

Inspection of Dodworth St John the Baptist CofE Primary Academy

Barnsley Road, Dodworth, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S75 3JS

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

The head of school of this school is Jonathan Smith. This school is part of St Mary's Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Tamara Gulliver and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tracy Rodger. There is also an executive headteacher, Simon Kaufman, who is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school that has undergone recent and significant change. Some of these changes are happening at pace. Leaders' actions are beginning to make a difference to pupils' learning. Leaders have introduced a new behaviour policy in school. This is beginning to have an impact on how pupils behave and how they feel in school. Leaders are beginning to make the curriculum that pupils learn more ambitious. The changes to the curriculum are at a very early stage.

Leaders are making changes to how pupils' behaviour is managed. There are clearer expectations for how pupils should behave and how adults should promote positive behaviour. Pupils welcome these new expectations. For example, they speak enthusiastically about the 'Dodworth Pledge', which promotes kindness, respect and teamwork. Pupils feel safe. However, adults do not make sure that pupils consistently follow these new expectations. Pupils feel that different adults deal with issues in different ways. Leaders have introduced systems to identify pupils whose absence is higher than it should be.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy coming to school. Pupils are enthusiastic about the new rewards system put in place by leaders. They say that this is helping them to make the right behaviour choices in lessons.

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

The school has recently begun to develop the curriculum. Leaders are ambitious for what they want pupils to achieve. In some subjects, such as physical education and music, the curriculum is clearly sequenced and regularly checked by leaders. As a result, pupils have a positive experience and learn more. In subjects that have been recently developed, the school does not have a clear picture of how well these subjects are being taught, how they are helping pupils to learn and how they could be improved. In the early years, some parts of the curriculum that children learn is not clearly defined.

Leaders want pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to achieve as well as their peers. Leaders have introduced clearer systems for staff to identify pupils who may need help with their learning. This is starting to help staff give more appropriate support to pupils with SEND. In the early years, children who need additional support with learning are quickly identified.

There is a new phonics curriculum in school. Staff have been trained to deliver the phonics programme. However, this curriculum is at an early stage of being implemented. The school does not have a clear understanding of which sounds pupils do and do not know. Pupils are not taught sounds that are appropriate to their level of phonics knowledge. They do not get regular opportunities to read books that match the sounds that they have been taught. The school is taking steps to increase the speed of implementation of the newly introduced phonics programme. The school is beginning to promote a positive culture around reading.

Children in the early years are supported to follow routines to help them become independent learners. They build positive relationships with adults. There are some occasions when pupils move through school calmly. Leaders have taken some recent actions to improve the attendance of pupils who are persistently absent.

Leaders understand the importance of developing pupils' character beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils learn through their personal, social, health and economic lessons about how to stay safe online, and about the importance of treating all people fairly. Staff look for opportunities to help pupils think about the impact of their actions on others. For example, the 'Dodworth Pledge' is used to help pupils think about what 'respect' means. Pupils have opportunities to take part in some clubs and activities outside of their lessons. Some pupils have opportunities to take on leadership roles, such as anti-bullying ambassadors and playground leaders. However, some parts of the school's personal development offer are not clearly mapped out. This means that the curriculum to promote the spiritual and cultural development does not set out the most crucial knowledge that pupils need to learn.

Recently appointed school leaders have an accurate picture of the school's areas for improvement. The new governing body also has a clear picture of the school development priorities. They are starting to hold leaders to account more robustly. Subject leaders do not have the opportunity to regularly check how well their subjects are being taught. There have been recent changes to how trustees hold school leaders to account. This is beginning to make a difference.

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 does not have a clear measure of which sounds pupils know in their recently introduced phonics and early reading programme. This is because assessment of this programme is not fully established. As a result, pupils are not given books that match the sounds they are taught, and the teaching of phonics does not match pupils' level of phonics knowledge. The school should ensure that pupils' phonics knowledge is assessed accurately and that pupils are taught the sounds they need to revisit and learn next and are given books to practise reading these sounds.
- The school does not have a clear measure of how well some subjects are being taught, including different areas of learning in the early years curriculum. As a result, the school does not measure precisely how well the curriculum, across school, is supporting pupils and children to learn. The school should ensure that there are systems for leaders at all levels to check how well all curriculum areas

are implemented and to check what pupils know, what they can do, and what they need to learn next.

- There are variations in expectations of pupils' behaviour across school from staff. As a result, staff do not address behavioural incidents and issues with a consistent approach. The school should ensure that all staff are clear on the behavioural expectations, that they apply these fairly and consistently and quickly identify pupils who may need more support to regulate their behaviour.
- The curriculum to promote pupils' personal development is not cohesively planned. Opportunities and experiences on offer to pupils are, therefore, not specifically connected to the curriculum goals. This limits pupils' awareness of some aspects of the wider world. The school should ensure that the personal development offer is strategically mapped to identify the crucial knowledge they want pupils to learn and provide a specific range of experiences and opportunities to achieve those goals.

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	140539
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10268218
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	155
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tracy Rodger
Headteacher	Jon Smith
Website	https://dodworthstjohns.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	5 May 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher took up post in September 2023.
- The head of school took up post in September 2023.
- The chief executive officer took up post in September 2023.
- The chair of trustees took up post in September 2023.
- A new governing body was put in place in September 2023.
- The school is smaller than an average-size primary school.
- The school is part of the Church of England Diocese of Leeds. The school's most recent section 48 inspection was in October 2019.

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.
- The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 spoke to senior leaders, including the executive headteacher and members of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors spoke to a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors spoke to the chief executive officer and the chief education officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, early reading, music and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors evaluated responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey. They spoke with some parents dropping their children off at school. Inspectors also evaluated the responses that staff and pupils made to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

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His Majesty's Inspector

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