

Dovedale Community Primary School

Herondale Road, Liverpool L18 1JX

Inspection dates

6–7 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and school leaders have developed a happy and strongly inclusive new school where all are valued and encouraged to thrive.
- The skilled governing body makes a positive contribution to school improvement. Governors know the school well and have an accurate understanding of how pupils progress in their learning.
- As a result of improvements to teaching and learning, standards have risen and the school is going from strength to strength. Pupils are encouraged to follow the school's motto, 'Imagine, believe, achieve.'
- Pupils' welfare and well-being take a very high priority. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, receive high levels of carefully planned support. As a result, they achieve well.
- Pupils enjoy opportunities to take part in a wide range of sports activities and competitions. Residential trips prepare pupils for the next stage in their education.
- In early years, children make rapid progress from their different starting points. As a result, they are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils are proud to attend Dovedale Community Primary School. They have excellent attitudes to learning.
- Pupils learn to value other cultures and religions. They have an excellent understanding of British values and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Staff teach phonics well. Younger pupils read, pronounce and write new sounds with confidence. Throughout the school, teachers develop pupils' love of reading.
- The teaching of mathematics is a strength of the school. This means that pupils develop confidence in reasoning and problem solving. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards in mathematics are above the national average.
- The teaching of writing has improved but is not as strong as the teaching of reading and mathematics. Some pupils, including the most able, do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Some subject leaders are new to their roles. They are still developing assessment and tracking systems to check pupils' learning and to improve teaching in some subjects, including religious education.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on and strengthen the improvements in pupils' outcomes in writing by ensuring that all teachers:
 - provide pupils with more opportunities to practise and improve their writing across the curriculum
 - provide work that challenges the most able pupils so that an increased proportion work at greater depth in writing
 - encourage pupils to use rich and ambitious vocabulary to enhance and improve their writing.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the school has assessment information to measure pupils' achievements in all areas of the curriculum including religious education
 - developing the impact of middle leaders' actions to improve pupils' learning in different subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, very ably supported by the senior leadership team, provides strong and effective leadership of an enthusiastic and dedicated team of staff. Since the school opened, leaders have secured improvements in outcomes for pupils and standards have risen.
- Leaders have successfully developed a school community which shares an ambition for all pupils to achieve to their potential. Staff, pupils, parents and carers are proud to be part of Dovedale Community Primary School and share leaders' ambitions for the school.
- Since the school opened, leaders have established a culture in which pupils thrive. Central to the school's vision is making sure that the school is inclusive and strongly nurturing.
- Leaders know the school well. Detailed plans are in place to make it even better. The school's improvement in standards in a short time demonstrates the effectiveness of leaders' actions. Staff have received well-planned training to develop their teaching skills.
- On a regular basis, leaders make careful checks to find out how well pupils are learning in mathematics and English. Teachers check the progress of different groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and disadvantaged pupils. Staff are alert to any pupils who are not making expected progress and take actions to get pupils back on track.
- In some subjects, middle leaders are developing their systems to monitor pupils' learning. Leaders have not yet embedded these systems across the school. For example, in religious education, teachers do not check what pupils have learned. School leaders have correctly identified subject leadership as an area to improve. This is to make sure that pupils make the progress that they should across all areas of the curriculum.
- The SEN coordinator very successfully ensures that the additional support pupils receive is well planned and precisely matches their needs. Leaders use the pupil premium funding very carefully to make sure that disadvantaged pupils get the support that they need to make good progress. As a result, the progress that these pupils make has improved.
- Pupils achieve well in sport and develop new skills. This is because leaders use the physical education and sport premium funding carefully to improve teaching.
- Leaders have planned an engaging and varied curriculum. It successfully promotes pupils' enjoyment of learning across a range of subjects. Teachers enhance pupils' learning through trips to theatres and museums. Pupils enjoy residential trips which develop their confidence and skills. As a result, they find learning interesting and they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The school makes effective provision for the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through assemblies and lessons, different cultural traditions

are celebrated. Pupils have many opportunities to help others and to raise funds for different charities. Through weekly assemblies on British values, pupils acquire a good understanding of tolerance, freedom of expression, democracy and the rule of law. Leaders make sure that they prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.

