

Inspection of a good school: Dothill Primary School

Severn Drive, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire TF1 3JB

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 June 2024

Outcome

Dothill Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where everyone has a voice. Pupils are happy to come to school because they feel valued and safe. Some pupils join the school partway through the year. These pupils settle quickly because everyone makes them feel welcome.

The school has high expectations in all aspects of school life. The motto of 'ready, respectful and safe' is central to the school's approach to behaviour. Pupils understand the school's expectations and why these rules are important. They know that if there are any problems, such as bullying, staff will sort these out straightaway. The curriculum is ambitious, and teachers ensure learning is interesting and engaging. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same rich curriculum as their peers. As a result, pupils love coming to school and achieve well.

There is a strong focus on helping pupils develop as citizens. They relish taking on responsibilities, these include being play leaders, librarians, safeguarding leads and eco-leads. A beautiful nature reserve surrounds the school, where pupils volunteer to look after wildlife. Pupils respect each other's differences by learning about diverse role models in the arts and science. There is a sport to suit everyone from archery and cricket to boccia and dance.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is broad and ambitious. They have made thoughtful choices about the knowledge and concepts they want pupils to know in depth. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, achieve well because they enjoy learning this well-designed and challenging curriculum.

There is a strong reading curriculum. Teachers are well trained and ensure pupils learn to read from the start. Staff check regularly to make sure that any gaps in learning are identified. They use information from these checks to ensure pupils quickly get the help they need. Consequently, pupils become confident and fluent readers. Pupils learn about

a wide range of books and authors, which inspires their own love of reading. In writing, however, the curriculum for younger pupils is not as effective. This means that some pupils are not developing their spelling and use of grammar as well as they could.

Leaders have focused on professional development for all staff. This means that teachers have good subject knowledge, present new material well, check pupils' understanding and reshape tasks when needed. Pupils with SEND are fully included in lessons because staff successfully adapt learning to meet pupils' needs. Subject leaders are passionate about the development of the curriculum. This is because leaders have supported them to take on more responsibility. Subject leaders check the teaching of the curriculum through regular monitoring and provide effective training to ensure the curriculum is delivered well.

The school uses assessment well to identify any gaps in learning. For example, in response to a lack of fluency in basic number manipulation, teachers introduced daily quizzes. As a result, pupils now have more fluency when recalling basic number facts and are better prepared to attempt more challenging questions in mathematics.

The school manages behaviour very well. This starts in the early years, where strong relationships and clear routines means that pupils are safe and happy. Leaders analyse behaviour and attendance information closely to identify any patterns and trends. This means that they provide a personalised approach to support families so that pupils can get to school and enjoy learning. Pupils know they have someone to talk to if they have any worries and that adults will help them sort out any problems.

Pupils have strong values because these are promoted at every opportunity in school life. The Pupil Parliament representatives promote issues which matter to pupils, such as physical activity and the impact on mental well-being. They know about the importance of being fair and are fascinated to learn about places, cultures and opinions that are different to their own. They debate assumptions, such as how girls and boys should behave and advocate for the environment at eco-club. In addition, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, both on and offline.

The governing body is ambitious for the school. They provide effective support and challenge to leaders. They continuously reflect on how they can build positive relationships with all stakeholders, including parents and staff. Staff feel that they are listened to and that leaders are mindful of their workload. They feel they receive the support they need to be successful.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not ensure that younger pupils develop a secure knowledge and understanding of grammar and spelling. This means that pupils are not achieving their full potential in writing. The school should ensure that the early writing curriculum promotes this foundational knowledge with regular opportunities to check for understanding and to practise.

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/outstanding. 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2013.

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	135496
Local authority	Telford & Wrekin
Inspection number	10322818
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	392
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jenny Naujeer
Headteacher	Rebecca Butler
Website	www.dothillprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school makes use of a specialist language unit run by Telford and Wrekin Local Authority based at Wrekin View Primary School.
- The school is part of the Beacon Co-operative Learning Trust. The trust is a collaborative arrangement between this school and High Ercall Primary School. Each school has a separate governing body.

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector had discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and curriculum leaders. The inspector met with representatives of the governing body, Telford and Wrekin local authority and an advisor from Severn Teaching School Alliance.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also discussed the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector spoke to groups of pupils and staff and considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Johanne Clifton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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