

Dussindale Primary School

Vane Close, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich, Norfolk NR7 0US

Inspection dates

19–20 June 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is an improving school. Pupils, parents and carers, and staff recognise the progress made by the school's leaders.
- Leaders, including governors, have raised their expectations of staff. Systems to check the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment are robust. Swift action is taken to improve teaching. As a result, pupils achieve well.
- Governance has improved. Governors are determined that all pupils achieve well. They provide effective support to senior leaders in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Governors rigorously hold the school's leaders to account for their work.
- The headteacher leads an effective senior leadership team. Leaders at all levels have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This means they are clear about where to prioritise their efforts.
- Teachers plan interesting learning experiences for pupils across a variety of subjects. They ensure, wherever possible, that links are made between different subjects. This helps pupils to deepen their understanding.
- Children in early years get off to a good start in their Reception Year. They make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Staff provide effective emotional and academic support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This helps pupils' readiness for learning as well as focusing on filling gaps in their knowledge and skills.
- Safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Pupils say they feel safe. Parents agree their children are kept safe and are well cared for.
- Pupils behave well. They are respectful and well mannered. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning in lessons and try hard to do their best.
- Improvements to the teaching of writing have led to more pupils reaching at least the standards expected for their age. More work is needed to strengthen and secure recent developments, particularly in providing greater challenge for most-able pupils.
- While the vast majority of parents are positive about most aspects of the school's work, some expressed concerns about communication between home and school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and progress in writing, particularly for most-able pupils, by building on strategies to ensure that pupils' progress in writing equals that in reading and mathematics.
- Improve leadership and management, by ensuring that school leaders, including governors, explore how they can more effectively share important information with parents.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher leads with passion and determination. She is supported well by an effective leadership team. Leaders have established a culture and ethos of aspiration in which all pupils can thrive. They have ensured that pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour make a significant contribution to their learning.
- Leaders, including governors, demand high levels of professionalism among staff. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is of high priority. As such, it is rigorously checked and, where appropriate, decisive action is taken to provide staff with the support they need to develop their skills. This often involves joint professional development with other schools in the trust and provides opportunities for staff to share what is working well in other schools and to learn from each other.
- Teachers new to the profession, as well as those with more experience, feel trusted and encouraged to take risks and try new ideas that help pupils to make good progress.
- Leaders at all levels have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas of development. This helps them to prioritise and evaluate improvement actions. Leaders use this information to identify staff training that will have the biggest impact on pupils' learning. The trust has an accurate view of the school's challenges. It has enabled leaders to implement its improvement plans and provided additional resources to support it.
- Strong and robust systems to measure pupils' learning are secure. Teachers are accurate in their assessments. This means that they are well placed to identify what pupils need to learn next. Leaders and staff meet frequently to ensure equality of opportunity and check how well pupils are learning. Those in danger of falling behind their classmates are provided with the extra help they need to catch up and keep up. Work in pupils' books shows that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are rising and pupils are making strong progress.
- The curriculum provides a breadth of study. Pupils learn a wide variety of subjects enriched by trips, visitors, extra-curricular clubs and sporting events. They visit places of worship and study different religious beliefs and practices. Activities such as 'odd sock day', run in anti-bullying week, promote tolerance of people's differences and help pupils to celebrate diversity. Pupils told inspectors it is 'ok to be different'.
- Teachers make good use of the pond and wildlife area in the school grounds to teach aspects of science. Pupils visit museums and the theatre and go on residential trips. Pupils create art, and listen to and make music. Such activities support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The current curriculum enables pupils to use their reading and writing skills when learning about foundation subjects, such as history and geography. Leaders are working on developing these links further.
- The curriculum enables pupils to learn about, understand and demonstrate British values. Pupils who wish to take on additional responsibilities, for example election to the school council, are required to write a statement supporting their application. Pupils take part in debates and share the results as they do in the British Parliament. In Year

4, pupils debated, 'Are children lazy?' Pupils voted after listening to arguments on both sides and announced, 'Ayes to the right; nays to the left; the nays have it!' and concluded that children are not lazy.

