

Deneholm Primary School

Culford Road, Little Thurrock, Grays, Essex RM16 2SS

Inspection dates

7–8 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
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, including governors, have high expectations of pupils and staff. They lead by example and are ambitious for all pupils to succeed.
- Leaders have accurately identified areas for improvement. Their actions have secured rapid changes that have raised standards across the school.
- Pupils are keen to do well and respond to teachers with enthusiasm across a range of subjects.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. This is because teachers' subject knowledge is strong and teaching meets the needs of all groups of pupils.
- Children in early years receive high-quality provision and subsequently make good progress. This prepares them well for Year 1.
- School leaders use additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities effectively. As a result, these groups of pupils do well in school and make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are respectful of each other and have excellent relationships.
- Some most-able pupils do not attain as well as they should. This is because opportunities to provide challenge, and to extend and deepen their learning, are not consistent across the whole school. This is particularly the case in writing.
- Some subject leaders' scrutiny of pupils' progress is not sharp enough to identify areas of teaching that could be better. As a consequence, some teaching does not meet pupils' needs as well as it could.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that a higher proportion of the most able pupils achieve the higher standards by deepening their learning, especially in writing.
- Strengthen the quality of leaders' scrutiny of pupils' progress so that leaders consistently identify and improve aspects of teaching that could be better.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, including trustees, are highly ambitious and committed to provide the best possible education for all pupils at Deneholm. The headteacher leads by example, creating a culture of high expectations shared by all. Teachers and learning support assistants work together well, which contributes to the good progress that pupils make. Their positive relationships also create an atmosphere of tolerance and respect, which enables pupils to learn effectively.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. These pupils make good progress because additional funding is used effectively, and leaders carefully track their progress. For example, a pupil who was given additional support for handwriting is now exceeding expectations, having made rapid progress.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is good. This is because the pupils receive carefully planned teaching that helps them to understand what they are learning.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of education in the school. They know what works well and what steps need to be taken to improve pupils' learning. Leaders provide training and support to help teachers develop to the highest standard. All staff value this support. Staff new to the profession said that their well-being is valued and explained how much they enjoy working at the school. One said, 'It's a really lovely place to work.'
- The physical education and sport premium is used effectively. For example, teachers work alongside a qualified teacher specialising in dance from the Trust during the week and use this opportunity to develop their own teaching skills. The school makes sure that pupils take part in local competitive sporting events and benefit from the school's sports partnership. Consequently, pupils are motivated to take part in a range of sports and develop their team skills. All pupils are offered two free after-school clubs per week. This means that no children are excluded from clubs. Pupils told inspectors how much they value these opportunities.
- The school's chosen curriculum successfully delivers a broad and balanced approach to learning. Pupils enjoy the topics they learn about and because interesting lessons are planned, the pupils are fully engaged and enthusiastic in subjects such as history, religious education and geography. Displays in every classroom highlight what topic is being taught and help promote interest across the curriculum. They provide pupils with specific vocabulary and information that supports their understanding of the topic.
- Leaders promote British values across the school effectively. There are several key life skills that all pupils are familiar with. For example, the school may teach about 'celebrating differences', and then the pupils reflect upon what they have learned. This explicit teaching of life skills means that pupils are tolerant and kind to one another and understand that everyone is different.
- Subject leaders review pupils' progress in their subject areas. However, some subject leaders' understanding of pupils' progress is not secure. They are not quick to identify

aspects of teaching that could be improved. As a consequence, some pupils are not supported as well as they could be to make strong progress in those subjects.

Governance of the school

- Trustees know the school well. They understand the strengths and areas for development and are aware of the swift, positive changes that have been made following the appointment of the new headteacher.
- The board of trustees is ambitious for school improvement and keen to develop Deneholm School as part of the South West Essex Community Education Trust. Trustees have been instrumental in providing shared professional development for staff at Deneholm.
- Trustees carefully monitor the budget and have a comprehensive understanding of how additional funding is used for disadvantaged pupils and for sport. Changes they have made to how money is spent have improved pupils' outcomes, particularly in sport.
- Standards across the school have improved as trustees have supported the school in a number of ways, including through drama links with a local secondary school and improved Year 6 transition arrangements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All statutory checks are carried out and records are efficiently kept.
- The lead member of staff for safeguarding has a thorough understanding of how to keep children safe and shares good practice across the school. When leaders need to involve other agencies, they do so swiftly and appropriately.
- Vulnerable pupils are well supported. Systems in school to help pupils and families who need extra support are well organised and understood by all staff. These systems ensure that pupils and families receive appropriate support when required.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. This is confirmed by the Ofsted pupil questionnaire. Additionally, pupils were clear that if they are worried about something, they know whom to talk to and are certain that adults would deal with any of their concerns.
- Most parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, indicated that they feel their children are safe at school. Parents believe their children are well looked after. One parent summarised the views of many, saying: 'Deneholm is a lovely school and they always strive to keep the pupils and parents happy and involved. As a parent, all I want is for my son to be happy and enjoy school, which he does'.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and plan engaging activities. Across the school, pupils commit to do well in their learning.

