

# DSL V E-ACT Academy

Southbrook Estate, Hawke Road, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 4LJ

## Inspection dates

1–2 February 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Senior leaders have taken robust and effective action to resolve the concerns that inspectors raised at the last inspection.
- Teaching is good. In both primary and secondary provisions, teachers set activities that meet pupils' individual needs, and enable them to make good progress in their learning.
- Pupils conduct themselves well, both in lessons and around the school site. They have positive attitudes to learning.
- Leaders who are responsible for safeguarding ensure that pupils are safe, and that those who are potentially vulnerable receive appropriate support.
- Children in the early years make good progress in their learning due to the effective support that they receive from their teachers.
- Students in the sixth form achieve well due to the appropriateness of the courses that they study, and the close support that they receive from their teachers and the head of sixth form.
- Senior leaders regularly check the quality of teaching. Subject leaders are not yet fully effective in helping them to do so.
- The systems for managing teachers' performance are now much more robust, and provide teachers with effective training to develop their practice further.
- Members of the raising achievement board have a comprehensive understanding of the quality of the school's provision. They provide effective support and challenge to the senior leaders.
- The academy trust offers the school effective support, particularly through enabling the school to work with other schools, both within the trust and locally.
- Historically, attendance has been below average. However, the attendance of those pupils who have previously found it difficult to attend school regularly is rapidly increasing because of the close support they receive. As a result, overall attendance is improving towards national levels.
- The achievement of pupils who left Year 11 in 2016 was below average. However, the outcomes of current pupils in the primary and secondary provisions are good. Pupils of all abilities, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve well.

## **Full report**

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Embed further the improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, to ensure that all teaching is as good as the best, so that increased proportions of pupils from each year group make more than the progress expected of them in their learning.
- Continue to develop the skills of subject leaders in the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, to enable them to drive the improvements in this aspect of the school's provision.
- Build upon the improvements in pupils' attendance, to ensure that the attendance of all groups of pupils is above the overall national average.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- In the short time he has been at the school, the principal has been relentless in his drive to improve standards. He has worked closely with his capable senior leaders to raise the expectations placed on both staff and pupils in relation to the quality of teaching, pupils' behaviour and their achievement. There is now an expectation across both primary and secondary provisions that pupils of all abilities should make good progress in their learning.
- Senior leaders closely monitor the quality of teaching through regularly visiting lessons. Because of this, they have a precise understanding of the quality of teaching at the school. Where they identify classroom practice that does not enable pupils to make good progress, they ensure that the teacher receives appropriate support and training. Until recently, the contribution of subject leaders to raising standards has been limited, but senior leaders have now begun to develop their effectiveness in this respect.
- The leadership of achievement is good. Senior leaders closely monitor pupils' progress. Through this, they are able to identify where pupils may require further support. For example, they provide further support to those pupils whom leaders identify as having fallen behind in their communication skills, including reading.
- Senior leaders regularly review their use of additional government funding, including pupil premium funding and Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium, to support eligible pupils. They closely monitor the impact of the strategies that they use through this funding and make any necessary adjustments. As a result, the pupils who receive this support are now able to catch up quickly where previously they have fallen behind.
- Senior leaders use the physical education and sports premium effectively. They provide training for teachers, offer sport-related clubs to pupils, and provide pupils with opportunities to engage in inter-school sporting fixtures. The school's use of this premium enables the teachers to secure pupils' understanding of the importance of leading healthy lifestyles.
- The leader who has responsibility for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities uses the additional funding well to support those pupils in their learning. He has ensured that all adults who work with these pupils receive appropriate training.
- Leaders have improved the systems by which teachers ensure that pupils behave well. They regularly check that teachers implement the school's behaviour policy consistently. School records show that incidents of poor behaviour have significantly declined since the last inspection. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour has improved at the school.
- The systems by which senior leaders manage teachers' performance are now robust. Teachers' performance targets focus strongly on the school's improvement priorities, including pupils' outcomes. Senior leaders are prompt in identifying where teachers' performance does not meet their targets, especially in relation to securing good progress for pupils. Where this is the case, senior leaders provide teachers with comprehensive and effective support to improve their classroom practice quickly.
- Teachers have wide-ranging opportunities to receive training to develop their own

classroom practice. They are able to work with each other to share best practice, and are able to receive training from other schools within the trust. Teachers who spoke with inspectors were appreciative of the training that they receive.

