



School:	Dalestorth Primary School	Headteacher:	Craig Robertson
Date:	23&24/02/2026	Education Improvement Adviser:	Richard Chapman
Focus:	Quality Assurance Review	Report Number:	RC-1
Participants:	HT, DHT, SENCo, EYFS Leader, Subject leaders for English, Mathematics, Reading, History and Geography and Phonics, Pastoral Staff		
Onsite/Remote:	Onsite		

Main Focus of Meeting

To hold a professional dialogue to:

- Collaborate with senior leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's current provision.
- Assess the robustness of evidence supporting the school's self-evaluation of its provision.
- Ensure the school maintains effective provision for all children, and especially those who are disadvantaged, those with SEND, those who are known to (or previously known to) children's services and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being.

Report on the impact of the school's work and the progress made

Contextual Information

The school was last inspected by OFSTED in November 2022 when it received outcomes of Good. Prior to the Review the headteacher provided a package of documents and a phone call was held to discuss the issues the school faces, the priorities it has and actions being taken. The documentation included the School Improvement Plan, School Self Evaluation, History and Geography subject action plans, progression documentation and a range of other information. The dialogue, and supporting documents, provided contextual information and details of the school's actions. Activity conducted during the review included professional discussions with leaders and a co-opted governor, learning walks, observations, book looks, pupil voice, analysis of monitoring and evaluation activity and scrutiny of data outcomes.

Curriculum implementation and impact

The head teacher and senior leaders have constructed a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all pupils the skills and knowledge they need. It is coherently planned, sequenced and designed so that pupils apply what they know, and it is reviewed regularly to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils. The curriculum prioritises accurate and fluent word reading, spelling, handwriting and mathematics and the continual development of language and vocabulary across the curriculum. As a result, pupils develop foundational knowledge which was evidenced by learning walks, book looks, discussions with leaders and pupil voice.

There is a consistent and sequential approach to the teaching of reading across the school starting in Early Years, where quality texts are available for pupils to share. In Nursery, for example, a book about animals, and those that lay eggs, was shared by a pupil who was clearly not only enjoying the book but who was able to talk about the content with confidence. This is one example of how the school blends the use of phonically matched books that the children read alongside other texts that are used to promote reading for pleasure. This is an approach which is mirrored in Key Stage 1 and into Key Stage 2. Reading displays are evident in all classrooms, which promote the texts that are being studied and key vocabulary is displayed and examined in teaching. For example, the word “tearing” in a reading session about the life of Dick King-Smith was identified by a pupil in the context of “tearing around” and the emphasis on developing vocabulary as a priority in school was clearly evident in the teachers’ response and the resulting conversation. As a result of leaders’ analysis of external outcomes in reading, there has been a development of the existing sessions for reading from the start of the academic year. These developments have continued the focus on fluency but with more sessions to develop inference, deduction and recall along with other aspects of comprehension. This provision has been monitored and evaluated by leaders who are now looking to examine in more detail the impact of it on specific groups across school.

The Little Wandle scheme provides a clear structure to the teaching of phonics, so that children gain phonics knowledge and language comprehension. The Reading and English Leads were able to demonstrate this in a shared observation of Guided Reading across the whole school. It is well staffed so that children work in smaller groups matched to their ability, well structured so that children follow a set teaching sequence and well-resourced including the recent addition of more extended texts. The staff who deliver Little Wandle are supported by leaders and are provided with structured CPD to ensure that there is fidelity to the scheme and a development of their skills. School leaders are fully aware that the outcomes in the Phonics Screening indicate that there are some pupils who have gaps in their knowledge and, as a result, there are a range of interventions that are in place to diminish the difference between these pupils and all other pupils. These include “priority readers”, extra teaching groups, pre-reading opportunities and the use of intervention lists to provide specific targeted support, especially for disadvantaged pupils. For other pupils, for example non-verbal pupils, those with a poor working memory or for those with other specific needs who have not achieved the standard, leaders address the specific SEND barriers that these pupils have through further provision.

