

DDAT School Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)

Name of School: Darley Churchtown CE Primary School	
Vision and Values: The school vision is to “Aim high and believe, grow and succeed”. This is underpinned by the Bible verse, “With God, all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26)	
Mission Statement: At Darley Churchtown we develop the child's full potential academically, physically, morally, spiritually and socially.	
Headteacher: Ben O’Connell Head of School: Tom Lloyd	Date of Evaluation: 26 th September 2025

Summary of Ofsted Grades

Inspection Area	Ofsted Grade at last inspection	Date	School Grade	Evidence and Date
Inclusion	Good	17 th December 2024	Good	September 2025
Curriculum and Teaching			Good	September 2025
Achievement			Good	September 2025
Attendance and Behaviour	Good		Good	September 2025
Personal Development and Wellbeing	Good		Good	September 2025
Leadership and Governance	Good		Good	September 2025
Early Years (if applicable)	Good		Good	September 2025
Sixth Form (if applicable)				
Safeguarding	Effective		Effective	September 2025

- Darley Churchtown is a small school with a declining number of pupils on role due to the surrounding demographics.
- The size of the cohorts necessitates the teaching of children in mixed age classes, with all children benefitting from an established curriculum.
- The proportion of pupils who qualify for free school meals is well above average and has been increasing in recent years.
- The percentage of children with special educational needs is also well above average and has been increasing.
- There are very few children with English as an additional language.
- There has been a decline in the stability of the school in recent years and it is now below average.
- Since September 2022, Darley Churchtown has formally worked within a partnership of 5 local schools, who are part of Derby Diocesan Academy Trust (All Saints' CE Infant; All Saints' CE Junior, Bakewell CE Infant and St Giles CE Primary).
- The children, staff and community at Darley Churchtown benefit from experienced leadership (including a non-teaching SENCo and experienced senior leaders for English and Maths). This has provided stability.
- Leaders have identified and prioritised the right issues. The school's latest external attainment (2024 & 2025), and behaviour records evidence the positive impact of the carefully chosen improvement work. Attendance has also strengthened.
- The school offers a free breakfast club to all pupils and is part of the Department for Education's early adopter scheme. This supports attendance, punctuality and provides targeted support for PSED and language development.

What is it like to be a pupil at this school?

(200 words max)

Children at Darley Churchtown benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum that has been developed by sharing the expertise of teachers across schools within the Matlock and Dales Primary Partnership. Class sizes are smaller than would typically be found in many primary schools and this means children benefit from additional support in lessons and a nurturing environment that accounts for the individual needs of every child. Wider opportunities such as forest school and participation in extra-curricular sports are offered through the partnership of schools meaning children have access to many activities that might not typically be available in smaller settings.

Pupils overwhelmingly share that they enjoy coming to school with all reporting (in our latest pupil voice) that they feel safe when they are at school. Children know who to speak to if they have a problem and feel proud to be part of their school. Family support and nurture provision provides support for children and their parents.

Pupils attainment continues to strengthen with our children leaving school well placed for the next stage in their education.

Improvements Since Last Inspection

Key actions taken, impact of changes, areas for further development.

- Darley Churchtown was last inspected in December 2024 with the report being published in January 2025.
- The one area noted for improvement was the consistent application of routines for checking pupils' understanding to ensure gaps in knowledge are identified and corrected.
- This was incorporated into monitoring and school improvement work for the remainder of the 2024/25 academic year and has been incorporated into the school development priorities for 2025/26. End of year outcomes were in line with expectations and attainment was above national for children in Y6.
- Early years environment has been improved through investment in new outdoor resources to enable children to benefit from a wide range of activities. The area has also been extended to allow increased space for movement and the development of gross motor skills.
- Our family support offer has been embedded with weekly meetings between the HoS and the family support workers. This has allowed more families to benefit from support and has resulted in improved attendance for disadvantaged children.
- Work has continued to embedding the school vision and values and developing the role of the school within the local community. Projects are planned for the 2025/26 academic year to support children's personal development through engagement with a number of community initiatives including the Twinning association, local wildlife projects and the restoration of a footbridge over a local heritage railway.

