

Dorridge Primary School

Station Road, Dorridge, Solihull, West Midlands B93 8EU

Inspection dates

6–7 February 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	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have successfully established an effective school community in which pupils have every opportunity to thrive academically, socially and emotionally.
- Governors know the school well, including its many strengths and those areas for further improvement. Along with school leaders, they have an unwavering determination and aspiration to secure the best possible outcomes for all pupils. However, some improvement plans do not reflect the school's self-evaluation.
- Pupils benefit from a new, rich, creative and vibrant curriculum that increasingly engages their interest and encourages a desire to learn.
- Progress and outcomes for current pupils across the school in reading and mathematics are strong. Outcomes in writing, especially for boys, have not been as good but are now improving.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective support that they receive.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils know that they can trust adults to help keep them safe.
- Pupils value their education and rarely miss a day at school. They are proud of their school and show excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils' behaviour is of the highest standard.
- Teachers and teaching assistants generally have high expectations about what pupils can achieve. They ask effective questions to deepen pupils' understanding and quickly tackle any misconceptions. However, in a small number of lessons, teaching approaches are inconsistent and this leads to a lack of challenge or lost learning time.
- Leaders and teachers have a clear understanding of pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Lessons are carefully planned to match pupils' needs. Assessment is not as well developed in other subject areas.
- Children in the early years get off to a flying start. They benefit from warm relationships with staff and interesting, varied activities. They make very good progress from their individual starting points.
- While the senior leadership team is highly effective, middle leadership roles are yet to be fully developed.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the work of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - further developing middle leaders to support successful outcomes for all pupils
 - ensuring that action plans are sharply focused on the school's main priorities
 - continuing to develop the curriculum and strengthening assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teaching across the school is of a consistently high standard so that all pupils are challenged effectively
 - outcomes in writing across the school continue to improve, especially for boys.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has successfully navigated the school through a period of considerable change. Together with the leadership team and staff, she has established an effective primary school where pupils are able to flourish.
- Parents are overwhelmingly happy with the education that their children receive. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, felt that their children are safe, happy and well looked after. One parent told an inspector that they were 'bowled over by staff and how they go over and above', while another parent commented that they were 'delighted with the school'. Many parents spoke positively about the progress that their children make and the support provided for them.
- The headteacher has built an inspiring and effective senior leadership team, each of whom brings a high degree of skill and knowledge to the role. As a result of their drive and determination, the quality of teaching and learning is strong, and pupils are well supported to make good progress from their starting points. Together with the governors, senior leaders demonstrate a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of further improvement. However, while leaders have accurately identified the priorities for development, plans to address these do not always accurately reflect the work being undertaken.
- The headteacher has high expectations for everyone, and there are clear performance management systems in place to help staff ensure that improvements are made and targets are achieved. Senior leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils are making. To support developments further, these opportunities need to be extended to middle leaders such as year-group and subject leaders. Staff value the open and honest feedback that they receive from senior leaders and the opportunities that they have to access effective coaching and training both in and out of school.
- The school has secure systems in place to identify and assess pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Their needs are addressed in a variety of ways, including high-quality teaching, extra support in class and specialist interventions from school staff. The impact of additional support on pupils' progress is tracked carefully and activities are adapted as necessary. Additional funding to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well managed.
- Careful consideration is given to how the pupil premium funding is spent so that disadvantaged pupils are supported effectively and have opportunities to take part in all that the school has to offer. Senior leaders and staff have a good awareness of the barriers to learning and the challenges that this group of pupils face. As a result, more disadvantaged pupils are working at the standard expected for their age across the school.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport funding is used effectively to support pupils' participation in, and enjoyment of, sport. The wide range of after-school sports clubs are very popular and many pupils take part in sporting events and competitions with local schools.

- The leadership team has introduced a rich and engaging curriculum that covers all areas of the national curriculum. The increasing use of creative and practical activities stimulates pupils' interests and their desire to learn. Recent developments include raising the profile of science across the school to ensure that pupils have more opportunity to develop relevant skills and knowledge. Music provision is strong, for example all Year 4 pupils learn to play the guitar. The school's outdoor environment, including a garden area, pond and forest school, enhances the curriculum further.
- Pupils value the opportunities that the school offers them to extend and enhance their learning. Topics are brought to life through trips and visitors. For example, Year 6 pupils visit Coventry Cathedral when learning about the Second World War. Pupils also benefit from an extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities, including sports, music, arts and craft-based activities.
- Senior leaders have created their own effective system to assess and track pupils' progress across the school in English and mathematics. Although still in its infancy, this is now being extended to science and a range of other subject areas.
- Leaders and staff make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school supports the importance of mutual respect and equality effectively. Pupils learn about a range of different faiths and cultures. The school environment is rich in displays and opportunities to celebrate all aspects of pupils' developments, such as artwork, healthy living and charity events. As a result of these opportunities, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governance

- Governance is effective. The governing body has successfully overseen the amalgamation of two schools and has provided support for leaders and staff through a period of significant transition. They have a good understanding of the school's many strengths and areas for improvement. Members of the governing body are clearly ambitious for the school and its pupils.
- Governors use information gathered through visits to school, reports from a range of external advisers and reports provided by leaders to ask challenging questions in order to bring about improvements. The governing body has recently recruited new members with relevant skills, experience and knowledge to continue to challenge leaders to raise standards further.
- The governing body takes its safeguarding duties seriously. The safeguarding link governor regularly meets with school leaders to ensure that systems and processes are up to date and are being followed closely.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Ensuring that children are safe is at the heart of the school and leaders have created a culture where all staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. As a result, the school is a safe environment for pupils and they are well cared for at all times.
- All staff have regular training to understand their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe.

