Inspection of a good school: Dovedale Community Primary School

Herondale Road, Liverpool L18 1JX

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are immensely proud to attend this happy and caring school. Staff greet pupils with a warm smile each day. Pupils have highly positive attitudes to school and a keen readiness to learn.

The school sets very high expectations for pupils' achievement. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils achieve very well.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They happily follow the school rules. This begins as soon as children start in the Reception class. Pupils are kind and polite towards each other and staff.

The school provides a whole host of opportunities to develop pupils' individual talents and interests. There is something on offer for everyone. Pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include singing in the school choir, attending the crochet club and taking part in 'street dance' activities.

Pupils benefit from a variety of trips and residential visits which help to bring the curriculum to life. Year 6 pupils understand that a major part of their residential visit is to develop their teamwork skills. Activities such as these help prepare pupils well for the next steps in their educational journey.

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

The school has designed an engaging and highly ambitious curriculum for pupils, including those with SEND. A wealth of experiences are carefully planned to allow pupils

to gain a deeper understanding of what they study. For example, visits to the local law courts support pupils' understanding of law and order in Victorian Liverpool. Pupils also spoke enthusiastically about the influence that past pupils, such as John Lennon, have had on music in the city.

Across each subject, the school has carefully mapped out what pupils should learn and when it should be taught. This enables staff to deliver curriculums confidently and build on what pupils already know in a logical order. Assessment information is used extremely well to check pupils' understanding of what they have learned. Pupils develop detailed knowledge and achieve extremely well.

The school has appropriate processes in place to identify any additional needs that pupils may have. Careful adaptations are made to the delivery of the curriculum to ensure that pupils with SEND can learn the same content as their peers.

Reading is central to the school's curriculum. Through high-quality training, the school has ensured that staff have developed expertise in the teaching of reading. Pupils who may find reading more difficult receive the support that they need in a timely manner. Books that pupils read match the sounds that they already know. This helps them to become fluent, confident readers who understand what they have read.

Pupils relish the time given to them to listen to stories and to read books. Texts are chosen carefully representing a range of authors and cultures. Access to books that support further study and interest is available in class and school library areas. Older pupils recognise that reading supports them to extend their vocabulary, helps them with their own writing and 'transports them to another place'.

Across the school, pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. Lessons are very rarely disrupted. The school motto of 'imagine, believe, achieve' resonates with the older pupils who are inspired to follow their ambitions. Pupils play a highly active role in school life. They enjoy taking on different responsibilities in school. These include working as prefects, reading ambassadors and resilience champions. Other pupils look up to these role models and aspire to take on these responsibilities when they reach Year 6.

The school's systems for tracking absences effectively identifies those pupils who may require further support. The pastoral team successfully works with families to break down any barriers. This results in rapid improvements to attendance rates.

Wider opportunities beyond the academic allow pupils to broaden their knowledge and prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils understand the importance of tolerance and respect for other cultures and faiths. The school's work on supporting pupils to understand neurodiversity is worthy of sharing with others. This work, pupils said, helps them feel accepted and valued for who they are.

Governors are actively involved in aspects of school life. They understand their role and hold leaders to account very effectively for the quality of education that pupils receive and the outcomes that they achieve. The school has carefully considered the impact on workload in the decisions that it makes. Changes to marking and feedback requirements

along with a reduction in the number of meetings have had a positive impact on staff well-being and morale. Staff said they are immensely proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2018.

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

Unique reference number	141960
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10290283
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	835
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Bedford
Headteacher	Nik Smith
Website	www.dovedaleprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 March 2018

Information about this school

- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other members of staff. The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair of governors. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke with teachers and with some pupils about their learning. The inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector also spoke to subject leaders for other subjects and viewed a

sample of pupils' work in these subjects.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1 to 3 read with a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at various times during the school day, including during lessons and at playtime.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The team inspector also spoke with some parents and carers at the beginning of the school day.
- The inspectors also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Pat Speed, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Liz Davidson	Ofsted Inspector

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