There is a similar structured approach to the development of written work and handwriting. The school follows the Pen Pals scheme to develop a legible fluent handwriting style and school developed progression documents for writing and SPAG. Both the use of these schemes and the handwriting scheme are evident in the written work that the children produce across the curriculum. Handwriting development begins with strong foundations in EYFS, where the introduction of Drawing Club was a direct response to the need for children not only to develop their fine motor skills, but also develop a love and enjoyment of the “magic code” of writing. The impact of this is evident not only in the progress in books in EYFS and the pride it generates for pupils in their achievements, but also in Year 1 where a love of writing in the learning of the children was observed. A small sample of monitoring records of writing were seen and a professional dialogue held about the process and the outcomes of them that were shared with staff.

The development of writing across the curriculum is one of the priorities for the school, and the range of work on display, and in books, reflects the developments that have taken place. Children “write like a” geographer, scientist, historian etc through the use of vocabulary banks, sentence stems, the writing framework and a range of other materials. As a result, the writing seen on display and in books contains key technical vocabulary, subject specific vocabulary and a range of styles to broaden pupils’ writing skills. Pupils’ work across the curriculum therefore is of good quality. As one child commented, being able to write well is “so satisfying” when talking about their writing work in school.

In mathematics, the school uses White Rose as its core scheme, however leaders have developed extensions and support to this scheme by using “CLIC”, “Number Sense” and “TT Rockstars” to support the needs and learning of pupils. In addition, the scheme is supplemented with specific personalised resources developed by teachers from a range of sources to progress learning as part of key initiatives such as starters and problem of the week. There is a clear structure to the teaching sequence and a range of adaptations and visuals to support the children from working walls, manipulatives and learning support packs. These include Flashback Five, retrieval activities and “blue” reasoning questions. The books indicate clear adherence to the schools’ marking policy, which provides opportunities for the children to address misconceptions and respond to the marking. The subject leader for mathematics has provided strong support for staff to develop the schools’ approach and provided examples of monitoring including a summary. This work can be developed by examining the impact of teaching and learning and achievement of particular groups so that it provides further evidence of their progress to allow him to develop mathematics further.

The external headline outcomes for mathematics at the end of key Stage 2 have been broadly in line with National Averages for 2 of the last 3 years. As a result of their analysis of the outcomes, leaders are being proactive in taking action to ensure that the provision in mathematics for all children impacts on their outcomes. This reflects their ambition for the children, which in turn is reflected in the current evidence of the learning of children in books. This work is rooted in the schools’ emphasis on strong foundations, where developments in the Early Years Mathematics curriculum has impacted on achievement in Mathematics i.e. the children currently in Year 1 progressed from 27% at expected on entry to EYFS to 76% when exiting EYFS. Mathematics across the Foundation Stage is a key priority for the school in its SIP and, in order to develop this work further in Mathematics across the school, the subject leader is sourcing further support from the East Midlands Maths Hub. This is reflective of leaders constant sourcing of CPD to improve teaching and learning.

In the development of the wider curriculum there is a drive to use visits, workshops, artefacts and experiences so that the children use first hand experiences to inspire and support their learning. From book looks, and discussion with a small sample of subject leaders and children, it is evident that the subject matter in a range of subjects that pupils are taught is presented clearly, and in a range of styles to ensure that the needs of all pupils is considered. The History and Geography leaders demonstrated the approach that the school has to systematically check, and assess, pupils’ understanding in their subjects and referred to other subject areas which reflects a consistency of approach e.g. Science, English and Mathematics. The strategies within History and Geography included discussion and pupil voice, starters, exit tickets, weekly retrieval practice, quizzes and the use of an end of unit “showcase” for pupils to present their work and respond to questions about what they have learnt. The key knowledge that pupils are to learn is explicit within the key documentation and is clearly designed to help pupils to remember the content they have been taught in order to integrate new knowledge in the longer term. In pupil voice activities, with both Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils, they not only explained their learning using appropriate subject specific language but they demonstrated that they had learnt and remembered key content and knowledge from previous learning. This demonstrates the impact of the strategies that are used by teachers and leaders in school. The schools’ leaders provide effective support through CPD and collaborative activity for staff so that teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. The outcome of this is that children’s learning is assessed and recorded by staff, in line with the schools’ ongoing assessment cycle, and reported to parents and carers. The subject leaders are conscious of the need to ensure that the outcomes for pupils are moderated and accurate, and they are mindful of the need to monitor and evaluate carefully the outcomes of different groups such as SEND pupils in their subjects. The school is using its own systems and wider collaborative work to facilitate this.