They have a good awareness of what constitutes abuse and are vigilant in looking out for indicators of risk or harm.

- The safeguarding team maintains the required confidential records and, when appropriate, the team shares information with relevant external agencies. Leaders are persistent when concerned about a pupil's welfare and follow up concerns with these agencies as necessary.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all adults appointed to work at the school.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know whom to talk to if they have any worries or concerns. They are taught how to keep safe online. Pupils are confident that any issues raised will be quickly resolved.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is effective. Pupils increasingly engage in activities that capture their interest. There are very positive relationships between adults and pupils and these encourage pupils to work hard and try their best. Teachers clearly explain to pupils what they need to do and why they are doing it.
- Classrooms are positive and purposeful learning environments. Lessons are planned well and build on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding. Teachers and teaching assistants question pupils to extend their thinking and deepen their learning effectively. Tasks are very well matched to the needs of pupils, including the most able. Teachers quickly address any misconceptions and pupils respond well to teachers' feedback. These strong features of teaching are seen in most lessons. However, there is some lack of consistency across the school; in a minority of lessons, teaching is less effective, affecting the amount of progress pupils make.
- Reading has a high priority across the school. Improved phonics teaching, particularly in Year 1, has successfully enabled the great majority of pupils to reach the required standard. Phonics sessions are engaging and pupils are able to apply their phonics skills to read new and unfamiliar words. Throughout the school, reading challenges encourage pupils to read widely and often. However, some reading sessions in class do not provide sufficient challenge for pupils and, as a result, some learning time is lost.
- Pupils' books indicate that the majority are making good progress in relation to handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation. Pupils are benefiting from opportunities to write for different purposes and audiences in English and other subjects. Pupils, especially boys, report enjoying writing more because of the engaging contexts in which lessons are set. For example, as part of a history topic about the Great Fire of London, Year 1 pupils were inspired to write more vividly having experienced a real campfire in the school grounds. While in Year 6, a whole sequence of writing opportunities, including reports, letters and diary entries, were stimulated by exploring a tent that appeared in the school grounds as a starting point to learning about Scott of the Antarctic.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. There is evidence of strong progress in relation to the development of calculation skills. Opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills are increasingly becoming a regular part of mathematics lessons.

- Teachers typically have a clear understanding of pupils' starting points in English and mathematics. Teachers' effective use of assessment helps them to plan activities that support good progress for pupils of all abilities. However, assessment in most other subjects is not so well developed and consequently teachers are not as well placed to assess the extent of pupils' achievements in these subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to support pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Leaders have created a positive, nurturing environment in which pupils are able to thrive. Each classroom includes a range of displays to support pupils' learning and celebrate their achievements. Weekly 'endeavour' assemblies acknowledge pupils' successes, whether they are for academic achievement or demonstrating school values.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning. From Nursery to Year 6, pupils were seen demonstrating resilience and perseverance to complete tasks and achieve success. This 'can do' approach has a strong impact on the progress that they make. Pupils take a pride in their work, their school and themselves.
- Pupils feel safe and are taught how to keep themselves safe. For example, during the inspection, some older pupils and their parents took part in workshops about online safety. Pupils understand what bullying is and the various forms it may take but those spoken to were unequivocal in their view that incidents of bullying are extremely rare and 'will not be tolerated' by senior leaders.
- Pupils have many opportunities to make a contribution to school life and the wider community, such as raising money for local and national charities. They have the opportunity to take on a range of school-wide responsibilities as play leaders, reading buddies and school council representatives. These opportunities are helping to prepare pupils well for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils know the importance of keeping themselves healthy and making informed choices about healthy eating. Physical fitness has a high profile across the school, with many pupils taking part in the 'daily mile' challenge. Pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs are also well provided for through the school's nurturing environment and supportive staff, specific interventions such as counselling or simply by talking to Alfie, the school dog.
- The school provides high quality wraparound care for pupils before and after school as well as for three-year-olds during the day when not attending nursery. The atmosphere is welcoming and relaxed and pupils are happy to attend. Staff are good role models, providing real warmth and care. Pupils have access to a wide range of resources and the provision is tailored appropriately to suit their age group.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Behaviour in classrooms and around school is of a consistently high standard, with almost all pupils eager to learn.

