

Inspection of Dobcroft Junior School

Pingle Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S7 2LN

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 November 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 15 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending school. Pupils feel safe and happy. They talk positively about the support they receive from adults. One pupil said that, 'teachers help you to overcome your difficulties'. Pupils are confident that any worries that they might have will be dealt with thoughtfully by adults. Inspectors agree.

Pupils behave well. They show good manners and are polite. This is because adults have high expectations of their behaviour. In most cases, teachers deal with any misbehaviour or lack of focus swiftly so that learning is not interrupted. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils are motivated and ambitious. Pupils have a positive, inclusive and respectful approach to all the school community. Bullying is rare. When it does happen, pupils say that it is dealt with effectively. Pupils say that they can go to the 'butterfly room' if they need to talk to someone or get some help.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils, and in turn, pupils have high aspirations; many want to go university. Pupils want to find out how to prepare for their future. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive and supportive of the school. Comments such as 'the fantastic staff go above and beyond'; 'children thrive here' and 'children are safe, happy and get a wealth of opportunities' are typical of those received.

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

Leaders have worked hard with the support of both the mathematics and English hubs to design a well-considered and ambitious curriculum in these subjects. Key knowledge is identified in curriculum plans. Teachers make sure that pupils regularly revisit what they have learned in previous lessons. In mathematics, they use resources designed to recall previous learning and help pupils to remember more mathematics.

Leaders know that some subjects, such as geography and history, need more work. The knowledge and content that pupils should learn in these subjects are not always clearly defined. It is not consistently clear what pupils need to learn by the end of each year. Leaders know this and have started to develop these curriculum plans.

Pupils achieve well and enjoy learning. If a pupil struggles to understand or is in danger of falling behind, teachers identify this and put in the appropriate support. For example, some become part of a 'focus group'. This enables them to get extra help in a timely manner. Leaders know that there is a small group of pupils who are not as resilient as they could be. Leaders are working hard to support these pupils.

Pupils are confident and fluent readers. Teachers plan activities that help pupils to develop their vocabulary. Teachers make sure that pupils who need more support with their reading receive it. Leaders have identified, due to the impact of COVID-

19, that there are now greater numbers of pupils who need extra support to become fluent readers. Leaders recognised that they needed a more robust single, early reading programme. As a result, leaders introduced a new phonics programme and are training all staff in this new approach.

The school's positive values are made clear through the 'Five Bees': be safe, be respectful, be kind, be responsible and be honest. Pupils are respectful, tolerant and kind. They cooperate well with each other in lessons and focus very well in classrooms. Pupils have a strong moral purpose. The pupils demonstrate this through their role as active citizens. For example, sports leaders work with the children from the infant school. The pupils' parliament has supported pupils to understand the rule of law.

Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported, and the curriculum is ambitious for them. The provision has a dual purpose in supporting the pupils who need the most help. In the morning, adults support pupils who have significant gaps in their knowledge in mathematics and English. In the afternoon, pupils with emotional barriers are supported to learn how best to manage their challenges and emotions.

Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is a strength of the school. Pupils talk positively about the support they receive from adults in school. They are confident that should they have any worries, adults will support them.

Leaders are passionate and reflective, and strive for the best for their pupils. They know their school and leadership is strong. Leaders are mindful of workload. For example, they provide teachers with time to undertake developmental activities. Teachers appreciate this. Leaders have built strong relationships with parents. Parents say that communication is effective. Governance is strong. The new chair of the governing body is working with the headteacher to further develop the information that governors receive in meetings.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding team understands local and national risks. Staff know the signs to look out for of potential harm and abuse. All staff are vigilant and know how to report any concerns. There are robust systems in place to keep pupils safe, and prompt action is taken when concerns are raised. The safeguarding and pastoral team works closely to identify the needs of pupils and families who may be vulnerable. Members of this team ensure that pupils and families get the right help quickly. Families appreciate this help. Pupils are taught to recognise risks and how to stay safe. They can articulate these well.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and sequenced in some subjects. Leaders are taking action to rectify this. Leaders must make sure that the key components of knowledge are clearly identified across all subjects. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.
- There is inconsistency in the school's approach to the teaching of early reading. This means that some opportunities for pupils to progress successfully in reading are missed. Leaders must ensure that all staff are provided with training in the school's chosen systematic synthetic phonics programme so that the approach matches both classroom teaching and reading interventions.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

Unique reference number	107035
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10199333
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Shawley
Headteacher	Nicola Sexton
Website	www.dobcroft-jun.sheffield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 December 2006, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and physical education. Here, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils and teachers, and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans in other subjects.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, groups of teachers and members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors. An inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Senior and subject leaders accompanied inspectors on visits to lessons and examined pupils' work and planning documents alongside inspectors.
- Inspectors considered the curriculum for pupils with SEND. Inspectors looked at pupils' support plans and work and talked to a group of pupils with SEND.

- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and the safeguarding team, and reviewed safeguarding records, including the single central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- Inspectors spoke to parents during the inspection and considered the views of 180 parents who responded to Ofsted’s questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff from conversations and took account of the responses to Ofsted’s staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils formally and informally about their day-to-day experiences at the school.

Inspection team

Annali Crawford, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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