

Discovery Academy

Porlock Avenue, Hattersley, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 3LE

Inspection dates

11–12 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

- Leaders and governors have established an ambitious culture and a positive, caring ethos throughout the school.
- Since the school opened in September 2016, leaders and governors have worked effectively to ensure that the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes are good.
- Pupils enjoy school and engage well in their learning. They show respectful and caring attitudes.
- Teachers provide activities that interest and challenge pupils. This develops their learning well.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and ensures that pupils' skills and understanding are developed well in a range of subjects.
- Pupils' progress is good; it is stronger in reading and mathematics than in writing.
- At times, teachers' expectations for pupils' handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar are not high enough.
- Pupils are proud of their school. At times, this pride is not reflected in the presentation of their work.
- Trustees, governors and senior leaders work effectively to ensure that the school continues to improve.
- Subject leadership is developing. Some leaders do not play a full part in promoting improvement in their subject.
- Children in early years benefit from good teaching and a stimulating learning environment. They make good progress and are well prepared for the transfer to Year 1.
- Pupils' speaking skills are usually developed well. Occasionally, teaching does not effectively promote pupils' understanding of new vocabulary.
- Safeguarding has a high priority in school. Leaders ensure that children are well protected. Staff, pupils, parents and carers agree that the school keeps them safe.
- Parents speak highly of the school and praise the good level of communication with staff and leaders.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve leadership and management, by:
 - developing the role of subject leaders so that they play a greater part in promoting improvement in their subjects
 - ensuring that the school's policy for handwriting and presentation is consistently applied.
- Further improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in writing, by:
 - ensuring consistently high expectations for pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - further developing and extending pupils' understanding of new vocabulary.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the school opened, trustees, leaders and governors have worked well to establish a happy, caring school where pupils are taught effectively and make good progress. Leaders have carefully managed the expansion in pupil numbers and staffing. They have made sure that the quality of provision is strong and improving, and the school's positive culture is embedded in the daily life of the school.
- The associate principal, in charge of the day-to-day running of the school, leads by example. Along with the principal she establishes high expectations for the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders, staff and governors share a passion to ensure that the school provides the best education possible for pupils.
- The quality of teaching is effectively monitored, and areas of development identified and addressed. Recent staff training, for example in the teaching of mathematics, has led to improvement to the quality of teaching. Leaders have not ensured that staff consistently implement the school's policy on presentation and handwriting.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Their careful monitoring of all aspects of the school's work ensures that they swiftly identify any areas to improve. Action plans identify key priorities and are regularly reviewed to make sure that strategies to bring about improvement are effective.
- Subject leadership is becoming more established as the school expands. Leadership of subjects is being passed from the associate headteacher to other staff members. Leadership of some subjects is strong, such as English and mathematics. For other subjects, such as music and art, is at an early stage of development. This means that some leaders do not play a full part in bringing about improvement in their subject areas.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum which is broad and balanced and provides activities which interest and engage pupils in their learning. For example, in science Year 2 pupils enjoyed investigating how to drop an egg without it breaking, by making parachutes. The curriculum is enriched by after-school and lunchtime activities such as guitar, dancing and reading clubs.
- Pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of fundamental British values are developed well. Pupils show an understanding of other faiths and cultures and a respect for others. They know the importance of following school and class rules. Pupils show care and consideration for others and engage in activities to raise funds for charity.
- Leaders make effective use of the funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Funding is used to ensure that resources and staffing are used effectively to meet pupils' individual needs. As a result, pupils make good progress.

- Similarly, the funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. Barriers to learning are identified. In this small school where staff know pupils' needs well, effective support is put in place to ensure that barriers are overcome.
- The primary sports funding is used successfully to upskill staff and provide coaching support to develop pupils' skills. For example, staff and pupils have been supported by dance and gym coaches. After-school activities have been introduced, such as dodgeball, multi-skills, athletics and dance. As a result, pupils' physical skills and enjoyment of exercise have improved.