Impact of Strategic Leadership

The leadership structure at Dalestorth is a clearly established model with strong, shared values, policies and practice. The head teacher and senior leaders have a clear and strategic approach to improvement. They use a range of evidence and strategies such as research, internal and external monitoring and evaluation activities, data from sources including the IDSR, the needs of the community, local and national priorities and the most significant barriers facing pupils to set the schools priorities. The use of research is clearly evident in much of the documentation that was shared or on the schools' website. The impact of this analysis provides a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality education to all pupils over the shorter and longer period through strong policies and practice. The emphasis that is placed on research by senior leaders focuses on improving teachers' subject, pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge so that the teaching of the curriculum and the appropriate use of assessment is continually developed for the benefit of the pupils and staff. There is an extensive programme of professional development to improve and maintain the practice and deepen the subject knowledge of staff over time. This is supported by regular newsletters to staff, which include links to articles, podcasts and research articles, as well as information for parents and carers about the initiatives and priorities that the school has. The impact of this is that all staff have the opportunity to develop and improve and teaching and learning is continually developing for the benefit of the pupils.

The school's improvement planning includes the use of action milestones, which are RAG rated. These are currently used to inform the school's self-evaluation, leading to the use of a combined SIP and SEF document. In a discussion about the evaluations of the head teacher and senior leaders there is a clear understanding of where the school sits using the current OFSTED toolkit criteria. The school evaluates itself to be at the expected standard for Curriculum and Teaching, Achievement, Attendance and Behaviour, Personal Development and Well-being and Early Years with Inclusion being judged as strong. Leaders conclude that the requirements for Safeguarding are met. They have a good knowledge of the criteria in the toolkit, the evidence for their evaluations and judgements and they articulate the of areas of development in each area.

Within the separate priority plans there is opportunity for leaders to evaluate the impact of the actions that have been taken in each priority. In some priorities, within the section titled "what has been the impact been over time on standards", there is a need for leaders to consider more precision to the evaluative impact statements that are made so that they relate to specific groups of children, and especially those who are disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being. These statements in turn could then be integrated into the school self-evaluation as evidence statements so that they are more time relevant and provide a key focus on the different sub groups in school.

In developing the vision, culture and ethos of the head teacher and senior leaders have ensured that there are opportunities for pupils to become confident, resilient and independent so that they develop strength of character. This is achieved through assemblies, class work, visits by people and organisations and field trips and educational visits. Relationships are strong between members of the community, which is evident in the calm and purposeful way in which they and the adults conduct themselves in and around school. This is articulated in the Busy Bee Values; Be You, Be a Friend, Be Brave, Be Honest and Be Kind which have been linked into the work that has been developed on British Values and Protected Characteristics this year. They are clearly displayed and evident in the Assembly Floor Book and are known and recalled readily by pupils. As one child said in response to being asked whether everyone at the school was kind, "of course they are, why wouldn't they be" and another added "you always have to remember the buzzy bees". In a discussion about different faiths and some of the topic work, another said that the best thing about school for them was learning about different people by saying that he "enjoyed RE and learning about Jewish people and Christians".

