

# Inspection of a good school: Dove Bank Primary School

Off Rutland Road, Kidsgrove, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST7 4AP

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Inspection dates:

14 and 15 February 2023

## **Outcome**

Dove Bank Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Kindness, aspiration and resilience are central to life at Dove Bank. Pupils understand and appreciate these values, which they live up to. Leaders and staff promote these values around school, in lessons and assemblies.

Leaders aspire for pupils to thrive. Parents agree, with one comment, typical of many, stating, 'Leaders are putting fun back into education.'

Pupils feel happy and safe in school. They benefit from a clear behaviour system, which they all understand. As a result, they behave well in class and around school. There are very few incidents of bullying. Leaders deal well with any bullying issues as soon as they happen.

Pupils across the school benefit from the attention that leaders give to their emotional well-being. Pupils value this support. They were keen to talk about 'bouncebackability' sessions where they learn how to control their emotions, understand the emotions of others and discover how worry and stress can affect them. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the wide variety of clubs that are now available to them, such as sports, art and crochet.

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

Leaders have successfully implemented essential actions to strengthen the curriculum. Senior leaders have empowered other leaders and staff, including by providing training to enable them to carry out their roles well. Leaders have worked hard with staff to ensure that the curriculum meets pupils' needs. Teachers use assessment information to find out what pupils have learned in lessons. They use this information to plan pupils' next steps in learning.

In most subjects, subject leaders have set out the key content that pupils need to learn. They have organised this carefully so that pupils can build on what they already know. This helps pupils to achieve well in these subjects.

In a minority of subjects, changes to the curriculum are more recent. Subject leaders have not had the opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of these curriculums. They have not identified how well pupils learn the curriculum and where further improvements are needed.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Children in the two-year-old provision love listening to and acting out many stories. This focus on the love of reading is then built upon by pupils being read to often by teachers. Pupils choose from carefully selected books as part of a library service. As a result, they can talk about many favourite books and authors. They regularly read at home to adults. Phonics is taught effectively in Reception and key stage 1. Further support is given to pupils in key stage 2 if they need to catch up with their peers. The books that pupils read are well matched to the sounds that they have learned. This helps them to read fluently and confidently.

Pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified early. This allows teachers to meet these needs so that they achieve well in school. Resources and adult support ensure that these pupils learn alongside their peers and follow the same curriculum. Leaders check that the provision for all pupils with SEND is effective.

Pupils are focused during lessons and are eager to learn. This is because teachers make learning interesting. They use clearly understood strategies which motivate pupils to learn. This means that pupils' learning is rarely disrupted in lessons.

Leaders provide a range of activities to support pupils' well-being and their personal development. Many pupils attend the clubs that staff organise. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities, such as being a playground buddy or a class monitor. Leaders use trips and visitors to enhance the curriculum. Pupils enjoy these opportunities. They have a clear understanding of different faiths and cultures.

Staff are very positive about the school. They are confident that their workload and well-being matter to leaders. Staff share the high ambition of leaders for the school to be the best it can be.

The governing body has recently undergone several changes. It does not have a sufficiently detailed understanding of the school's curriculum to enable it to fully challenge and hold leaders to account.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is everyone's top priority at this school. Safeguarding leaders are knowledgeable and carry out their roles efficiently. Leaders have organised safeguarding training for all staff, including regular updates. As a result, staff know how to spot when a pupil might be at risk of harm. They work with external agencies when required to help keep pupils safe.

Pupils say they feel safe because they have been taught how to stay safe and because the staff look after them. This includes staying safe online.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have not evaluated the impact of recent changes to the curriculum in some subjects. This means that leaders are unsure how well pupils learn in these subjects. Leaders should support subject leaders to monitor what pupils know and remember in these subjects.
- Over the last few months, there have been significant changes to the governance of the school. New governors have been appointed and are new to their role. As a result, the governing body does not have a secure understanding of the effectiveness of the school. Governors should continue to develop their role so that they hold leaders fully to account for the school's performance.

## **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 November 2017.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124089
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10257003
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	188
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Alexandra Canning
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sally Dakin
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.dovebank.staffs.sch.uk/">www.dovebank.staffs.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 and 29 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school has a breakfast club.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. He also met four members of the board of governors, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector viewed a range of safeguarding documentation. He examined checks on safer recruitment and spoke with members of staff to check their safeguarding knowledge.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. He met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and viewed examples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke to the subject leaders for art and design, history and science.
- The inspector observed children in the early years and pupils in key stages 1 and 2 reading to a trusted adult.
- The inspector spoke with members of staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspector considered the responses, including the free-text comments, to Ofsted Parent View. He also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys. He also spoke to parents and carers at the end of the school day.

### **Inspection team**

Barry Yeadsley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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