- Leaders have established a friendly school which fosters close partnerships with parents through very regular communication. Parents receive detailed and useful information about what their children are learning.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is dedicated, committed and knowledgeable. It shares the leadership team's determination for every pupil to be well cared for and to achieve well.
- The governing body has a detailed knowledge of the strengths of the school and of areas for improvement. Governors receive accurate information from the headteacher and other leaders about pupils' progress. They keep a careful watch on the progress of different groups of pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors monitor the school's budget carefully, including the physical education and sport premium funding. They ask pertinent questions about the difference this money makes to pupils' outcomes and staff development.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' safety is a high priority and that staff are vigilant. They make sure that staff receive appropriate training to identify any signs of possible danger or potential abuse. Leaders have created a culture in which pupils feel safe and know that they have someone to talk to if they are worried. School mentors have created space in the school to nurture vulnerable pupils and to reduce any anxieties that they have.
- The procedures for reporting any incidents or concerns are very clear and applied effectively. This means that teachers and mentors have been able to intervene, for example, to provide families with support when pupils are at risk of missing education by being frequently absent. The school works very well with parents and external agencies to make sure that pupils are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan effective lessons that develop pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- The teaching of reading has been successful in raising the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in phonics by the end of Year 1. Pupils learn to read with confidence and fluency. Across the school, staff encourage pupils to read regularly and pupils have access to a wide range of good-quality books. In lessons, staff develop pupils'

strategies to understand what they read. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught well in English lessons and reinforced in other subjects.

- Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge. They use language precisely so that pupils develop their learning across the curriculum. Teachers use bright and informative classroom displays to reinforce pupils' understanding of subjects.
- In mathematics, teachers' skills and competence have made a positive difference to how pupils learn. Pupils have a good understanding of number and place value. Teachers carefully develop pupils' skills in reasoning and problem solving. Across the school, pupils work confidently in pairs to explain their thinking and to develop their mathematical understanding. As a result, pupils are confident in tackling difficult mathematical challenges successfully. Teachers are quick to address pupils' misconceptions so that learning is secure.
- Since the school opened, there has been a steady improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in writing. Pupils write in different styles and for different purposes. In some classes, teachers give pupils frequent opportunities to write at length and to develop their writing skills in different areas of the curriculum, such as history and geography. In the best lessons, teachers use high-quality text to develop pupils' understanding of how to enhance and improve what they write, including using rich and varied vocabulary. However, these opportunities are not consistent across the school. In some classes, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve in their writing. As a result, some pupils, including the most able, do not make the progress of which they are capable in writing.
- Pupils and their parents find the homework set by teachers helpful and engaging in supporting pupils' learning. Teachers hold regular events to involve parents in their children's learning.
- Teachers develop pupils' love of learning in a range of different subject areas. Pupils' skilful and attractive artwork enhances the school environment. They enjoy a wide range of trips and visits to bring their learning to life. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about a recent Year 5 trip to a science museum as part of their science topic work on forces.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding and is a very high priority across the school.
- Leaders make sure that pupils lead healthy lives in school. Sports coaching, funded through the physical education and sport premium, has had a significant impact on developing the skills of pupils and teachers alike through a wide range of physical opportunities. Pupils described how sports coaches develop their 'teamwork and creativity'. Leaders make sure that pupils have the chance to attend sports clubs such as those for rugby, dance and athletics. Pupils take great pride in running the school's healthy tuck shop.

- Pupils are proud of the school's achievements in inter-school sports competitions. For example, the girls' football team and Year 3 and Year 5 athletics teams are currently South Liverpool champions. Pupils develop skills and teamwork in a range of different sports.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is rooted in the daily experiences planned for them. Through assemblies, lessons and pupils' leadership opportunities, pupils learn to care for others.
- Staff teach pupils to be thoughtful and reflective through taking part in initiatives such as Black History Month. As a result, they show respect and tolerance for each other and for different faiths and cultures.
- Leaders and staff carefully develop pupils' resilience and independence. Residential trips in Years 2, 4 and 6 encourage pupils to work together to tackle challenges and to enjoy new experiences such as rafting and archery. As a result of these opportunities, teachers prepare pupils very well for the next stage in their education.
- The school's superb mentoring programme lies at the very heart of its ethos. Pupils' well-being is of the highest importance to staff. Pupils know whom they can talk to if they are concerned or distressed. Staff teach pupils valuable strategies to develop confidence and resilience. Pupils feel safe and staff keep them safe. All new pupils have an induction to ensure that they feel welcome and quickly make new friends. Pupils receive the highest standards of care during difficult times such as bereavement.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are polite and welcoming and have impeccable manners. A strong ethos of mutual respect between staff and pupils is evident for all to see.
- Pupils report that incidents of bullying are very rare and that staff quickly deal with any misbehaviour. 'Mini mentors' from Years 5 and 6 help pupils to reflect on their actions and to show empathy to others.
- Pupils are confident, articulate and very proud of their school. In all classes, pupils hold learning in high regard. They behave in a way that allows everyone to learn without disruption.
- Pupils move around school calmly and with consideration for others. Pupil monitors oversee corridors at breaktimes and make sure that high standards of behaviour are in place at all times.
- Attendance is above the national average and continues to improve. Leaders and school mentors have put in place stringent measures and support to improve the attendance of the small number of pupils who do not attend school regularly enough. This has had a significant positive impact.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- By the end of Year 1, pupils' attainment in phonics is above the national average. Pupils learn phonics progressively and teachers carefully build on the sounds that

pupils have already learned in previous lessons. Pupils learn at a brisk pace and are encouraged to use their phonics knowledge in their writing. Staff provide those pupils working below the expected standard with carefully planned additional lessons to make sure that they make good progress from their different starting points.