- Effective use is made of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium. More pupils are engaged in a wide range of sports than was previously the case. They organise their own games and have increased stamina. Specialist coaches have supported members of staff in improving the quality of PE teaching. Pupils enjoy plenty of sporting clubs and events. Some represent their school in inter-school and county competitions. During the inspection, Year 5 and Year 6 boys and girls brought back the winning trophy from a cricket tournament with great pride. Leaders have used the PE and sport funding to promote pupils' fitness and well-being, such as 'skip to be fit' and yoga. Plans are in place to offer different sports to enable even more pupils to take part.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to raise pupils' aspirations and to provide pastoral and academic support. As a result, a higher proportion of eligible pupils in 2018 achieved at or above the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics than other pupils nationally.
- Systems to improve pupils' behaviour are working well. Leaders expect pupils to behave well. The personal and social education curriculum supports pupils in managing their feelings better. This means that they are more able to access learning.
- Leadership of support for pupils with SEND is effective. A key feature of the provision is the special educational needs coordinator's (SENCo's) focus on supporting teachers in adapting the curriculum to meet pupils' individual needs in the classroom. Where appropriate, teachers plan small-group activities to address specific gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. Parents hold the support they have received from the SENCo, and care for their children, in high regard.
- Leaders have rightly identified that pupils' attainment and progress in reading and writing are not as strong as they are in mathematics. To tackle this, leaders raised the profile of both reading and writing. Alongside the teaching of reading, including phonics, they are successfully promoting reading for pleasure. Leaders have undertaken significant training to adopt a new approach to teaching writing. This is having a positive impact on pupils' writing skills. However, pupils' learning and progress in writing lag behind those in reading and mathematics. Fewer pupils are working at greater depth in writing than are working at the higher standards in reading and mathematics.
- Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and who spoke to inspectors are pleased with the school's work, its senior leaders and staff. Several noted recent improvements since the school became an academy. The vast majority are pleased with their children's progress and commented positively on staff approachability. Some parents expressed concerns about communication between home and school, which they feel could be better. They would like to see information shared in a more timely way.

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious for the school. They support the headteacher in setting high

expectations for staff so all pupils can achieve. Governors have supported the headteacher in tackling weak teaching. They keep a close eye on whether or not the school's improvement plans are successful in raising pupils' achievement. Governors use expertise from within the trust and external professionals to validate their own and senior leaders' judgements.

- Governors organise their work to make good use of their skills and expertise. They attend training provided by the trust and other organisations so they are more able to offer leaders critical challenge. Notes of governor meetings show that they hold senior leaders to account for the quality of education by asking suitable questions. Governors link closely with staff who have responsibilities for leading different areas of the school's work to see for themselves how well improvement strategies are working.
- Governors manage funding efficiently to enable staff to create a safe, nurturing and positive learning environment. They check that spending, such as the recent investment to refresh and improve the library, is contributing well to pupils' progress, thus providing value for money.
- Governors ensure the pupil premium is being used effectively. They know it is helping to diminish differences between disadvantaged pupils in the school and other pupils nationally. Similarly, governors manage the additional funding the school receives in the form of the PE and sport premium effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Senior leaders have created a climate in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Rigorous systems and procedures underpin the school's work to safeguard pupils. Leaders with specific responsibility for safeguarding signpost staff to the most recent information in what is known as 'Safeguarding Community Times'. This document ensures that staff are kept updated with current issues, so they are better prepared to reduce the risk of harm to pupils, for example, being vulnerable to peer pressure, or drawn into gangs.
- Staff understand the procedures to refer pupils if they have any concerns. Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that referrals are followed up. Systems for checking the suitability of adults working with children meet requirements. Senior leaders, including governors and trust staff, check that these records are carefully maintained.
- Almost all parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agreed or strongly agreed their children are safe and well looked after at the school. Several commented on the high quality of care their children had received. They are confident the staff will listen and respond to any worries they may have and say that they find the staff approachable.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers' expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour are high. They expect pupils to work hard and try to do the best they can. Pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. Their progress is clearly evident in workbooks across a range of subjects.

