

Deneholm Primary School

Culford Road, Little Thurrock, Grays, RM16 2SS

Inspection dates 17–18 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children make good progress in Reception because the teaching is good.
- The achievement of older pupils has also improved and is now good. Standards are above average by the time pupils leave school, and in 2012 the Year 6 pupils made outstanding progress.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils make good progress across the school and develop good skills in tackling unfamiliar texts.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs, those from Gypsy/Roma families and those supported by pupil premium funding all get the help and guidance they need to make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy school, feel safe and almost always behave well.
- Leadership has improved considerably at all levels. Senior leaders have a clear vision for further improvement. Governance, previously a weak element, is now good.
- Thorough checking of the quality of teaching, supported by suitable training to resolve any identified weaknesses, has contributed to the better quality of pupils' learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small amount of teaching requires improvement, and not enough is outstanding.
- Teachers do not always insist on high quality in pupils' writing and recording of work, or use computers enough to enhance learning.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is not as consistently rapid as it is in English.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, of which three were seen together with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, the school’s middle and senior leaders, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 43 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of school documentation, including records of checks on the quality of teaching, the school improvement plan, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, and the tracking of pupils’ progress. They also looked closely at pupils’ written work and listened to pupils reading.

Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Nicholas Flesher

Additional Inspector

Susan Cox

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Deneholm is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small number are of Gypsy/Roma heritage. The proportion of pupils who join or leave partway through their primary school education is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- No pupils are currently educated through alternative provision away from the school site.
- The school offers a breakfast club, which is managed by the governors and formed part of this inspection. It also offers an after-school club, which is managed and inspected separately.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is slightly above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Three class teachers joined the school shortly before the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding so all pupils make consistently rapid progress, by:
 - sharing existing good practice across the staff team
 - making sure that all staff demand high-quality written work from pupils in all subjects
 - making more creative use of information and communication technology to fire pupils' imagination and support learning across all subjects.
- Make sure that pupils achieve consistently well in mathematics by:
 - using information on pupils' progress to plan work that matches the full ability range in each class
 - giving pupils regular opportunities to practise their skills in challenging mathematical activities in different subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The pace of pupils' progress has improved steadily. Attainment has risen over the last three years, and is now above average by Year 6. The 2012 national test results show that Year 6 pupils made outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Despite these strengths, there are still some slight weaknesses in Years 3 and 4 and more generally in mathematics. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their skills in mathematics, and the school recognises that more pupils could tackle work at a higher level.
- Children enter Reception with skills close to those expected nationally for their age, although relatively weak language and communication skills. They make good progress, which has improved considerably thanks to better teaching and more demanding activities.
- Reception children benefit from a good grounding in the linking of sounds and letters (phonics). Older pupils also make good progress in reading, and any gaps in their phonic knowledge are quickly identified and tackled through effective teaching. As a result, attainment in reading continues to rise.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who need extra help has also improved considerably. This is because of better-organised support for these pupils, improved identification of their needs, better training for teaching assistants, and more responsibility given to teaching staff for ensuring that pupils make good progress.
- Last year, the progress and attainment of Year 2 pupils known to be eligible for free school meals exceeded those of pupils not in receipt of free school meals. In Year 6 their progress and attainment were well above those of similar pupils nationally, and all these pupils reached or exceeded the expected level in English and mathematics. Pupil premium funding also subsidised school visits and uniform, and the work of the family support officer. These strategies contributed to improvements in attendance, pupils' attitudes to school and their basic skills.
- The school serves the small group of Gypsy/Roma pupils well. At both Year 2 and Year 6 in 2012, their attainment and progress significantly exceeded those of similar pupils nationally.

The quality of teaching is good

- More effective teaching is supporting rising attainment and pupils' good, and occasionally outstanding, progress. Pockets of less effective teaching are gradually disappearing as teachers are now more directly responsible for making sure that pupils achieve well.
- In the best lessons, the pace is brisk and pupils are fully involved in learning. This was seen in several lessons where pupils were doing independent writing activities. All staff followed good practice, setting pupils clear expectations for high-quality work. They created a good atmosphere for writing, encouraging stillness and concentration.
- The sharing of best practice across the staff team is being developed through a recently adopted 'coaching' approach. Although school policies lay out clearly what teachers should expect in terms of the way pupils should present and record their work, pupils' written work shows that these guidelines are still not always applied.