Safeguarding - met

- Darley Churchtown has an open culture where safeguarding is recognised as everyone's responsibility. This is evidenced through weekly briefings where safeguarding updates are shared with all staff, weekly training on safeguarding matters using resources developed by the trust and the understanding that all staff have access to and use our safeguarding case management system, CPOMS Student Safe. The impact of this is that all staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding procedures and have the confidence to report their concerns to the DSL or deputy DSL and follow this up where appropriate to ensure the safety of children.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to share their views on safeguarding through an annual pupil voice survey. Any themes identified as a result of this are acted upon and followed up through lessons or other activities. Last year all pupils reported that they felt safe in school. Safeguarding is taught through our PSHE curriculum and we have also produced a dedicated safeguarding curriculum that

highlights how safeguarding is taught through different activities in school including collective worship and visits from external partners such as our local police and community support officer.

- Staff are vigilant in reporting safeguarding concerns. All members of staff have access to our safeguarding reporting system, CPOMS. All staff are required to complete refresher training at the start of the academic year and this is followed up with weekly updates in staff briefings, TA and office forums and staff meetings. Staff complete a quiz at the end of each half term to check their understanding of safeguarding and any areas for development that are highlighted by this are then incorporated into the training plan for the following half term.
- Leaders are aware of their responsibilities in relation to child on child violence. Pupils are taught about bullying through PSHE lessons and collective worship.
- Trust policies on safeguarding training are in place and are followed. All staff complete Prevent training every two years. Senior members of staff and those likely to be involved in recruitment processes have safer recruitment training every three years. DSL and DDSL training is completed every two years. Where possible, safeguarding training is delivered through face to face sessions rather than online learning or remotely.
- School policies are reviewed at least annually and more frequently if required by policy updates or if potential improvements are identified. Safeguarding information is provided to governors at meetings six times a year. The school's single central record is checked each half term by the head of school in line with trust policies and this information and any actions are shared with governors.
- Staff are trained in identifying low level concerns and in reporting these. Any concerns are monitored by SLT with actions agreed and followed up on a daily basis. The school has a safeguarding email mailbox where police notifications and other messages are received. This is checked on a daily basis including during school holidays.
- The school has an inclusion team consisting of a special educational needs co-ordinator and inclusion lead, a deputy inclusion lead and a family support worker. The teams works with teachers in school and external agencies to ensure safeguarding concerns are managed appropriately according to relevant legislation and policies to ensure all children are kept safe.

Inclusion – expected

Description and evaluation of inclusion...

- The needs of pupils are quickly identified through classroom observation and professional discussion. Parents are encouraged to seek additional support for their children by applying for pupil premium funding. Staff are aware of the pupils in their classes who qualify for this additional support and ensure they are supported to achieve their full potential in line with the school vision to 'Aim high and believe, grow and succeed'.

- The school has a dedicated SENCO who works with teaching staff to ensure appropriate adjustments and adaptations are made to ensure all pupils make excellent progress. Pupils who are on the SEND register are set individual targets that are shared with parents and reviewed each term. Where children have additional funding due to their level of need, these IEPs are based on the targets set for the children. A provision map is maintained showing how resources are managed to ensure all children are benefiting from the support to which they are entitled.
- A pupil premium strategy is in place and is reviewed annually to ensure children who qualify from pupil premium funding are receiving additional support to close the gap on their peers or, where appropriate, exceeding these expectations. Support includes additional support in class, funded trips and other opportunities, support with uniform and wrap around care. Pupil progress meetings are held each term to review the progress made by all pupils and disadvantaged pupils are a focus within these. In addition to pupils who qualify for pupil premium funding or SEND support, we also focus on children who may be disadvantaged by poor attendance or family circumstances.
- The school has a dedicated family support worker who provides early help support to families including the Solihull parenting course. Support includes referral to other external agencies and support with applications for funding through household support funds or food banks. If an early help assessment indicates that the level of need meets a threshold beyond early help then a referral would be made to social services. The DSL meets with the family support worker each week for a priority pupil meeting to provide updates on support for disadvantaged children and agree actions for pupils and their families.

Even Better If...

To reach the next grade or to continue to be exemplary we need to:

- Consistently enhance opportunities for children who are known or previously known to social care.

Curriculum and Teaching – expected

Description and evaluation of curriculum and teaching...