- A key strength of the school's provision is the good relationships adults have with their pupils, which provides a warm, positive learning environment. Pupils are encouraged to persevere and try hard, without fear of failure.
- Improvements to the assessment of pupils' learning ensure that teachers have an accurate view of what pupils already know and can do. This means they can plan tasks that help pupils to progress. Pupils in all year groups are set specific targets, such as using more interesting adjectives or more accurate punctuation, to move their learning to the next step.
- Teachers use questions effectively to check pupils' understanding. They show secure subject knowledge and use appropriate technical vocabulary for each curriculum aspect. Consequently, pupils learn to use the new vocabulary and this supports learning well.
- The teaching of reading has improved. Teachers use high-quality texts in lessons to identify and discuss the features of different genres. An increased emphasis has been placed on developing pupils' vocabulary. As a result, pupils know more, understand more and therefore learn more. They are more able to use the same features, styles and a wider variety of words in their own writing. For example, a Year 4 pupil, writing about his own mythical character, wrote, 'walk', then fetched a thesaurus and changed 'walk' to 'stroll'.
- Pupils' books show they are progressing well in mathematics. They are taught mathematical fluency and are consistently expected to explain and justify their reasoning. This supports learning effectively because pupils are applying their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Homework is based on reading, spelling and learning number facts such as multiplication tables. It consolidates learning in the classroom.
- The teaching of writing is improving. Leaders have introduced a new approach. This enables pupils to hear, tell and re-tell stories. They are provided with lots of opportunities to rehearse their ideas and sentences before writing them down.
- Although the school's assessment information shows that pupils' attainment in writing is improving and pupils are making better progress, improvements are at an early stage. Learning is well planned and, on the whole, matches the needs of pupils. Occasionally, the work that is set for some most-able pupils in writing is not challenging them as much as it could. Therefore, they do not always make the progress they should.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are extremely polite and courteous. They have a positive view of the school and are excited and enthused by the activities teachers plan for them.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Parents agree their children are kept safe and are well looked after. Bullying is rare. Pupils told inspectors, 'It is not tolerated at our

school.' Pupils are helped to identify a minimum of five trusted adults with whom they can raise any concerns and are confident that issues will be dealt with quickly.

- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of how to keep safe when using the internet. They know not to share personal details, play online games or chat with strangers. Staff teach pupils to be curious and not to take what they see at face value.
- Year 5 and Year 6 'handy helpers' and 'play leaders' support younger pupils to sort out minor squabbles and lead playground games. Pupils take on additional responsibilities as they move through the school. Ambassadors help maintain the pond area, become librarians or are elected to the school council for example. Ambassadors apply for and are interviewed for these roles. Pupils are proud of these responsibilities and take them very seriously.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and as they move in and around the school. They listen attentively and with interest. Pupils try hard to do their best and show they are keen to learn. They work hard on their own and with each other. This creates a calm, well-ordered, working atmosphere.
- Procedures to promote pupils' good behaviour are effective. Each class sets its own standards in a 'class charter'. Pupils understand the rewards and sanctions of the school's systems to manage behaviour and say they work well. The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View and who spoke to inspectors agree that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.
- On the whole, pupils respond positively to adult guidance, follow their advice and persevere when work is challenging. Their books show that they have been persistent in making improvements to their work. Very occasionally, when the work pupils are set is not precisely matched to their needs or abilities, they lose interest and their attention wanders. This slows their learning.
- Staff manage challenging behaviour consistently well. A key feature of the school's approach is known as 'restorative justice'. This provides opportunities for staff to help pupils take responsibility for their actions and to put things right. The school's records of behaviour show that incidents of poor behaviour have reduced significantly over time. No pupils have been permanently excluded for two years.
- Systems to monitor and improve pupils' attendance are rigorous. Poor attendance of individuals is followed up persistently. Leaders provide help and advice to individual families. Consequently, pupils' attendance is above average.
- Pupils' punctuality is good.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Published information shows that in 2018, pupils' attainment at the expected standard at the end of key stage 1, in reading, writing and mathematics, was above average. Standards at the end of key stage 2 in mathematics at the expected standard were

above average. They were broadly average in reading and writing. Pupils' progress by the time they left the school at the end of Year 6 in 2018 was above average in mathematics, average in reading and below average in writing.