- By the end of Year 2 in 2017, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average for reading and mathematics but below it for writing. Current pupils' work indicates that they make good progress in reading and mathematics. In writing, pupils acquire skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling that are in line with national expectations. However, pupils do not make the same progress in developing their composition skills, such as writing for different purposes and developing their use of rich and varied vocabulary.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because leaders plan provision very carefully to match pupils' needs. A majority of disadvantaged pupils are also those who have SEN and/or disabilities. These pupils also make good progress from their varied starting points. The school works closely with outside agencies to ensure that outcomes for children looked after are also good.
- As a result of improvements in the teaching of mathematics, by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is good. In 2017, the number of pupils reaching the expected standard was above the national average and the number of those reaching higher standards was in line with the national average. Current work shows that pupils' achievement is good. This is because teachers consistently challenge pupils to achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- In key stage 2, pupils' achievements in reading have improved since the school opened. In 2017, pupils at the end of Year 6 achieved above national averages in reading, including for the most able pupils.
- In 2017, by the end of Year 6, the number of pupils reaching the expected standard in writing was above national averages. However, some pupils did not make the progress of which they were capable. Current Year 6 pupils are achieving well in writing. However, progress in writing in key stage 2 is not consistently good in every class.
- By the end of key stage 2, pupils achieve well in science. Pupils' work in other subjects shows that they make good progress over time. However, assessment systems are not in place for all subjects to allow teachers to measure progress accurately.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The majority of children join the Reception classes with skills and knowledge that are generally typical for their age. However, a significant minority join Reception with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age, particularly in reading and writing. As a result of skilled teaching and effective leadership, children make rapid progress. The proportion reaching a good level of development is above the national average and increasing. Teachers prepare children very well for Year 1.
- The support for children who have SEN and/or disabilities is outstanding. Staff are meticulous in planning provision to meet children's different needs. Early support in areas such as communication and language means that children settle quickly and are ready to learn.

- Each of the Reception classroom areas provides children with a bright and exciting learning environment. Leaders have meticulously planned the use of the outdoor learning area to develop children's skills and engage their interest.
- Staff take every opportunity to engage children in exciting activities that support their learning. They use questioning skilfully to develop children's understanding and to encourage them to think about what they are doing and to talk about their ideas.
- Staff are highly skilled in teaching phonics and children quickly develop confidence in reading. High-quality books and plenty of printed words are prominent in all learning areas. Children use their phonics knowledge to develop their early writing skills. Teachers plan engaging activities to make sure that children enjoy writing and write frequently. For example, during the inspection, children were writing with great excitement about the different superhero powers that they would like.
- Children's behaviour in early years is outstanding. They are eager, cooperative and enthusiastic learners. They play calmly and with exceptional levels of concentration. This is because staff plan engaging activities and show them how to use equipment safely and sensibly, both in classrooms and outdoor learning areas.
- The leadership of early years is strong. Staff make sure that they record children's progress regularly and accurately. They use information about children's learning to plan enjoyable and challenging activities to develop their skills across different areas of learning.
- Leaders make sure that all the statutory welfare requirements are met and that staff strictly adhere to the school's safeguarding practices and procedures. Leaders provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment that allows children to thrive.
- There are very strong links with parents, and staff involve them in their children's learning. Parent workshops and 'stay-and-play' sessions help parents to know exactly how to support their children in developing skills in reading, writing and number.

School details

Unique reference number	141960
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10046603

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	705
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Bedford
Headteacher	Nik Smith
Telephone number	0151 733 4232
Website	www.dovedaleprimary.co.uk
Email address	admin@dovedaleprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school, and opened on 1 September 2015.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly average, as is the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is similar to the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in each year group and in a range of subjects. They conducted joint observations with the headteacher and senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body and representatives of the local authority, including the virtual school's headteacher.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils from key stage 2 and talked with pupils around the school. They observed pupils during breaktimes and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors heard a number of pupils read.
- Inspectors checked a range of pupils' books jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents and took into account 118 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- Inspectors took into account 45 responses they received to the inspection questionnaire for school staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation and development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, school policies and procedures, and the school's own assessment information. A range of documentation regarding safeguarding was scrutinised.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Stevens, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tina Cleugh	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Platt	Ofsted Inspector
Barbara Harrold	Ofsted Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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