

Dean Bank Primary and Nursery School

Dean Bank, Ferryhill, County Durham DL17 8PP

Inspection dates

2–3 March 2017

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Requires improvement |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Requires improvement |
| Outcomes for pupils | Requires improvement |
| Early years provision | Requires improvement |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching has not been consistently strong enough over time to ensure that pupils are making good progress, particularly in reading.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium funding do not make enough progress to move closer to the attainment of other pupils nationally.
- Leadership of the early years has been inconsistent over time. As a result, the quality of teaching in the early years requires improvement. Learning opportunities are not maximised for children in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Over time, leaders have not taken robust action to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, particularly in reading.
- Attendance levels are low, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- The governing body does not fully check and challenge aspects of the school's work, including pupils' progress over time, the impact of pupil premium spending and the quality of early years provision.

The school has the following strengths

- Since her appointment, the headteacher has systematically taken action to address the weaknesses in teaching, including in the early years. This is starting to drive the required improvements.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Leaders check thoroughly that teaching and the curriculum prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The subject leader for English has a good understanding of the priorities for improvement. The English leader provides effective training and guidance for staff, which is improving their teaching. She regularly checks that training impacts positively on the quality of teaching.
- Personal development for pupils is good. Pupils, including those who require support to manage their behaviour, receive nurture and guidance, which helps them to grow in confidence.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress of children in early years so that the proportion of children, including disadvantaged children, achieving a good level of development is at least in line with that found nationally by:
 - improving the quality of adult-led teaching so that it is well matched to children’s needs and interests
 - improving the quality and relevance of learning opportunities in the early years classroom and outdoors
 - developing the early years leadership skills of the deputy headteacher so that she can drive improvements promptly
 - further developing the recently introduced assessment and recording approaches to monitor children’s progress and to match teaching better to their next stage in learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it becomes consistently good or better by:
 - planning and providing work that matches pupils’ needs and abilities effectively
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills
 - making sure the teaching of reading enables the less able pupils to have a clear understanding of vocabulary and texts and challenges the most able pupils
 - making sure that the teaching of phonics is consistently good
 - improving pupils’ application of grammar, punctuation and spelling in their writing and the quality of their handwriting and presentation.
- Increase the impact of leadership and management and accelerate the rate at which the school improves by:
 - embedding the school’s assessment and pupils’ progress tracking information to provide teachers and leaders with accurate and up-to-date information on pupils’ progress
 - making more effective use of the range of evidence now available when evaluating the quality of teaching and pupils’ progress to arrive at more accurate school self-evaluation judgements
 - making sure that timeframes for checking and evaluating the impact of the actions in the school improvement plan are sharp, hold staff to account and drive rapid improvement
 - promptly completing the recently commissioned review of the school’s use of pupil

premium in order to evaluate how this aspect of leadership and management can be improved

- improving governors' level of challenge to school leaders, particularly in relation to pupils' progress and early years provision.
- Improve pupils' attendance, including for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that these at least match the national averages.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Over time, leaders, including governors, have not been effective enough in securing consistently good teaching and good progress for pupils. Leaders' actions have not fully addressed the required improvements, including in the early years. However, the recently appointed headteacher, well supported by the key stage 2 leader, is taking action to address these areas for improvement.
- Leaders have been too positive in their overall judgements of the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. The new headteacher has introduced a more systematic approach to checking the quality of teaching and recording and review of pupils' progress information. Although not fully embedded, these systems are beginning to pinpoint where teaching and pupils' outcomes need to improve.
- Pupil premium spending has a variable impact on accelerating the progress of disadvantaged pupils. In 2016, some of these pupils in key stage 1 did not make sufficient progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check was also low. Levels of absence for disadvantaged pupils have been too high and, despite leaders' efforts, still require further improvement. Spending to support the social and emotional needs of disadvantaged pupils, however, is used to greater effect.
- The headteacher has accurately identified the need to improve the impact of pupil premium funding. She is already working with the local authority adviser to complete a review of the impact of these resources and a plan to respond to the review findings.
- The subject leader for English has previously focused on improving pupils' outcomes in writing. There is evidence that this has had a positive impact upon pupils' writing outcomes at the end of Year 6 and Year 2. The subject leader for English has recently turned her attention to addressing weaknesses in the teaching of reading. Training for staff and the introduction of new resources aim to improve pupils' reading outcomes. While there is some evidence that staff are adopting the new approaches, it is too early to determine the full impact on pupils' outcomes. The subject leader for English checks regularly for improvements in reading and writing and provides useful guidance to staff on how to improve further.
- The headteacher has recently taken responsibility for leading the teaching of phonics. She has rightly identified that pupils' outcomes in phonics have been too low and this limits their ability to succeed as readers. Training for staff and a revised approach to phonics teaching is beginning to bring improvements, although consistently secure good phonics teaching is not yet in place. However, there is already early evidence that pupils are improving their phonics skills at a faster pace than previously.
- The special educational needs coordinator provides committed leadership of the provision for this group of pupils. Effective use is made of special educational needs funding, and these pupils succeed socially and most make at least similar progress to that found nationally.
- The school's improvement plans generally identify appropriate actions to address the school's priorities. However, timeframes for checking and evaluating the impact of the

