.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of areas of learning in the early years, leaders have not set out the specific knowledge they want children to learn. In these areas, this hinders some children from building logically on what they already know and can. Leaders should ensure that staff in the early years are clear about the knowledge that children should learn.
- In some subjects, leaders are in the early stages of ensuring that teachers' approaches to assessment match the intended, revised curriculum. This means that, in some subjects, teachers are not sure that pupils have learned everything they should. Leaders should finalise their approaches to assessment to match the revised curriculum, ensuring that teachers are equipped well to check on what pupils know and remember.

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.

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	110972
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10256034
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	277
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ashlea O'Rourke
Headteacher	Amanda Downey
Website	www.dallam.warrington.dbprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.
- There is a designated provision for 24 pupils with autism spectrum disorder between the ages of five and 11. There were 26 pupils on roll in the designated provision at the time of the inspection.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative education providers for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other members of staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of safeguarding documentation, including the single central record. They spoke with staff to check how well they understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Inspectors considered a range of curriculum documentation. Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, geography and history. They spoke with subject leaders, visited lessons and spoke with teachers and some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also reviewed pupils' work in these subjects.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils and children read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at lunchtime and playtimes.
- The lead inspector spoke with some members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and carers to gather their views about the school and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with staff to gather their views about their workload and well-being and considered the responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils during the inspection. There were no responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

Julie Morley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Lawson	Ofsted Inspector
Nicky Corfield	Ofsted Inspector

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