Governance of the school

- Since the school opened there have been changes to the local governing board, including a change of chair. The local governing board brings a range of expertise to the school. Minutes of their meetings show a strong level of challenge and support to leaders.
- Governors share senior leaders' high expectations and passion for improvement. They have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They are regular visitors to the school. Their visits are focused on particular aspects of provision and ensure that governors are well informed about the quality of the school's work.
- Trustees provide strategic oversight of the school. They work closely with the local governing board to ensure that leaders are held to account.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders place a high priority on ensuring that pupils are safe. Leaders and staff are knowledgeable and well trained in protecting pupils from risk of harm. This includes aspects such as child sexual exploitation and the risk of terrorism and radicalisation.
- Staff are vigilant to identify any signs that pupils may be at risk. They are familiar with the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a pupil.
- Leaders ensure that the premises are safe and secure. The identity of all visitors to the premise is checked. Thorough checks are carried out on individuals applying to work at the school.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have a good understanding of how to protect their own safety. Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Parents, pupils and staff agree that the school keeps pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have a good knowledge of pupils' skills and capabilities. They use this information successfully to provide activities that are interesting and develop learning effectively.

- Phonics is taught successfully. Activities are carefully tailored to pupils' needs and capture their interest. For example, pupils enjoyed identifying letter sounds by 'going for a swim' to identify letters which were placed on a make-believe sea scene.
- Teaching of reading is good. Pupils learn to apply their phonic knowledge to their reading, as they sound out unfamiliar words. Teachers promote a love of reading, through encouraging pupils to understand and appreciate stories. For example, pupils in Year 1 enjoyed activities relating a story about a bear hunt and were keen to recount the story to staff and each other.
- Staff question pupils well to challenge their thinking. For example, Year 2 pupils were encouraged to think of the most efficient way of solving a mathematical problem involving money. At times, staff do not make the most of chances to extend pupils' understanding of new vocabulary.
- Recent training has improved teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics. Teaching effectively deepens pupils understanding of number, shape and space. Teaching challenges pupils to apply their skills to solve problems. Older pupils are learning to develop reasoning skills in explaining how they know an answer to be true.
- Teaching ensures that pupils learn to write for a range of purposes. Pupils enjoy, for example, writing instructions for making ice cream, and writing their own versions of favourite stories.
- Although progress in writing is good, at times staff do not have high enough expectations of pupils' handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar. At times, errors are not corrected and so persist in pupils' writing. The legibility of writing and accuracy of letter formation also varies.
- Staff establish very positive relationships with pupils. This helps to build pupils' confidence and contributes to their positive attitudes to learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy school. They thrive in the warm and caring environment provided. Pupils who spoke to the inspector were enthusiastic about their school and said that they enjoyed learning.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They engage happily with activities and know the importance of working hard. They are familiar with the school's values of discovering, achieving, inspiring, caring and improving.
- Leaders work well to develop pupils' emotional well-being. Pupils know that they can speak to staff if they have concerns or can tell the 'worry monster' by recording their concerns and posting in a box, which is then followed up by staff.
- Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. They show concern and respect for the views of others. For example, Year 1 pupils showed an awareness that looking at artwork may make people feel differently because 'people are different, and people might have different feelings'.

- Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They know what to do if there is a fire alarm and understand that school rules keep them safe. Pupils report that there is no bullying in school, 'because we all look out for each other and care'.
- Although pupils show a pride in their school, this pride is at times not reflected in the presentation of their work in books.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They listen closely to instructions and cooperate happily with other pupils to share ideas.
- The school is an orderly environment. Pupils move sensibly in and out of classrooms, and little time is wasted in lessons.
- Pupils are familiar with school rules and know their importance. They say that pupils behave well in school, and any occasional misbehaviour is dealt with by staff. School records show that occasional incidents of unacceptable behaviour are addressed swiftly and appropriately.
- Attendance is above average and reflects pupils' enjoyment of school. Leaders encourage good attendance through close communication with parents and an established system to reward good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- As a result of effective teaching, current pupils make good progress across a range of subjects. The school has no published national data for the end-of-key-stage results, as the current Year 2 are the school's first pupils to take national tests.
- Work in pupils' books and the school's own information indicate that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and in other subjects such as science, history and geography. Progress is strongest in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' attainment in phonics in 2018 was above national averages. Pupils make good progress in their phonic knowledge from their starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND make good progress as teaching is closely matched to their needs.
- Pupils show enthusiasm for reading. Those who read to the inspector showed a good understanding of their books. The most able pupils could talk about their favourite authors and could describe the different characters in their books.
- Pupils engage well in mathematical activities. They show skills in applying their mathematical knowledge. For example, Year 2 pupils showed confidence in using their understanding of coin value to solve problems.
- Pupils show good progress in learning to write for different purposes. However, progress in handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar is not as strong.