actions in the plan are not sharp enough to hold staff to account and drive rapid improvement.

- Leaders make effective use of the additional funding for sport and physical education (PE) in primary schools to increase the opportunities pupils have to enjoy a wider range of physical activities. As a result, opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sports and develop healthy lifestyles have improved. The leader for physical education and other teachers have benefited from training to increase their skills for teaching PE.
- The school has a well-planned curriculum based around the national curriculum subjects. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in music. They also have access to a good range of after-school clubs, which enrich the curriculum.
- The encouragement of pupils' social, moral and spiritual development is a strength of the school. Regular evaluation by leaders ensures that this aspect of school life effectively meets pupils' needs. The school's 'curriculum for life' combined with links with schools in other countries, help pupils to be well prepared for life in modern Britain and to see themselves as international citizens.
- The local authority has provided relevant support to help leaders improve their approaches to checking the impact of school improvement and for improving early years provision. The support for leaders has helped to improve their self-evaluation skills. However, the impact on early years has been limited.

Governance of the school

- Governors are supportive of school leaders and staff. They have a good understanding of the community the school serves. Some governors visit school regularly to increase their understanding of the quality of teaching, interventions to support pupils, and safeguarding arrangements. However, they have not provided sufficient challenge for leaders in aspects such as pupils' progress, including in the early years and the impact of the use of resources such as the pupil premium funding. Governors have been slow to respond to the findings of the governance health check, which identifies areas where they need to improve.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and staff implement a thorough and determined approach to keeping children safe. The safeguarding policy meets the current national requirements and staff understand the procedures and their own responsibilities. The headteacher and safeguarding leader know the needs of vulnerable pupils well and are active in seeking support for pupils and their families. Effective engagement with parents and other agencies is in place. Staff and governors receive regular and appropriate training, for example training to recognise the signs of radicalisation and extremism. The safeguarding leader and headteacher display a very good awareness of how this training relates to the community the school serves.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent, and, as a result, over time too few pupils make good progress.
- Some teachers do not plan work that is well matched to pupils' abilities. Consequently, some less able pupils struggle to complete the work successfully and the most able pupils do not progress quickly enough.
- Leaders have recently introduced revised assessment arrangements and systems to record pupils' progress, which are better linked to the national curriculum. Although not fully embedded, these systems are beginning to provide teachers with useful tools to support better planning and provide leaders with more accurate information to check on pupils' progress.
- In mathematics, some teachers are now using a wider range of approaches to improve pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills. However, in other classes, opportunities to develop these skills are more limited.
- The teaching of reading is improving. As a result of staff training, teachers' understanding of how to improve pupils' understanding of texts has strengthened. There is also now a greater focus on developing pupils' comprehension skills and knowledge of the text. Leaders are taking steps to improve the quality of reading resources, including developing the libraries.
- Pupils display a curiosity in reading. Older readers are interested in books and they read with reasonable fluency and understanding. Younger readers generally make effective use of their phonics skills. Despite these improvements, pupils' progress in reading is still not good. Less-able pupils sometimes struggle with the meaning and vocabulary in the text provided. The most able pupils are provided with texts that are not demanding enough and do not develop their stamina for reading. They do not read at levels higher than the expected standard.
- A recent change to the teaching of phonics is strengthening provision in this area. The school's assessments indicate that better teaching is having a positive impact upon pupils' phonics skills. Even so, there is still further work to do to ensure the teaching of phonics is consistently effective across the school.
- Regular lessons with a well-structured approach help pupils to improve their understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling. In these discrete lessons, pupils demonstrate their strong knowledge gained over time. The impact of this learning is reflected in pupils' results in the test at the end of Year 6 in 2016, which compare well with national averages. However, these skills do not always transfer into the pupils' other written work. Teachers' expectations for presentation and handwriting are not high enough. As a result, the quality of this aspect of pupils' work is variable and requires further improvement.
- Topic work for older pupils provides good opportunities for using and applying writing skills. It enables pupils to develop their geography and history skills methodically.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils develop self-confidence as they progress through the school. Opportunities for pupils to take on important roles in school such as 'mini police', combined with clear reward systems, guide pupils to conduct themselves responsibly. Regular sports coaching helps pupils develop healthy lifestyles and appropriate competitive qualities.
- The school's provision meets pupils' social and emotional needs very well. Staff, including the leader for special educational needs, provide strong support for pupils and parents, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.
- Pupils understand the different forms of bullying, and, while they report that incidents are rare, they acknowledge that staff address these promptly. Staff record any forms of poor behaviour diligently and follow up quickly to address this.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Overall, most pupils behave well in lessons. However, when teachers' expectations are not high enough, or where pupils receive work not well matched to their needs, some low-level, silly behaviour by a few pupils can occur.
- Attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is too low. The headteacher has started to address this and, there are some early signs that work with families where pupils' absence levels are too high is beginning to have a positive impact. Even so, attendance remains below average and, therefore, requires improvement.
- During playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils behave well, socialise suitably and engage in lively, friendly activities. Pupils move around the school in an orderly fashion and demonstrate good manners.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because in key stages 1 and 2, pupils' progress has been variable since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has not been consistently good enough over time.
- In 2016, pupils' progress was too slow in reading and, as a result, not enough pupils reached the higher standards by the end of key stages 1 and 2. The most able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should, particularly in reading. This is because teachers' expectations are not always high enough.
- The school's information about pupils' progress shows that some current pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are working below the expectations for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Programmes of support introduced by leaders are helping pupils to catch up and there is some evidence of impact. For example, in Year