- The curriculum is designed to ensure a clear progression in core learning across all subjects. Each subject has been reviewed and refined to ensure the National Curriculum is comprehensively covered over a two-year cycle to account for our mixed age class structure. Subjects such as computing and RE have been reviewed with relevant professional organisations and advisors. This has led to further improvements. In our most recent Ofsted inspection (December 2024), inspectors commented on the ability of children to recall facts from their lessons.

- We seek to go beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum to ensure children receive a comprehensive education that incorporates a range of diverse experiences that they might not otherwise have the opportunity to encounter. We have a set of 11 experiences we want children to benefit from before they are 11 years old. These include opportunities provided through trips, sports events and forest school activities.
- Key learning (sticky knowledge) has been identified in each subject to ensure there is a clear progression and that content is regularly reviewed and revisited so that learning is securely embedded in children's long term memory. Assessments are completed on a termly basis to gauge children's progress in recalling the key learning. Where gaps in knowledge are identified, planning for recall activities is adapted to ensure this is addressed.
- Graphical organisers are used to help children remember what they have been taught. These are used at the start of lessons to recap information from previous lessons and draw links between previously taught content as this has been demonstrated to be an effective way to help children learn. Trust school improvement officers have reviewed the use of graphical organisers with children and found these to be effective.
- Leaders monitor the teaching of all subjects through learning walks, book scrutiny and pupil voice activities. A proforma is used that sets out expectations for teaching, behaviour and the classroom environment. Teachers are familiar with this and have received training on our Principles of Excellent Teaching. Staff receive feedback on monitoring and this is used to drive further improvements, as can be seen in notes from the monitoring proformas.
- Little Wandle is used from EYFS for the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics. Half termly assessments are used to track children's progress. Where necessary, keep up, catch up or SEND interventions are used alongside the daily phonics lesson to ensure children make progress at least in line with expectations. Once children complete the SSP, Little Wandle fluency resources are used to increase children's confidence in reading. This is provided for all children in lower key stage two and any children reading below age related expectations in upper key stage two.
- All staff have been trained to deliver the Little Wandle programme. Staff training meetings are held weekly and INSET days are also used for training in excellent teaching. Subject leader networks are available through the academy trust and staff attend these so they are able to work with colleagues from other trust schools to enhance their teaching as well as keeping up to date with any developments in policy or practice.
- Suitable adjustments or adaptations are made for children with additional needs. These are set out on our SEND provision map, planning documents and through the timetables provided to teaching assistants. Specific targets for children on our SEND register are set on individual educational plans. These are reviewed each term and shared with parents before being updated with revised targets. Where children have an EHC, these form the basis for the IEP targets.

To reach the next grade or to continue to be exemplary we need to:

- Review curriculum plans with advisors for foundation subjects to further refine content and progression in light of policy updates.

Achievement – expected

Description and evaluation of achievement...

- Children leave Darley Churchtown well placed for the next phase of their education. There are significant variations in data due to the small cohort sizes and results are not shown on the IDSR for this reason but in 2025 80% of children achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths and in 2024 100% of children achieved the expected standard.
- Achievement is tracked throughout children's time in school through termly assessments. Targets are set for each child individually, benchmarked against the top 50% of schools nationally. Although children typically start Darley Churchtown with low prior attainment they make good progress. Where children are not able to do so, we have a robust process for ensuring children receive the additional support they need (see curriculum and teaching section above).
- Formative assessments are used by teachers to identify children who require additional support. Small class sizes allow this to be provided quickly and effectively by the class teacher or teaching assistants. Addressing misconceptions was identified as the area for improvement in the school's most recent Ofsted report (December 2025) and is one of the areas for development on the school's improvement plan for this year.
- Disadvantaged pupils reach or exceed the level of attainment of their non-disadvantaged peers in most year groups. Details of this can be seen in the Pupil Premium Strategy reviews. Where there are exceptions to this, generally this is due to a mix of children with a cohort that is not typical of the general demographic within the wider population.

Even Better If...

To reach the next grade or to continue to be exemplary we need to:

- Targets set against outcomes in top 20% of schools nationally.

Attendance and Behaviour – expected

Description and evaluation of attendance and behaviour...