- In 2018, above-average proportions of the most able pupils at key stage 1 were working at a greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics. This represented an improvement on the previous year. The proportion of key stage 2 pupils reaching the higher standards in mathematics was above average. The percentage of pupils reaching higher standards in reading and greater depth in writing was below average.
- The attainment and progress of pupils currently in the school are improving in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Phonics teaching is regular and systematic. The proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the required standard in the national phonics screening check in 2018 was above average. Pupils who did not reach the required standard in Year 1 are given additional help to catch up. Almost all pupils, by the end of Year 2, are able to use their phonic knowledge and skills to sound out and blend unknown words confidently and accurately.
- Pupils with SEND are supported well in class. Adults pre-teach and revise new vocabulary. They repeat ideas in different ways and break learning down into small steps to aid pupils' understanding. Adults know precisely what emotional support pupils need in order to learn best. Consequently, pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils are supported effectively. Interventions are targeted to their specific needs, including for the most able disadvantaged pupils. Greater proportions of disadvantaged pupils are working at or above age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics than other pupils nationally.
- Leaders identified that attainment and progress in reading and writing were not as strong as in mathematics. Robust action has been taken to raise teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and to improve the quality of teaching in both aspects.
- The profile of reading, including reading for pleasure, has been raised across the school. The library has been revamped and populated. It is open to parents and their children after school. 'DEAR' (Drop Everything and Read) time has been introduced to provide a dedicated time for pupils to become immersed in reading. Teachers now read to pupils on a daily basis. Leaders have provided staff with effective training, enabling them to become more knowledgeable about children's literature.
- Recent assessments, confirmed by work in pupils' books, show that most pupils are making strong progress. The proportion of pupils working at greater depth in writing is not as strong as the proportion of pupils working at the higher standards in reading and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter Reception Year with skills that are broadly typical for their age. They get off to a good start. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development in 2018 was above average. This meant they were well prepared for Year 1.

- Reading is given a high priority. Leaders are ambitious for children to start to develop reading skills at a very early stage. Phonics is taught soon after children start school. Most children know letter sounds by the end of the first term. Those who do not are provided with extra help to catch up. Leaders have made sure that children's reading books enable them to practise the sounds they are learning before moving on. Currently, more children are reaching and exceeding a good level of development in reading than was previously the case.
- Adults are effective role models in the way they use language. They ask children questions, repeat new words and provide opportunities for children to use them in different contexts.
- Writing skills are linked closely to those of reading. Listening, responding to and telling stories, and saying rhymes and poems provide children with the vocabulary they need to create their own. Adults model writing so children know precisely what they have to do. For example, children wrote notes to Jack, from the fairytale 'Jack and the Beanstalk', and left them in the giant's boot for him to find. Such activities successfully inspire children to write.
- Children's writing books show they make good progress over time. Their attempts at writing individual letters at the start of the school year have progressed into legible full sentences, accurately marked with capital letters and full stops, such as, 'Once upon a time, there was a monkey who lived with a lazy old zookeeper.'
- Adults plan a range of interesting and engaging activities for children to develop their skills across all areas of learning. For example, children practise 'tricky' words by playing tricky-word bingo. They count 'magic' beans and learn to share them equally.
- Disadvantaged children are supported well through good teaching, which provides experiences to fill specific gaps in their learning. This helps them to make good progress.
- Leadership and management of the early years provision are effective. Children are kept safe and are happy and settled in school. Parents speak highly of early years and say that their children love coming to school and have developed a passion for learning. Staff establish positive relationships with parents. Parents appreciate being able to check how well their children are learning in the electronic records of children's achievements and to make their own contributions.
- Leaders know what the setting does well and where it needs to make improvements. They have rightly identified that although children's outcomes are above average at the end of Reception, more could exceed a good level of development and be even better prepared for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	143279
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10087453

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	372
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair	Owen Jenkins
Headteacher	Louise Norgate
Telephone number	01603 436180
Website	www.dussindaleprimary.co.uk
Email address	head@dussindale.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Dussindale Primary School became a member of the Yare Education Trust on 6 September 2016. When its predecessor school, Dussindale Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to require improvement.
- Dussindale Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. It consists of 14 classes, two in each year group.
- Trustees are responsible for holding the school's leadership team to account. They delegate these powers to a local governing body.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals and pupil premium funding is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND support is below average, as is the proportion with an education, health and care plan.

- The headteacher took up her substantive role in September 2016. There have been significant changes to staffing since the school became an academy.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all classes, most of which were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- During visits to lessons, inspectors talked to pupils about their learning and looked at work in their books. Two pupils read to inspectors and talked about how they were learning to read.
- Inspectors observed and talked to pupils at breaktime and lunchtime on the playground.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, SENCo, director of schools, chief executive officer of the trust and governors, including the chair of governors. They spoke to middle leaders and to those with responsibility for safeguarding.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from Viscount Nelson Education Network (VNET), which provides support and training for the school.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised. This included the school's website, policies, pupils' assessment information, leaders' evaluation of the school's performance and plans for improvement. Inspectors looked at records of behaviour, attendance and punctuality.
- Inspectors took account of the 83 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View, the free-text responses and one item of correspondence. They scrutinised the 28 responses from staff to Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the day as they brought their children to school and when they came to see their children's sports day.

Inspection team

Sarah Warboys, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Harbrow	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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