- Pupils show interest and enthusiasm for other subjects. They enjoy carrying out investigations in science. Year 1 pupils were keen to find out facts about an artist they are learning about.

Early years provision

Good

- Children usually enter school with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. Teachers quickly assess children's capabilities and provide activities which meet their needs and promote learning effectively. As a result, children make good progress. An average proportion of children reached a good level of development in 2018. School evidence indicates that a similar proportion will attain this level this year.
- Children thrive in the inviting environment provided. They show a good level of independence and concentration as they engage in the broad range of activities and resources provided. They confidently choose their own activities.
- Teaching is good. Staff make effective use of their knowledge of children's interests and capabilities. They plan activities which capture children's enthusiasm. Children engage well in the activities provided. As part of a theme about pirates, Reception class children enjoyed designing and building pirate ships in the outdoor area, and writing 'wanted' posters.
- In Nursery and Reception classes, children show a keen interest in words and letter sounds. Nursery children showed delight as they found 'tricky words' hidden in the sand play area and confidently read them. Reception children happily searched for words displayed on 'treasure chests' in the outdoor area and matched them to their own lists of words.
- Staff question children well to make them think and extend their learning. Nursery children drawing sea creatures were questioned effectively to encourage them to explain what they were doing and why.
- Leaders have a good awareness of the strengths and weakness of early years. They ensure that children's progress is closely tracked, and support is put in place to make sure that children who are lagging behind catch up. This ensures that children make good progress from typically low starting points. They are well prepared for the transfer to Year 1.
- Staff establish a positive partnership with parents. Parents commented on the effective communication with staff and how they feel supported to develop their children's learning at home. Parents contribute to assessments of their children's learning through discussion with staff and activities such as 'discovery at home' cards.
- Children behave extremely well. They are secure in their surroundings and are familiar with the class routines. Children have positive relationships with each other and cooperate well in, for example, imaginative play.
- Children learn to keep themselves safe. They use equipment safely. For example, children were encouraged to consider safety issues as they built their pirate ships outdoors using different materials.

School details

Unique reference number	140428
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10087787

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	100
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Nicky Wise
Associate Principal	Bev Oldham
Telephone number	0161 3685962
Website	http://discoveryacademyhyde.org/
Email address	info@discoveryacademyhyde.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. It opened in September 2016 with a small cohort of early years children. School numbers increase each year as a new cohort of children join school in early years. The school currently has pupils in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.
- The school was opened under Carillion Academies Trust. In January 2018 this transferred to Victorious Academies Trust.

- Academy trustees have overall responsibility for governance. They delegate day-to-day responsibilities around leadership, standards, teaching, and pupils' behaviour and attendance to the local governing board. Following the recent departure of the chair of the local governing board, there is currently a temporary chair. A new permanent chair has been appointed for September 2019.
- The school is led by an executive principal and associate principal. The associate principal is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school.
- The school operates a breakfast and after-school club for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning throughout the school. Some observations were carried out jointly with the associate principal. In addition, the inspector scrutinised pupils' workbooks and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the chair of the local governing board and three other governors, a trustee, the principal and associate principal and other school leaders.
- The inspector looked at a range of information produced by the school, including information on pupils' progress and attainment, behaviour and attendance, procedures for safeguarding and the school's own evaluation of its work. Reports to the local governing board, minutes of their meetings and the school's plans for further improvement were reviewed.
- The inspector considered the 18 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the views of 16 parents who communicated via text message to Ofsted.
- The inspector also took account of the 12 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire to consider.

Inspection team

Elaine White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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