- An updated behaviour policy was introduced in 2024/25 placing an emphasis on relational approaches to addressing poor behaviour. This was produced by leaders across the partnership of schools with input from teachers and other colleagues through staff training and briefings. This has resulted in a set of clear expectations and rules that are easier for children to understand. Children are able to discuss these and the high standard of behaviour around school has been noted by Ofsted and school improvement officers.
- Staff model positive and respectful behaviour. Any concerns about staff behaviour are investigated quickly and action taken if required. Collective worship focuses on values that are linked to positive role models from Biblical stories and these are discussed and understood by the children.
- Any incidents of poor behaviour are logged on the school's safeguarding and behaviour management system, CPOMS Student Safe, and investigated by the head of school or senior teacher. Records of incidents are kept and communicated to governors at regular meetings.
- There have been no suspensions or exclusions in the last three years but an up to date policy is in place and would be followed if required.
- The Trust's attendance strategy is followed. This was updated for the 2023/2024 academic year to focus on addressing the causes of poor attendance and putting support in place for families who are struggling with attendance.
- Families who are struggling with attendance are offered advice through the family support worker or referred for early help. Parents are invited into school to discuss attendance with a senior member of staff in line with the school policy and letters are sent reminding parents of expectations for attendance and drawing attention to any lateness or absence that exceeds expectations.
- A system of rewards is in place for children who attend school regularly. A watch list of children with attendance below 95% is maintained and updated daily. Contact is made with parents of children not in school: by the office to check on the reasons for absence and then by the class teacher to check on well being and plan for a return to school.
- Where children have missed learning due to absence or lateness, support is put in place to ensure they catch up and do not fall behind their peers.
- Attendance has increased in recent years and is currently 95.9% for the year to date at the time of writing (October 2025). One pupil who did not attend school on medical grounds has now left as they reached the end of Y6.

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Overall	92%	92.2%	93.1%
Pupil Premium	87.7%	88.7%	90%
SEND	87.7%	84.6%	92.7%

Even Better If...

To reach the next grade or to continue to be exemplary we need to:

- Sustain improvements to attendance that have been seen at this early stage in the year.
- Ensure attendance for disadvantaged children is in line with their peers.

Personal Development and Wellbeing – expected

Description and evaluation of personal development and wellbeing...

- Darley Churchtown offers pupils a wide range of activities to support personal development. These are based around our '11 before 11' experiences that all children should benefit from before they leave the school. These incorporate elements of our forest school provision, sporting events and school trips. A carefully planned sequence of activities means all children will benefit from these during their time in school.
- Our current RSE curriculum was developed in the 2023-24 academic year in consultation with parents. All children benefit from a comprehensive RSE curriculum that is built into our wider PSHE curriculum to ensure content is delivered at regular intervals with opportunities to revisit previously taught material and check understanding.
- Pupils are taught about fundamental British values through collective worship and our PSHE lessons. Picture News resources are used to link topical items to British values. A carefully chosen selection of events are celebrated throughout the school year and links made to these values. Pictures and information from these events is celebrated through a display in the school hall to help children recall the events and their significance.
- Children are given opportunities to lead activities and shape the future of the school through programmes including the school council, collective worship team and eco-council. All children are offered the chance to participate in these groups and leaders give consideration to how representative the groups are of the wider school community, ensuring that children from disadvantaged groups are proportionally represented. Children are supported to develop ideas to support the wider community for example by visiting residential homes or supporting schemes to grow plants in the neighbourhood.
- We work closely with the local Church and children have the opportunity to participate in services. We have a dedicated school service once a half term at which children can read prayers, poems or sing songs to the other children and parents. We also take part in community services on a Sunday at key points throughout the year and this offers children the opportunity to participate in a service for the congregation. This helps children to develop their resilience and confidence.
- As part of our vision to encourage all children to 'aim high' and be aspirational, we are focusing this year on broadening children's understanding of different careers. This is an area for development within our school improvement plan and a sequence of trips and visits are being planned throughout the year. The first event is a trip to Manchester Museum in November, which will allow children to

visit a type of building that many of them will have never seen before and consider the work that is related to the exhibits.

Even Better If...

To reach the next grade or to continue to be exemplary we need to:

- Develop opportunities for children to contribute to the local community in a meaningful and mutually beneficial manner so that children are able to engage with life beyond school.

Early Years – expected

Description and evaluation of early years...