- Pupils model 'Dorridge Decorum' expectations by being well mannered and friendly. They are very proud of their school. Pupils show respect for the ideas and views of other pupils, for example spontaneously applauding others' success.
- The school's behaviour policy is clear and used consistently across the school. Pupils feel it is effective and that any instances of poor behaviour are quickly dealt with. The great majority of parents also support this view.
- Pupils are keen to come to school and rarely miss a day. As a result, attendance is high and is consistently above the national average. Staff are rigorous in following up any absence to ensure that pupils are safe.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- School achievement information, confirmed by evidence in pupils' books, indicates that the majority of pupils across all year groups are currently making good progress and working at the standard expected for their age, particularly in reading and mathematics and increasingly in writing. This applies to pupils of all ability ranges, including the most able, and supports leaders' views that rates of progress and outcomes are continuing to improve.
- Over time, outcomes in writing, particularly for boys, have not been as strong as in reading and mathematics. This has had an impact on school outcomes at the end of key stages 1 and 2. However, there is clear evidence that, for current pupils, the rates of progress are increasing rapidly and standards are rising.
- The proportion of pupils who are working at greater depth is increasing and more pupils are reaching the higher standards of which they are capable. Assessment information for current pupils reflects this increase in standards across the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Prior to 2014, some pupils' key stage 1 outcomes were not accurate. Therefore, recently published information assessing the progress made by those pupils during key stage 2 does not accurately reflect the progress that they made.
- In 2017, at the end of key stages 1 and 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the standards expected for their age was above that seen nationally in reading and mathematics. The proportion of pupils attaining at greater depth was similarly above the national average.
- In 2017, outcomes in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 improved considerably and were above the national average. Due to consistently high-quality phonics teaching, the progress of current Year 1 pupils is also very strong.
- Historically, outcomes for the small number of disadvantaged pupils across the school have been low. However, leaders are now accurately tracking pupils' progress and ensuring that effective support is in place. As a result, there is evidence that these pupils are making more rapid progress from their starting points.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making increasingly good progress in relation to their individual starting points. Leaders monitor pupils' progress carefully and adapt support and intervention according to need.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The majority of children enter the early years with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. Over the last three years, outcomes have improved and the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is above the national average. Many children make very strong progress and demonstrate skills and understanding well above that expected at the end of the Reception Year. The great majority of children reach the required standard in all the early learning goals. The children are very well prepared for their transition into Year 1.
- The children are well cared for and are confident and eager to join in activities. Children's behaviour is very good and they show respect for each other. Both Nursery-age and Reception-age children play cooperatively, sharing resources and discussing their activities. Children generally respond well to instructions from adults. The children know and follow clear classroom routines so that little learning time is wasted.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective and welfare requirements in the early years are met fully. Each class in the Reception Year has its own 'health and safety officer'. The children take these roles very seriously, for example by checking that nothing has been spilt on the floor and drawers have been properly closed. As a result, all children are aware of how to be safe in their environment.
- Teaching is consistently of a high quality and is very responsive to pupils' needs. All adults have very high expectations of what the children can achieve. This encourages the children's curiosity and concentration.
- The teaching of early literacy skills through phonics is effective. Children are accurately taught how to recognise the sounds that letters make and blend these together to make words. Reception-age children are beginning to write independently.
- Mathematical activities effectively support children's early number development and shape recognition. For example, a small group of Nursery children were playing a 3-D shape game and, supported by an adult, were discussing the properties of shapes.
- The curriculum is exceptionally well organised and planned to address children's needs through exciting topics and activities. A focus on encouraging boys to write is having a positive effect. During the inspection, boys in various classes were practising letter formation using 'light sabres' linked to Star Wars, writing as pirates and describing their alien 'selfie' pictures.
- The early years leader is highly effective and has the drive to review and refine practice continually.
- Early years staff are welcoming and encourage parents and carers to be involved in their children's education, for example through contributing to 'learning journals' or taking part in workshops. There is a comprehensive induction programme in place to support both children and families when they start school.
- The early years learning environment, both indoors and outside, is spacious, well resourced and supports all areas of learning effectively. Children access all areas independently and with confidence.

School details

Unique reference number	104045
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10032539

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	698
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Antoinette Fisher
Headteacher	Roslyn Ashe
Telephone number	01564 772836
Website	www.dorridge.solihull.sch.uk
Email address	office@dorridge.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 March 2008

Information about this school

- Dorridge Primary School opened on 1 September 2014 following the amalgamation of Dorridge Infant School and Dorridge Junior School. The school's unique reference number applied to the former infant school, which was deemed outstanding in March 2008. The junior school was deemed to require improvement when it was inspected in June 2013.
- The headteacher took up her post in January 2015.
- Dorridge Primary School is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The remainder of pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A much smaller than average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium.

- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average. However, the proportion supported with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above that seen nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress.
- The school offers before and after school wraparound care. This provision is managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 32 lessons or small-group sessions. A number of these observations were undertaken jointly with a member of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors met with pupils and listened to some pupils read. They looked at examples of pupils' work in their books and spoke to pupils formally and informally. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and around the school, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, other leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also spoke to the school's external school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, records relating to safeguarding and attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body, school performance data and the school's website.
- Inspectors considered parents' opinions through 99 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke to parents on the first day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Catherine Crooks, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Diana Pearce	Ofsted Inspector
Deborah Allen	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Maybank	Ofsted Inspector

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