- The broad and balanced curriculum in both the primary and secondary provisions provides pupils with wide-ranging opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. At key stage 4, for example, pupils are able to choose from a wide range of academic and work-related subjects, depending upon their interests and their ability. Extra-curricular activities, including educational visits to the theatre and trips abroad, widen pupils' experiences beyond both the classroom and the local community.
- Pupils receive effective opportunities to secure their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through assemblies and the curriculum, including the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme, pupils are able to consider different cultures, beliefs and values. For example, they have recently considered the concept of extremism, studying in the process what constitutes extremist views. Senior leaders have ensured that pupils learn about fundamental British values through their curriculum lessons. The pupils in Years 10 and 11, for example, who met with an inspector, demonstrated a secure understanding of the need to respect people for their differences, including those who are of a different sexual orientation.
- The multi-academy trust has provided leaders and teachers with effective opportunities to improve the school's provision. For example, the trust has enabled senior leaders and teachers to work with other schools, both within the trust and locally, to improve the quality of teaching, and to ensure that their assessment of pupils' achievement is accurate. Because of this, senior leaders are secure in their judgement of the quality of the school's provision for its pupils.

### **Governance of the school**

- Members of the raising achievement board (RAB) have a comprehensive understanding of the quality of the school's provision, including the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They meet regularly to consider the quality of the school's provision, reviewing the quality of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' achievement. Members of the RAB provide senior leaders with appropriate challenge and support to ensure that the necessary improvements to the school's provision take place.
- Members of the RAB undertake their own visits to the school to check that the information that senior leaders provide them with is accurate. In so doing, they undertake visits to lessons, where they speak with pupils. The chair of the RAB meets with the principal on a weekly basis to check on the quality of the school's provision.
- Members of the RAB work closely with the leaders who are responsible for safeguarding, to check that the school's procedures for keeping pupils safe are effective. The members of the RAB fully understand their responsibilities regarding keeping pupils safe.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The leaders who have a responsibility for safeguarding work closely together to ensure that pupils about whom they have concerns receive the support they need. Where it is appropriate, leaders work with parents and a range of local agencies to provide the

necessary support. Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that pupils receive the right kind of support. Furthermore, leaders are sensitive to issues in the local area that may affect pupils at the school. They ensure that both pupils and staff receive necessary information regarding any such issues.

- All staff receive regular training relating to safeguarding. Such training includes the procedures staff should take where they may have a concern about a child's welfare, and other pertinent safeguarding issues. Because of this regular training on safeguarding, staff have a clear understanding of the different types of abuse, and the signs to look for in their pupils.
- Those pupils who met with inspectors, and the very large majority of those pupils who responded to the online questionnaire, said that they feel safe at the school. They said that they have someone they can go and see if they have a concern, confident that adults will listen to them and take appropriate action.
- Most parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their child is safe at the school.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching and learning is good because, in both primary and secondary provisions, teachers set activities that meet pupils' individual needs. These activities enable pupils to engage with, and make good progress in, their learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, and are able to use this well to help pupils learn effectively. Teachers ask questions effectively to explore pupils' understanding, and provide pupils with support where it is necessary.
- There are strong relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils, that enable pupils to learn well. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils worked well together, discussing where they should put a bracket in a mathematical calculation. This discussion enabled pupils to learn effectively from each other. In a Year 9 music lesson, pupils worked well in groups to perform a musical piece together.
- Teachers plan activities well to meet the needs of pupils of different levels of ability, including the most able. Those books that inspectors looked at demonstrated that, across a wide range of subjects, the most able complete activities that enable them to develop their understanding fully. In a Year 10 English lesson, the most able pupils took part in a discussion about issues of life and death in Shakespeare's play, 'Romeo and Juliet'. These pupils engaged well in this task, thinking deeply about these complex issues.
- Pupils receive regular opportunities to develop their communication skills, including in reading. Leaders have ensured that teachers promote a culture of enjoyment of reading. In the primary provision, all pupils receive guided reading sessions, to ensure that they are secure in their reading. Those pupils in the primary and secondary provisions that read to inspectors were able to read well, and demonstrated a secure understanding of the text they had read.
- Teachers work well with other adults to provide effective support to pupils, in particular those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Because of the support the adults provide, these pupils are able to make good progress in securing their

knowledge, skills and understanding.