- Early years is a priority for the school as evidenced through investment in provision over the last three years.
- Leaders are familiar with the EYFS framework. The class teacher is a member of the school leadership team and attends trust networks and moderation.
- The curriculum has been reviewed in the last three years and designed specifically to meet the needs of children in a mixed age setting. Children achieve key 'milestones' over the course of the year and our EYFS curriculum is integrated into the KS1 curriculum for all subjects.
- Teaching is of a high standard. This is evidenced through monitoring in school and trust school improvement visits and audits.
- Children's starting points are assessed through the Reception Baseline Assessment and summative and formative assessments. Where additional needs are identified, support is provided using appropriate adjustments and adaptations.
- The transition from EYFS to year 1 is managed smoothly as children remain in the same mixed age class.
- A consistent approach to the development of children's vocabulary has been developed across our partnership of schools. This was a school development priority during the 2024-25 academic year.
- The early years environment is well developed with indoor and outdoor provision. The outdoor area has recently been extended and additional resources provided to ensure children are learning in an environment that is stimulating, secure and safe.
- The size of cohorts means the proportion of children reaching GLD is variable. In 2023-24, 75% of children achieved GLD but in 2024-25 this was only 20% due to a high level of additional needs within that cohort. This year we are targeting 75% from a cohort of our children.
- Phonics is taught through the Little Wandle SSP scheme. Monitoring shows this is effective and children generally make good progress and reach the expected standard. As with the point above, the small size of cohorts and number of

children with additional needs can cause a wide degree of variation in outcomes when comparing different year groups.

- Children with additional needs are quickly identified and support is put in place. The class teacher works with our dedicated special educational needs co-ordinator to develop appropriate interventions. Parents are kept informed of any areas for development and supported to work with their children at home.
- Teachers are aware of children in their classes who are disadvantaged and ensure they receive appropriate support. Weekly meetings are held with the school's family support worker to discuss children who may require additional support and ensure this is in place.

To reach the next grade or to continue to be exemplary we need to:

- Ensure the proportion of children in EYFS reaching GLD is above-average.

Leadership and Governance – expected

Description and evaluation of leadership and governance...

- The school has a clear vision developed with the local community. School leaders have ensured this is well understood by all staff and is at the heart of day to day school life. Priorities for the development of the school stem from this ambition to 'aim high and believe, grow and succeed'.
- Local trust committee members are predominantly drawn from the local community or are familiar with the demographic of the area. They have a clear understanding of the vision and were involved in its development. They receive regular updates on progress towards the associated school priorities.
- School leaders are predominantly classroom based and demonstrate high standards through their own practice. High expectations are set for all pupils through target setting and monitoring.
- Teaching staff are involved in the direction of the school through regular briefings, staff training and surveys. Other staff also have the opportunity to contribute to these and there are regular briefings for teaching assistants and office staff.
- All teaching staff have recently completed National Professional Qualifications that are relevant to their role. A weekly programme of staff training is provided throughout the year with opportunities to attend for teaching assistants as well as teachers. INSET days are used to provide training linked to school development priorities and other relevant areas.
- Staff wellbeing is a priority across our partnership of schools. Each school has its own wellbeing champion and a charter has been developed outlining the expectations staff should have in terms of support for their wellbeing. Time is provided for the completion of termly assessments and training, in addition to

weekly planning, preparation and assessment allocations. Policies on workplace conduct are reviewed annually and shared with staff.

- Effective communication and engagement strategies have built trust with parents and ensured there is support for the school within the local community. This was evidenced in responses to the Ofsted parent survey and the school's own annual parent survey. This has enabled the school to work with parents to overcome barriers to attendance and attainment.
- Darley Churchtown is part of a group of schools with DDAT known as the Matlock and Dales Primary Partnership. The schools work collaboratively to improve standards for all children across the partnership. This was noted by Ofsted and has been demonstrated to be a successful model within the wider trust.
- The dedication of staff was noted by Ofsted in its more recent inspection report. This stated that leaders and staff 'strive to make sure that all pupils benefit from the curriculum and achieve well' and that 'staff are proud to work at the school...they value the support that they receive to manage their workload and develop their expertise'.

Even Better If...

To reach the next grade or to continue to be exemplary we need to:

- Continue to develop the expertise of governors in providing support and challenge to school leaders.