

Inspection of Dovecotes Primary School

Ryefield, Dovecotes Estate, Pendeford, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV8 1TX

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at Dovecotes Primary School. They are proud of their school and appreciate how caring and supportive the staff are. Pupils share and embody the school's motto of 'spread your wings, learn new things, fly as high as you can'.

Governors, leaders and all staff share an ambition and passion for every child to do their best. Staff set high expectations of how well pupils learn. In turn, pupils demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning and are keen to meet the expectations their teachers set.

The behaviour of pupils is a strength, and disruption in lessons is rare. Pupils are polite and helpful. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very positive. Smiles are everywhere at this school.

Pupils know what bullying is and say it sometimes happens, but rarely. When it does, they trust adults to sort it out. Leaders' approach to managing pupils' behaviour through restorative conversation is proving very successful. Pupils have become skilled at talking about their behaviour and feelings. They show empathy for others, and this contributes towards the school's warm, supportive culture.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for the curriculum at Dovecotes. They have been deliberate in ensuring that the curriculum is right for the pupils at this school.

The way leaders have structured curriculum content in each subject ensures that learning builds over time. In most subjects, including mathematics and English, pupils learn well and produce high-quality work. Teachers and support staff have strong subject knowledge across the curriculum. They present information to pupils in ways that make learning enjoyable, engaging and successful. However, in a small number of subjects, leaders have not decided on precisely what pupils should learn in enough detail. This means that pupils may not learn as well as they could, and teachers find it more difficult to assess how well pupils are learning.

All staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively and expect them to do well. Leaders manage the provision for pupils with SEND successfully, so they receive the support they need.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. They make sure that they train all teaching staff to teach phonics effectively. In the early years and in key stage 1, children gain the reading skills and phonic knowledge they need. As a result, most become fluent and confident readers before entering Year 3. If pupils are still finding reading difficult in Year 3, teachers provide additional phonics support, which helps them to catch up.

Children get off to a positive start in the early years, from Little Doves to Nursery and Reception. They settle quickly and learn how to get along with each other. The environment is calm and happy, and children are active and involved in learning. Early years staff know the children well and meet regularly to plan activities. However, the methods by which adults monitor how well children are learning are not structured well enough. This means that, sometimes, planned learning may not be tailored as well to children's needs as it should be.

The curriculum at Dovecotes goes beyond the academic. Leaders provide meaningful, well-considered opportunities for pupils' wider personal development. This includes a range of clubs, including football, choir, dodgeball and drama. Many pupils attend after-school clubs, and they often attend more than one. Pupils contribute to the life of the school in many ways. These include becoming 'positive bees', reading buddies, science leads, play leaders and school councillors. Pupils take these roles seriously, and they contribute fully to the caring ethos of the school.

Pupils are very respectful to others. They understand equality well and talk sensitively about differences in people's lives. In this regard, the pupils at Dovecotes are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leaders and governors know the school well. Through their rigorous monitoring, they know what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve further. Staff feel very well supported by leaders and are proud to work at this school. Governors and leaders always consider the workload and well-being of staff in the changes that they make.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that they train staff to recognise risks to pupils' safety and well-being. All staff understand what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Leaders respond quickly to provide help and involve other agencies if appropriate.

Those who lead safeguarding keep meticulous safeguarding records. They know the pupils and their families well.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, both in the real world and online. Leaders organise activities and talks by visiting speakers to alert pupils to risks that are specific to the local area.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the essential knowledge that pupils need is not clearly identified. This means that pupils may not learn as well as they could in

these subjects. Leaders should ensure that they have identified the essential knowledge to help pupils build their understanding over time.

- Leaders have not ensured that assessment of children’s learning in the early years is as carefully structured as it needs to be. Consequently, staff are less successful at identifying gaps in children’s understanding and in providing the right targeted help. Leaders should ensure that assessment in the early years enables staff to match learning activities more closely to children’s needs.

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	104350
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10285045
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tim Wakefield
Headteacher	Tracy Challenor
Website	www.dovecotesprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has had a new headteacher since the last inspection.
- Leaders do not use 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke

to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also observed pupils reading.

- Inspectors met with leaders about the school's safeguarding procedures. Inspectors reviewed policies and records relating to safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and attendance. Inspectors spoke to pupils and staff about pupils' safety.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator, the early years coordinator and those responsible for monitoring attendance.
- The lead inspector reviewed a wide range of documents, including governors' minutes, school improvement plans and the school's website.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff, parents and pupils through their responses to Ofsted's surveys. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Gareth Morgan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Michelle Bishton	Ofsted Inspector
Emma Gater	His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023