Provision for SEND is developed by the schools' senior leaders and the SENCo, who has dedicated time to lead and manage provision for pupils. The SEN list has grown over recent years and this has impacted on how the SENCo manages the caseload and the SEN list. There is clear evidence of the graduated response starting from the quality first teaching of the staff, and their responsibilities, through to a specific list of interventions and support programmes that are available to staff. The use of Assess, Plan, Do Review provides the structure for a surgery model of support and the timely involvement of the SENCo for observations and further referral to Springboard. There is clear evidence of, and rationale for, the provision mapping for children with differentiated documentation reflecting the differing levels of need and expectation for each child. There is a clear cycle of termly reviews in place and one-page profiles are shared. The SENCo has support from the Family SENCo and there is a clear approach to assessment for the children on the SEN list to enter and exit provision or interventions. The use of B-Squared provides an ongoing assessment tool to demonstrate the steps of progress that are being made by the children who are not either working towards their chronological year group expectations or the year below. There is provision across the school to support these children either in class, within small learning groups or within the HIVE provision that the school has developed.

The SENCo provides support for the parents and carers of pupils with SEND linked to the provision and strategy for Pupil Premium. Workshops are well attended by parents and carers and external speakers are invited to present information and approaches that can be used. These workshops are also an opportunity for parents and carers to share information with each other, facilitated by the SENCo, head teacher and pastoral staff. The SENCo also meets with the link governor for SEND to discuss the impact of the work that has been done and the SEND cohort, and information for the wider governing body is shared through the head teacher termly report. The evidence that was shared by specific staff indicates that SEND is included within plans and the curriculum in those areas as well as in assessment. The head teacher and senior leaders have taken steps to ensure that the school has fully embraced the updated Restrictive Physical Intervention guidance through in-service training and the SENCo shared both the school's approach in this area and the Accessibility Plan.

The head teacher and senior leaders regularly evaluate the outcomes for SEND pupils and the barriers that they face. They analyse both internal and external data and interrogate other data, such as attendance information. Current data within the IDSR shows that the attendance of SEND pupils is 94.6%, against the National average of 92.4%. The head teacher and senior leaders also track the live situation through the monitoring of shorter time period data in order to respond to any issues that may arise. This is supported by their knowledge of the pupils and the early intervention approach that is taken.

In a discussion regarding the changing social and economic factors of the area around the school, the head teacher reported that there has been an increase in the number of pupils who have English as an Additional Language. This has led to the schools' leadership to focus on support for these pupils and access support from the Diversity and Inclusion Team. The schools' website reflects this work and the heading endorses the fact that "Everyone's Welcome at Dalestorth". The information is accessible, and the strategic direction of the school in this area is demonstrated in the information that is shared, the current priority within the school's improvement planning and the displays around the school. As a result of this work across the whole school, pupils readily and regularly engage with views, beliefs and opinions that are different from their own and they evidence indicates that they show respect for the different protected characteristics. The progress and achievement of the EAL group specifically is regularly assessed in line with the school's policies and practices using the Babcock assessment descriptors. This enables leaders to regularly assess the impact of their work and the progress of the pupils. The outcomes for this group of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 was above the national averages in 2025 in Combined Reading, Writing and Mathematics.

The head teacher and senior leaders also have an established system to support those children in receipt of pupil premium. The school is compliant with its statutory responsibilities to publish the strategy on the website. There is a range of support available for this group of pupils including a Sports mentor and ELSA, which is under constant review by the head teacher and pastoral staff using the Low-level Pathway and the needs of the pupils within it. This approach provides the school with the opportunity to escalate or de-escalate support for pupils in response to their barriers and needs and the outcomes of the provision are monitored. The focus on equity for groups in the school means that leaders blend the strategy for pupil premium pupils with their approach to support other pupils. There is specific support, through additional teaching groups and wrap around care, alongside dedicated programmes based on research by the EEF and Sutton Trust which are detailed in the schools' strategy indicating the multiple needs of some pupils. There is also support for parents through the use of the Solihull Parenting Course alongside the workshop for parents and carers of SEND pupils.