- In the primary provision, pupils receive effective opportunities to develop their understanding of phonics.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Across both the primary and secondary provisions, pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They engage well with the tasks that teachers set them in lessons.
- Through the assemblies and their PSHE curriculum, pupils in both the primary and secondary provision receive wide-ranging opportunities to learn how to be safe. All pupils, for example, have recently had an assembly on keeping themselves safe online. Older pupils have also received information about crime from the local police.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying, including verbal, physical and cyber bullying. The very large majority of the pupils who completed the questionnaire, or who met the inspectors in person, said that bullying at the school is rare. They said that where it does occur, they are able to talk to staff, who take prompt and effective action. The school records confirm this to be the case. The large majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire agreed that the school deals effectively with bullying, where it occurs.
- The school effectively monitors the attendance, behaviour and progress of those pupils in the primary provision who receive their education elsewhere. The school communicates regularly with the organisations that provide the education off-site, and receives regular reports regarding the pupils' welfare and progress.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school site, between lessons and during social time.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. They engage well with their learning.
- Leaders' and teachers' consistent implementation of the behaviour policy, and the focus on rewarding good behaviour, have seen a marked decline in incidents of poor behaviour. Pupils say that behaviour has improved greatly since the last inspection.
- The proportion of pupils who are excluded from school, including those who are excluded more than once, has reduced and is now below national levels.
- The proportion of pupils who are absent from school, including those who are regularly absent, has reduced this academic year. Due to the close support that leaders provide to those pupils who find it difficult to attend the school, overall attendance is now close to national levels, for all pupils and disadvantaged pupils. However, more needs to be done to ensure that the attendance of all groups of pupils remains consistently at least in line with the overall national average.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes are good due to the effective action that senior leaders have taken to improve the quality of teaching across the school. This improvement has ensured that, across a wide variety of subjects in most years, current pupils from different starting points are making good progress in their learning.
- Outcomes in 2016 at key stage 4 were below national levels. The proportion of pupils in the current Year 11 who are making at least the progress they should across the full range of subjects, including in English and mathematics, is much higher. This is due to the effective action that senior leaders have taken since the last inspection to improve the quality of teaching, and to monitor closely the progress that these pupils make.
- Pupils' progress in key stage 3 is much improved. From their different starting points, current pupils make strong progress across a range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science. This is due to the improvement in the quality of teaching and the support that these pupils receive from their teachers.
- Across a range of subjects in both the primary and secondary provision, higher proportions of the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, now make the progress that they should in their learning. This is because teachers set these pupils suitably challenging work to secure their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- The school's performance information, and the work seen in books, indicate that the difference between the progress that the disadvantaged pupils make and that made by other pupils nationally is diminishing. This is the case in both the primary and secondary provisions. This is due to the close support these pupils receive from their teachers, who cater for their individual needs, and the school's effective use of the pupil premium.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress in their learning. This reflects the effective support that they receive in lessons, particularly from the adults who are present in lessons to support them.
- The proportion of the pupils in Year 6, including those who are disadvantaged, who are currently working at the level expected of them in reading is in line with those levels seen nationally in 2016. This is due to the close work that teachers have completed with pupils to ensure that they are secure in their reading skills. The proportion of pupils currently working at the level expected of them in most other year groups in key stages 1 and 2 is similar to that found in Year 6.
- Attainment in mathematics at key stage 2 for current Year 6 pupils is higher than that seen previously. The proportion of pupils in key stage 2, particularly in Years 5 and 6, who are currently working at age-related expectations or above is in line with the national average. This improvement is due to the strong focus that teachers in the primary provision have given to developing pupils' mathematical skills.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the national standard in phonics at the end of Year 1 in 2016 was in line with the national average. The school's performance information indicates that the proportion of current pupils in Year 1 whom teachers

expect to achieve the national standard will be of a similar level.