- Additional adults are effectively used to support pupils by providing verbal and written prompts that help them with their learning. For example, adults re-frame questions and offer small pieces of good advice, helping pupils to make good progress.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge in all areas of the curriculum. This enables them to quickly resolve any misconceptions pupils may have.
- Presentation in books is improving. Teachers' higher expectations now ensure that pupils focus more than they used to on the quality of their handwriting.
- Work in pupils' books shows that they make good progress over time. Teachers identify any difficulties that pupils may have in understanding their learning and use this information to plan what they teach next.
- Teachers often link writing opportunities to topics, which gives pupils a purpose for writing and helps them practise their literacy skills. For example, in a history lesson when writing about Victorian workhouses, Year 6 pupils wrote with great enthusiasm and skill as they were supported with specific vocabulary and images to develop their writing.
- Pupils benefit from experiences that enrich the curriculum. For example, a drama workshop for Year 6 pupils run by a group from a local sixth form college inspired them to use rich vocabulary and develop a cultural understanding of theatre.
- Teachers encourage pupils to use life skills throughout their learning. This develops their confident, positive approach to school. In one lesson, a teacher reminded a child to use the 'teamwork' life skill when working with others, which resulted in cooperation and good outcomes for the group.
- Teachers do not consistently do enough to deepen the understanding of the most able pupils, especially in writing. This means that some of the most able pupils do not make the progress they should.
- In some subjects, teachers do not receive timely guidance on how to improve what they do. As a result, in some subjects, some pupils do not make as much progress as they could.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils play an active role in the life of the school. They have responsibilities through initiatives such as PALS (pupils as listeners), where older pupils provide practical and emotional support to younger pupils. This is carefully planned and monitored by a lead member of staff.
- Learning is underpinned by life skills. Teachers regularly remind pupils about what life skills they could use to support their learning. The school focuses on five 'R's – Resourcefulness, Reasoning, Resilience, Responsibility and Reflection – that all pupils understand and use. Pupils take on roles such as being eco-warriors. They remind

pupils about conservation and keeping the school tidy. They also remind teachers that they need to turn the lights off to save energy. These leadership roles give pupils the opportunity to develop their personal skills and prepare for secondary school.

- Pupils' understanding and awareness of the beliefs and values of others are well developed. In a Year 3 lesson, the pupils were not afraid to ask when they were confused about aspects of a certain faith. The teacher responded sensitively and productively, helping the children to understand.
- Pupils understand the concept of democracy. For example, pupils were recently all asked to vote on what playground equipment they would like. This gives pupils the opportunity to contribute to decision making and they know their views are being heard.
- Pupils show respect and support for each other. Pupils talk politely to each other and are prepared to help their friends. For example, in a school council meeting, one pupil could not move his chair, so immediately, without being asked, an older pupil came across and moved it for him.
- The school's 'nurture group' ensures that pupils receive an education that meets their needs. These pupils receive personalised support to meet their social and emotional needs. The pupils said that they now like coming to school and work in their books shows that they are making good progress.
- Pupils are confident about how to stay safe online. One child explained how he and his family had learned 'a lot' about e-safety following a school workshop and they now talk about safety measures at home.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils behave in an exemplary manner in classrooms and around school. They are polite, courteous and well mannered. In the dining hall, pupils across all ages interact positively and any pupils who have additional needs are thoughtfully cared for. Pupils said lunchtime was a 'happy time to be with friends'.
- Pupils and staff demonstrate warm, positive relationships. This is reflected in how well pupils talk to all staff and their friends. Pupils are proud of their school. In the pupil survey, almost all said they enjoyed learning. Pupils said that if there are any problems or things they are worried about, they are confident that an adult will sort these out. The school provides 'worry boxes' for all classes, which pupils find useful, as they know which member of staff will help them if they put a worry in the box.
- Pupils' attendance across the school is in line with the national average, with no significant gaps between the attendance of different groups of pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- At key stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in recent years has been broadly in line with the national average.

