

Inspection of Dove Holes C of E Primary School

Hallsteads, Dove Holes, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 8BJ

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 January 2024

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 proud to say they attend Dove Holes Church of England Primary School. They appreciate that it is a small school where everyone knows each other. One pupil said, 'Even though it's a small school, it's a good school.' Another pupil added, 'It's even better because it's a small school.'

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. These expectations are underpinned by the school values of love, others, forgiveness, truth and perseverance. Pupils can explain how these values influence their actions. They know that forgiveness is vital when they fall out or have a problem with someone. They understand that they should not 'hold on to what is wrong' because this makes their school a happier and more harmonious place to work and play.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about the many exciting events the school provides for them. They enjoy trips to Magna Science Adventure Centre, visits from authors and raising money for charities. They are passionate about their weekly outdoor learning session where they safely light fires, learn to whittle and build dens.

The school has big plans to continue to improve. Staff are working together with determination to make this carefully considered vision a reality.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum with the needs of all pupils and mixed-age classes in mind. Plans begin in the early years. It is clear how children's learning in their first year at school provides a firm foundation for later years. Across the curriculum, subject knowledge becomes increasingly complex and demanding over time. For example, in religious education (RE), children in the early years act out the story of 'The Lost Sheep' while older pupils maturely discuss the meaning of 'Messiah' and what it means to be tempted.

In most lessons there are opportunities for pupils to recall prior learning. Teachers check that pupils remember key knowledge before moving on to new learning. Teachers consider the best methods to engage pupils successfully in their learning. However, there are times when the curriculum is not delivered as leaders intend it to be. In these lessons, pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Teaching pupils to read fluently is a non-negotiable for the school. The ambition is for all pupils to 'learn to read and to love to read'. Staff receive training to deliver the phonics programme with confidence. Children in the early years learn phonics right from the start. Pupils who find it more difficult to remember new sounds receive plenty of extra support. The books that pupils read are closely matched to the sounds they know.

The school has a myriad of creative ways to promote reading, including a 'booknic' for pupils and their parents and carers. Teachers read to pupils from a wide range of

carefully chosen texts. Children in the early years vote for the stories they want to hear.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are included in all aspects of school life. Teachers make sensible adaptations so that every pupil with SEND can access the curriculum. The school is not meeting the social and emotional needs of some pupils with SEND as well. These needs can be a barrier to their learning and, on occasion, the learning of others.

The school provides pupils with a strong personal development offer. Broadening pupils' horizons is at the heart of this work. Pupils participate in a science and careers fair to learn about the varied and exciting jobs they could have. Pupils are aspirational for their futures. They say that they want to be an engineer, a nurse or to work with animals. They learn about the beliefs and faiths of other cultures. They thrive when they are given responsibility and buzz with excitement about the various ambassador roles they can have in the school.

The school works closely with its partner schools. Across the federation and collaboration, staff expertise is utilised well to lead subjects and to support staff who are at an early stage of their career. Staff say that they appreciate the opportunities they have to work with other schools. They feel part of a close-knit team. They recognise how this collegiate approach reduces their workload and supports their well-being.

Governors are driven to fulfil their statutory duties by the moral purpose to get the education of every pupil right. They recognise the significant progress the school has made to improve as a result of leaders' precise decisions and actions.

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 has made significant strides to improve the quality of education, although not all of leaders' ambitious plans have been fully realised. The curriculum is not consistently delivered as intended. The school should ensure that the curriculum is consistently well implemented.
- The school has not sufficiently developed the ways in which it supports pupils with social and emotional needs. These pupils are not consistently given the help they need to manage their feelings and this can impact on the learning of other pupils. The school must ensure that staff have the skills and expertise they need to support these pupils so that they, and others, can learn as well as they can.

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	112809
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10254843
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	55
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jill Skidmore
Headteacher	James Handley (Executive headteacher)
Website	www.doveholes.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Limestone Peak Federation with Peak Dale Primary School. The school also has an informal collaboration with Taddington and Priestcliffe School.
- Since the previous inspection, the executive headteacher and head of school have been appointed. There have also been significant changes to staffing. A new chair of governors was appointed in October 2023.
- The school is a voluntary-controlled school in the Diocese of Derby. Its last section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character was in December 2023.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

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.
- A range of meetings were held with the executive headteacher and the head of school. The lead inspector met with the chair of governors and spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and RE. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. The lead inspector also reviewed curriculum plans and examples of pupils' work for geography and science.
- 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.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at playtime and lunchtime and as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the school gate to gather their views on the school. They reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took account of staff responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Caroline Poole, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ben O'Connell

Ofsted Inspector

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