

# Inspection of Dormanstown Primary Academy

South Avenue, Dormanstown, Redcar, Cleveland TS10 5LY

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Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2023

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

The headteacher of this school is Oliver Long. This school is part of Tees Valley Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Katrina Morley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Suzanne Hague. There is also an executive headteacher, Alison Hill, who is responsible for this school and one other.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Since the previous inspection, leaders have been effective in improving the quality of education offered. This is now a good school where expectations of pupils' achievement and behaviour are high and, overall, pupils achieve well.

Leaders have placed reading at the heart of the curriculum. The well-stocked and inviting library motivates children to read regularly. From the early years to Year 6, classrooms are awash with high-quality texts. Pupils read a wide range of books from different authors and this helps them to learn in other subjects. Older pupils enthusiastically told the inspector how their class book on Charles Darwin helped them to understand more about evolution in their science lessons.

Pupils feel safe and happy at school. They say that although arguments do happen, teachers are quick to help them sort them out. Pupils believe that teachers are fair and make them work hard. Pupils find lessons fun and this helps them to progress well. Golden tickets and golden coins motivate pupils to do their best.

The school encourages pupils to take on responsibilities. Pupils enjoy being part of the junior leadership team, prefects and librarians. Some pupils have been trained as 'headstarters'. These pupils help others when they are upset or worried.

Trips are carefully planned to broaden pupils' curriculum experiences. These include visits to the theatre, sporting events and a nearby modern art museum.

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

The school has made reading a high priority. Highly trained staff teach the phonics programme well. Staff make regular checks on the sounds pupils have learned. They use this information to match the books pupils read to the sounds that they know. Over time, more pupils are leaving key stage 1 as confident readers. Leaders use one-to-one interventions well to help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who need to catch up with their reading.

In the early years, children are introduced to stories and rhymes as soon as they start school. Books are everywhere and children enjoy exploring them. Leaders send home reading baskets containing hot chocolate and blankets to encourage children and parents to read together at home. Most staff model new vocabulary with children, as they support them to learn through play. Vocabulary flowers in the Nursery prompt adults to use the new language that children need to learn. However, this approach is not consistently used and opportunities to develop children's language are sometimes missed.

The school has a well-sequenced mathematics curriculum. It is suitably ambitious and challenging. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this helps them to present information clearly to pupils. Teachers use assessment well to review pupils'

previous learning. This supports all pupils, and particularly those with SEND, to remember what they have been taught before.

In a small number of subjects, the school has identified that the curriculum needs further work. Trust and school leaders are in the process of resequencing learning in history. However, the key knowledge that the school wants pupils to learn is not precise enough. As a result, pupils' experience of history varies and they find it difficult to remember what they have learned.

Pupils with SEND, who are taught in the specialist unit, follow the same ambitious curriculum as all other pupils. Well-considered adaptations are made to the curriculum to ensure that pupils with SEND can access their learning and make strong progress. The special educational needs coordinator ensures that help is targeted at the pupils who need it. Inspectors watched pupils in one of the base classes learning all about shapes. Pupils explored the properties of 3D shapes using accurate and challenging vocabulary.

The school offers a wide range of opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences. Pupils learn about fundamental British values and have opportunities in school to be democratic. Pupils say that they enjoy voting for the winners of the Diamond Awards, which recognise the adults and children who demonstrate the academy values.

Pupils are accepting of difference and say that 'everyone is welcome at Dormanstown'. However, pupils' understanding of different religions and world views is underdeveloped. The curriculum does not help pupils to remember the different religions that they have studied. Pupils say that they would like to learn more about different faiths and beliefs.

Trust leaders know the school well. The trust challenge board and standards committee ensure that trustees get detailed information from school leaders on pupils' progress. Staff speak positively of the networking opportunities they receive across the trust, to share good practice and learn from one another. A minority of staff expressed some workload concerns through the staff survey.

The trust has recently developed a tool to help leaders scrutinise pupils' attendance information in more detail. This is helping leaders to support pupils to improve their attendance quickly.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, for example in history, the curriculum is going through a process of change. This work has not been completed. The concepts that the school wants pupils to learn remain too broad and the sequencing of learning is not precise enough. As a result, teachers interpret the curriculum differently and some key knowledge is not taught. The school needs to finish updating the curriculum so that it is well sequenced and the gaps in pupils' understanding are addressed.
- Pupils' understanding of different world faiths and viewpoints is underdeveloped. Pupils do not have a clear understanding of the religions that they have studied. The school should ensure that the approach to teaching this aspect of the curriculum is reviewed so that pupils remember what they have been taught and develop the skills and knowledge they need to play an active role in modern Britain.
- In the early years, the way in which adults promote new language is inconsistent. The school should ensure that the vocabulary they want children to know is clearly identified so that all children benefit from high-quality adult support as they learn new words in Nursery and Reception.

## 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139931
<b>Local authority</b>	Redcar and Cleveland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10290235
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	262
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Suzanne Hague
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Hill (Executive headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://dormanstown.teesvalleyeducation.co.uk">dormanstown.teesvalleyeducation.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 December 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school operates a local authority allocated, specialist SEND unit for 40 pupils. The unit provides for pupils from five to 11 years old. The unit makes provision for pupils with learning difficulties, speech, language and communication needs and autism.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals is well above national averages.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is also well above national averages.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- 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 carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and history. Inspectors held discussions with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, spoke to pupils and teachers and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- The lead inspector listened to pupils from key stages 1 and 2 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with the head of the school, the executive headteacher and other school and trust leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the local academy committee, the chair of the trust challenge board, the chair of the standards committee and trustees, including the chair of trustees. The lead inspector also met with the trust chief executive.
- Inspectors met with leaders who are responsible for behaviour and attendance, early years, pupils with SEND and PSHE.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with a selection of pupils to talk about their wider experiences of school. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime and in lessons.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils and staff.
- Inspectors met with a selection of parents at the start of the school day. They took account of the parental responses on Ofsted's Parent View. This included a review of free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Pearce, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Graham Findlay	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Reeves	Ofsted Inspector

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