- The school's current information indicates strong progress and attainment for key stage 1 pupils. Work in books plus attainment information show that more pupils are working at greater depth than in previous years.
- At key stage 2, pupils' attainment has been broadly in line with the national average but with a significant improvement in reading in 2017. Pupils' progress across key stage 2 has been similar to the national average, other than a dip in reading in 2016. The school took actions that resulted in much better progress in reading in 2017. The school's most recent assessment information for current year groups in reading, writing and mathematics, alongside work in pupils' books, show good progress. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is in line with that of other pupils nationally because the school uses its additional funding to support these pupils well.
- Year 1 pupils have achieved above the national average for the last three years in the phonics screening check. This is because teachers skilfully teach pupils to articulate sounds accurately and give pupils opportunities to practise their skills regularly.
- Pupils across the school read fluently and can talk confidently about their books. For example, Year 6 pupils were able to read with expression and used clues within the text to decide how to read aloud. Year 2 pupils were able to sound out their words accurately and answer questions about their reading books competently.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader has an accurate picture of the strengths and areas for development in early years because of careful monitoring. The development of every child is tracked, and therefore, strategies to support children who have any difficulties are quickly put into place. These actions are then reviewed and adapted, so that all children receive the appropriate support. The comprehensive assessment of children, including information from parents, helps early years staff accurately assess what the children can and cannot do. Therefore, they know the children well and can move them on quickly.
- All staff know the children well. They provide a well-thought-out curriculum that results in good outcomes for children. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development has been above the national average for the last three years. Current tracking information shows that children are making good progress towards their early learning goals. Where children have low starting points, the curriculum supports them to catch up quickly.
- The curriculum is engaging and allows children to explore and investigate. For example, in one lesson, 'Barney Bear' arrived with a letter which caused great excitement and encouraged them to write in reply.
- The range of activities indoors means that children get to paint, make models, use a computer, access role-play areas, and read, write and develop their language skills through carefully planned tasks. Much learning is linked to topics and encourages children to think deeply. In one activity, the children were asked to sort resources or photographs that were either from Africa or the Arctic. The children also used their life skills, taking turns and sharing to discuss which was which, with one child giving specific reasons, very articulately, for why a certain picture was from Africa. Tasks such

as this and access to appropriate books help to promote good language opportunities as the children discuss their ideas. Consequently, children develop good speaking, reading and listening skills.

- Adults have high expectations of all children and support them skilfully. During a phonics session, for example, a child received additional visual support and prompts from the teaching assistant, which meant he was able to learn effectively.
- The school provides high-quality support for parents. For instance, a workshop to support parents' understanding of phonics took place recently and was well attended.
- Transition arrangements for children are effective. The school provides many opportunities for pre-school children to get ready for early years. During the summer term, parents and children are invited into school on a weekly basis so they are familiar with staff and the environment when children start in September. This means that children settle quickly when they start school and are ready to learn.
- Children behave well in early years. They are polite and get along well with each other. In sharing activities, they take turns and are also able to learn independently without the need for constant adult support.
- Although the indoor area provides a broad range of learning activities, the outdoor area is not as strong. Leaders are currently considering how to make the outdoor area as good as the indoor area.
- Safeguarding and welfare in early years are effective. Staff monitor the children carefully at all times, but also let the children manage their own risk appropriately, so developing independence. During one session, as the children were discussing a cooker, the teacher skilfully reminded them about how to stay safe when using such equipment.

School details

Unique reference number	141897
Local authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	10041775

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	415
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John King OBE
Headteacher	Christina Pumfrey
Telephone number	01375 373405
Website	www.deneholmprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	administrator@dps.swecet.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Deneholm Primary School converted to become an academy on 1 April 2015. When its predecessor school, Deneholm Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average and the proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is above the national average.

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2017.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 32 lessons across the school, and the nurture group.
- Inspectors, together with school leaders, looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked with pupils on the school council about their enjoyment of school, their progress and their opinions about behaviour, welfare and safety.
- The inspectors held discussions with staff, parents and trustees.
- A total of 102 parents completed the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. All of these were considered, as were free-text comments, emails and letters, as well as discussions with parents.
- The views of 76 pupils who completed Ofsted's online survey for pupils were reviewed.
- Inspectors looked at 30 survey responses from staff.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documentation, including the school's standards information, development plan, safeguarding documents, school policies, behaviour and attendance records, personnel checks and school assessment information.

Inspection team

David Milligan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Cornish	Ofsted Inspector
Susannah Edom-Baker	Ofsted Inspector

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