- The school prepares pupils well for their next steps after GCSE. Pupils from Year 8 receive impartial careers advice and guidance to this effect. The proportion of Year 11 pupils who left the school in 2016 and progressed successfully into a sustained place in education, training or employment was above average.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Achievement in the early years is good. From starting points that are below those typical for their age, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development by the end of Reception is in line with the national average. As a result, children are well prepared when they enter Year 1.
- Leadership of the early years is good. In the short time that she has been in post, the leader has developed a comprehensive oversight of the quality of the provision. She has put into place effective training for the staff in those areas where the leader has identified that further improvement is necessary.
- The early years staff work closely with the parents of children who enter Nursery. For those children who enter the early years provision in Reception, staff work closely with the nurseries from which these children have come. This close communication with parents and other nurseries ensures that the early years staff have a clear understanding of children's needs before they arrive in the provision.
- The leader of the early years closely checks on the progress that children make. Where she identifies gaps in children's learning, she ensures that these children receive appropriate support. Because of this, these children are able to catch up quickly, and are prepared for Year 1.
- The early years setting provides effective opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning. Parents are able to take part in regular family workshops, where they are able to work on projects alongside their child, and learn how best to support them in their learning.
- Relationships between children and adults in the early years are strong. Adults provide children with effective support to ensure that they are secure in their learning. As a result, children engage well with their learning and behave well. They also develop strong relationships with each other during their time in the early years provision.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Adults work effectively together to plan activities that engage the children in their learning, and that meet their individual needs.
- Early years staff receive regular safeguarding training. They are aware of their responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe.
- The well-resourced classrooms ensure that children have effective and purposeful opportunities to learn and make progress. However, the outdoor area does not always provide sufficient opportunities for children, particularly those in Nursery, to make progress across the full range of the early years curriculum.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leadership of the sixth form is good. The head of sixth form closely monitors the quality of teaching that students receive, and the progress that they make. Where she identifies a student who is falling behind, the head of sixth form ensures that the student receives appropriate support.
- Senior leaders have carefully planned the curriculum to ensure that it meets students' individual needs. Students are able to study a range of work-related courses, at a level that is suitable to their ability. Students receive individual guidance to ensure that they select courses that are appropriate.
- The quality of teaching is good. Students engage well with their lessons and have excellent relationships with their teachers. Students receive close and individual support from their teachers, where it is appropriate.
- Outcomes in the sixth form in 2016 were broadly average. This represented a significant improvement in outcomes when compared with the previous year. There has been a continuation of this improvement in outcomes for current students. This is because of the provision of a work-related curriculum that is more suitable to students' needs, combined with the improvement in the quality of teaching. The school's performance information indicates that the majority of students are on track to make good progress in their courses.
- Students receive comprehensive opportunities to prepare for their next steps. They have visited the local university, and have received information about apprenticeships. Students are also able to take part in work experience. The head of sixth form provides effective support to students to inform their decision-making about their next steps.
- Students' behaviour in the sixth form is good. They have strong relationships with each other. Students engage well with their learning, both in their lessons and when studying independently.
- Students receive effective opportunities to develop personally, particularly through the tutor programme. Through this programme, they learn about fundamental British values, and about the importance of healthy living, including physical and mental health. The head of sixth form encourages students to contribute to the wider life of the school, and to act as role models to the younger pupils. Those students who met with an inspector said that they feel safe at the school, and that they learn how to be safe.
- Students who have not previously achieved a grade C or above in GCSE English or mathematics receive discrete weekly lessons in the respective subject. Most students who took the GCSE examination this year improved on their previous grade. The school continues to provide support to those who did not attain a grade C or above.

## School details

Unique reference number	138073
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10023113

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,077
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	29
Appropriate authority	Multi-academy trust
Chair	Michael Wemms
Principal	Simon Cotton
Telephone number	01327 313400
Website	<a href="http://www.dslv.org.uk">www.dslv.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@dslv.org.uk">enquiries@dslv.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	17–18 June 2015

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Danetre and Southbrook Learning Village (DSLVL) is an all-through academy that is sponsored by E-ACT multi-academy trust.
- Since the previous inspection, a new principal has been appointed. He took up his substantive role in September 2015. There have been significant changes to the senior

leadership team.

- Since the previous inspection, the multi-academy trust has set up the raising achievement board (RAB) to take on the role of governance. The RAB, which is chaired by the regional education director, includes members of the trust's regional team. An academy ambassador advisory group represents parents, local interests and employers.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who are from ethnic minority groups is smaller than average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion of those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities with an education, health and care plan.
- The school works with two alternative providers for pupils within its primary provision. These are St James and Kings Meadow. Both are located in Northampton.
- The school met the government's current floor standards for pupils' achievement at key stages 2 and 4 in 2016. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 2, and the progress that pupils achieve across eight subjects, including English and mathematics, at key stage 4.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 39 lessons, 17 of which they conducted jointly with senior leaders. An inspector observed an assembly.
- A selection of pupils from key stages 2 and 3, including some of the most able pupils, read to inspectors.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books from across all key stages, including the early years, both within lessons and as a separate activity.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the alternative providers where primary pupils from the school attend to be educated elsewhere.
- The inspectors held a range of meetings with the principal, senior leaders, members of staff and representatives of the trust.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils from across all provisions, both formally and informally.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour before school, in and between lessons, and during break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to the school's provision, including that relating to: behaviour and attendance; achievement; teaching and learning; safeguarding; and governance. The lead inspector checked the school's single central register and the school's systems for recruiting staff.
- Inspectors took into account the 56 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the 22 responses to the free text service. Inspectors also took into account the 103 responses to the pupil questionnaire, and the 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Simon Hollingsworth, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Russell Barr	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Maher	Ofsted Inspector
Nina Bee	Ofsted Inspector
Jan Baker	Ofsted Inspector

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