As in other areas the head teacher and senior leaders monitor and evaluate the pupil premium strategy in terms of achievement, attendance, engagement and personal development. The head teacher reports that the externally assessed achievement of this group of pupils was lower than the national picture in the last academic year. Similarly to the attendance of SEND pupils, the overall attendance was above the National figure on the IDSR however the head teacher and senior leaders acknowledge the need to continue to track attendance through the monitoring of shorter time period data. As a result of their analysis of outcomes, leaders are taking steps to address any gaps in foundational knowledge they identify for groups within the whole pupil premium group and consider any correlation of factors to the group's achievement.

Overall attendance is regularly monitored for all pupils across school, and the detail and knowledge of the head teacher and the pastoral staff about individual pupils and families provides context and information about the issues that are being faced by families. The school operates a first day call procedure as well as seeking medical proof documentation for absence. They support families by adaptations and personalised approaches such as collecting children from home, Biscuit Club, home visits for specific families and meetings to discuss planned interventions to address attendance. There is a clear system of communication using both personalised and standardised letters which are sent out using a set criterion. The outcome of this approach is that the school's overall attendance for all pupils is 95.6% which is above both local and national averages. The head teacher and senior leaders are drilling down on the figures in their work to interrogate the data for any correlation between the attendance and achievement of specific groups.

In a short discussion with a co-opted governor during the review, information was shared about the structure of the governing body and its sub committees. The governor shared an outline of the work of the governing body including the areas within which specific nominated governors work, the policy reviews, the challenge given to the head teacher and the monitoring that is done of achievement, behaviour and attendance. Through the discussion with the school's leadership, dialogue with the governor and examples of the head teacher report there is evidence to support the fact that there are systems in place to ensure that resources are managed well and that leaders are held to account for the quality of education.

Evaluative Summary

Dalestorth Primary School is a school with its own distinctive character and ethos. There is a consistent and rigorous approach to the delivery of teaching and learning across the curriculum and senior leaders and staff work together to provide opportunities for the children to be the best they can be. It is clearly based in the principles of a Relational school. The structures and schemes of work that have been developed by all leaders are consistently implemented, regularly monitored and continually developed. The school works collaboratively with others, in both formal and informal

ways, and the emphasis that is placed on continuous CPD means that the school is continually evolving and developing. The school's approach to behaviour is restorative and there is evidence of the pupils' understanding of this in their comments and conduct around the school.

The knowledge of the community and the barriers that they face by Head Teacher and Senior Leaders is extremely detailed, considerate and supportive and demonstrates a full understanding of their needs. Leaders adapt and change to meet these needs. They work in partnership with children and families to provide support with expectation. The result is an atmosphere and culture of mutual respect, understanding of each other and an approach to delivering learning in a calm purposeful manner.

There are clear structures for monitoring and evaluation and the judgements that are made about the school's overall performance provide foci for future improvement. The head teacher and senior leaders know this in great detail and it is cascaded to staff in an appropriate manner taking into consideration the work load and the differing stages of teaching staff in their professional lives. Leaders readily take on the challenge of examining the needs of pupils and understand how evidence about more individual groups of pupils needs to be gathered so that any points of need and development can be met.

Dalestorth Primary School is a school that its community and pupils are proud of. The children say that the best things about their school are the chance to meet and play with friends, the teachers and the learning which they describe as being fun. One parent/carer summed it up in two words "it's great".

Focus of XXX Term 20XX support

Action	Who
Develop the precision of the schools monitoring and evaluation so that it focuses more specifically on the outcomes in learning of the different sub groups within the school	HT & Senior & Subject Leaders
Develop the evidence based within the school's self-evaluation so that it references more recent activity reflective of the current practice in school	HT & Senior Leaders
Provide concise impact statements within the school's SIP priorities so that they are evaluative and focus on the impact of the actions that have been taken on learners and outcomes.	HT & Senior Leaders