- Much improved training for additional adults in the classroom is resulting in more rapid learning by supported pupils. The school recognises the need to regularly review the way support staff are assigned to particular pupils, to ensure that their skills are used fully.
- The way pupils' progress is checked and supported has also improved. Most teachers are now making consistently good use of learning targets, marking and success criteria, and involving pupils more in assessing their own work. However, teachers do not always use the information they gather on pupils' progress to match work precisely to their ability levels and learning needs. This occasionally holds back learning, particularly in mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and eager to learn. They feel that behaviour is generally good. They eagerly take part in additional activities out of lessons and after school. Most parents and carers who gave their views feel that behaviour is good.
- Pupils are confident in the adults around them and feel that they can be relied upon to deal with any issues. Racist incidents, inappropriate behaviour and disruption of lessons are all rare. If incidents do occur, effective procedures ensure that they are managed appropriately.
- The school provides well for pupils with a wide range of individual needs. For example, Gypsy/Roma pupils are valued and their social and educational needs are supported well.
- The breakfast club is well managed, provides good care for pupils before school starts, and meets current national requirements.
- Pupils recognise that bullying may take different forms, such as internet bullying or name-calling based on physical differences. The school encourages pupils to be responsible, for example as playground leaders ('Pals'). Recorded instances of bullying are rare.
- Pupils have a good understanding of risk, supported by the school's effective focus on personal safety, including road and internet safety. They know how to keep themselves safe in a range of different circumstances.
- Attendance is broadly average. Most pupils attend regularly and arrive punctually. The school is working appropriately to raise the attendance levels of a small number of pupils whose attendance is erratic.

The leadership and management are good

- The appointment of a new deputy headteacher in 2011 and the development of an extended leadership team have greatly improved the school's capacity to promote and sustain change. This has resulted in a rapid improvement in pupils' achievement, particularly in the last five terms.
- All leaders are firmly focused on raising pupils' achievement through improving further the quality of teaching, refining assessment systems and thoroughly analysing information about pupils' progress. They have a thorough and accurate awareness of the school's strengths and remaining weaknesses.

- Good procedures for checking and improving the performance of teachers are ensuring stability in children's education during a period of staff change. Decisions about pay rises are firmly linked to pupils' progress. Staff appreciate the improved training opportunities, and feel that these are improving their teaching and management skills.
- The school has made considerable progress since its last inspection, and the revised leadership structure has given it a good capacity for further improvement. Good external support, in part arranged by the local authority, has contributed to this success.
- The school has improved the way subjects are planned and taught. Appropriate time is given to developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The new 'creative curriculum', based around themes and topics, is motivating pupils. However, school leaders recognise that there are some missed opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills across different subjects, and to use information and communication technology creatively to enrich learning.
- Pupils' social and moral development is good. Spiritual development is supported well through collective worship. Pupils have some planned opportunities to engage with other cultures. Links with parents and carers are good. They are invited to attend regular workshops to learn more about what their children are doing, particularly in Reception.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - With new members, the governing body has made considerable progress since the last inspection. Governors now have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including in pupils' performance, and its effectiveness. They have taken up opportunities for training so that they understand their role well. They provide greater challenge to the school's performance, particularly in reviewing areas of weaknesses. They evaluate first-hand the effectiveness of decisions made and are an increasingly visible presence around the school. They are aware of the need to ensure that pay and promotion are firmly linked to teachers' effectiveness. They recognise the school's responsibility to ensure equality of opportunity and to tackle discrimination. They manage the budget effectively. They contribute to decisions about the use of pupil premium funding and the analysis of its impact, and are aware of how well this funding is helping to close gaps in pupils' achievement. Governors ensure, along with senior leaders, that safeguarding arrangements meet national requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	114858
Local authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	401474

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	392
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Horrobin
Headteacher	Susan Basnett
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2009
Telephone number	01375 373405
Fax number	01375 394515
Email address	admin@deneholmprimary.thurrock.sch.uk

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