

Inspection of Danesholme Infant Academy

Motala Close, Corby, Northamptonshire NN18 9DT

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Meeting individual pupils' needs is at the heart of leaders' actions at this school. Leaders ensure that they listen to pupils' views and act on them. As a result, pupils thrive.

A warm, welcoming smile greets pupils every day. They know that their teachers are happy to see them. School is a safe place. Pupils know that they can speak to adults about any worries or concerns. Parents and carers appreciate how staff nurture relationships. As one parent said: 'Everyone is compassionate, patient, kind and professional.'

The school's behaviour values of kindness, respect and achievement permeate the day-to-day life of the school. The 'skills builder' programme rewards pupils for demonstrating positive learning behaviours. Families share these achievements through the school's online communication tool.

Pupils who need help to regulate their behaviour receive careful, considered support. Leaders work tirelessly to ensure that these pupils have positive experiences of education. All accomplishments for these pupils are celebrated, no matter how small.

Children in the early years enjoy their time at school. They like to share books and learn about creatures that live under the sea, for example. Sometimes, independent activities are not purposeful. They do not always help children to build on their communication and language development.

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

This is an improving school. Since the last inspection, leaders have overhauled systems and routines. They have raised expectations for all. In most areas of school development, these changes are now bearing fruit. However, leaders are not complacent. They have clear ambitions to build on the improvements that have been made.

Leaders have worked hard to improve the curriculum for reading, writing and mathematics. They know that getting the basics right will help pupils to know more across the curriculum. Staff appreciate the support they receive to deliver the school's curriculum. Leaders continue to refine the wider curriculum. They also recognise that early years needs further development.

Teachers check what pupils can remember. The book-based approach builds on pupils' vocabulary knowledge. Where needed, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are quickly identified. Staff ensure that parents are well informed. Teachers adapt the curriculum to help pupils with SEND to access the whole curriculum. They work well with external agencies. This helps them to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the right support.

Many leaders are new to their role. They understand what is working well in their area of responsibility. However, some leaders need further expertise to make checks on their subject areas.

Leaders want every child to read well. They ensure that they have an accurate oversight of the school's early reading programme. This helps them to understand how well pupils in school are learning to read. Leaders make daily checks to ensure that the programme is well taught. Many pupils, including some who are new to speaking English, join the school part way through the programme. They receive well-tailored support to catch up.

Relationships are very positive between children and adults in the early years. Children enjoy exploring the environment. However, independent activities do not always support children's communication and language development. Sometimes, adults do not develop children's language in meaningful ways.

Leaders build positive relationships with families. This has been crucial in improving pupils' attendance, particularly for the most disadvantaged. Leaders continue to strive to improve attendance for some pupils.

Pupils learn to be respectful of each other. Through stories, they learn about different communities in modern Britain. Enabling pupils to have high aspirations is important for leaders. They ensure that pupils see different role models. For example, pupils have received visits from female pilots and male nurses. The school has recently received the 'Careers Mark' status, in recognition of this work.

The trust has supported school leaders in their actions to improve the school. They have provided opportunities for staff to undertake leadership training. Staff are appreciative of leaders' actions to reduce teacher workload and enhance staff well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture for safeguarding. They ensure that pupils' needs are at the centre of all decisions made. The school has many staff who can lead on safeguarding matters. This helps other staff to feel well supported. All adults in school can spot the signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They understand the dangers pupils may face in the community and beyond. Trust leaders ensure that the school's safeguarding procedures are regularly evaluated.

Through the school's curriculum, pupils learn how to stay safe. Where needed, parents receive support to manage their child's use of the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some leaders are new to their role. Although they have an accurate understanding of what needs to be done, many are at the early stages of implementing these improvements. This means that leaders' ambitions for the school's curriculum are not fully realised. Leaders must ensure that all staff have the necessary support and expertise to provide strong leadership in all aspects of school development. They must ensure that leaders make accurate checks on their area of responsibility.
- Sometimes, children in the early years do not benefit from meaningful learning during independent activities. Opportunities to develop children's language, ideas, concepts and vocabulary are not always maximised. This slows learning. Leaders must ensure that independent activities help children in the early years to know more of the school's curriculum. They must ensure that all staff have the confidence to use early years pedagogy to develop children's language so they are well prepared for Year 1.

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	142185
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10268228
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	256
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike Hamlin
Principal	Nikki Lamond (Executive principal) Carol May (Head of Academy)
Website	www.danesholmeinfantacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	9 and 10 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Greenwood Academies Trust.
- Since the last inspection, there has been significant restructuring in school's leadership model. The executive principal took up position in September 2021.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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 impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive principal, the head of academy and leaders from the trust. They met with leaders who are responsible for attendance and behaviour.

- Inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and science. Aspects of the school's curriculum for geography, art and design, and personal, social and health education were also sampled. Inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, met with pupils and listened to them reading to adults. They considered curriculum plans and scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the effectiveness of the provision for pupils with SEND and for children in the early years as part of inspection activities.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils at various times during the inspection, including during social times.
- Inspectors spoke with parents during the inspection. They considered the views of parents expressed through Ofsted surveys.
- The single central record was scrutinised as part of the inspection of safeguarding. Inspectors spoke with a range of staff and pupils and sampled documentation relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Shaheen Hussain, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Cleo Redmond

Ofsted Inspector

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