6, pupils are now catching up in reading. An increasing proportion of pupils are on track to achieve the expectations for their age.

- In 2016, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check dipped and was below the national average. The achievement of disadvantaged pupils was particularly low. There are early signs that changes to the teaching of phonics are paying off. This year, pupils are doing much better.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils requires improvement. Generally, in key stage 2, disadvantaged pupils' progress is broadly in line with other pupils nationally. However, in key stage 1 some disadvantaged pupils do not make enough progress from their starting points in reading and mathematics. Current disadvantaged pupils' attainment is mostly below that of other pupils across the school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making progress broadly in line with that found nationally by the end of Year 6. Appropriate plans and support are in place to match teaching to their learning needs.
- In 2016, the proportions of pupils in Year 6 who achieved both the expected standard and the higher standards in the grammar, punctuation and spelling assessments were above the national average. This reflects the focus of leaders and staff to secure strong outcomes for pupils in this area.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children start in the Nursery with skills and abilities that are generally below those typical for their age. From their starting points, children make variable progress through the early years classes. In 2016, the proportion of girls who achieved a good level of development by the end of Reception was in line with that of others nationally. However, the proportion of boys who achieved a good level of development was below the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged children achieving a good level of development was below other children nationally.
- The quality of teaching across early years is inconsistent. Despite efforts to engage boys in learning with topics such as dinosaurs, teaching does not always match children's learning or interests effectively enough.
- The resources, both indoors and outdoors do not consistently hold children's interest. As a result, there is low-level disruption. Consequently, behaviour requires improvement.
- Learning activities do not always make good use of the available adults to move children's learning forward. As a consequence, adults sometimes miss opportunities to assess children's learning or to address misconceptions.
- Children enjoy developing their physical skills, for example in a PE lesson where they were moving to music and in using the climbing frame in the outside area. Consequently, the proportion of children meeting the expected levels of development in physical development were in line with the national average in 2016. However, opportunities for children to develop reading, writing and mathematical skills are more limited. As a result, children's outcomes are weaker in these areas of learning.
- Over time, assessment and recording systems in the early years have lacked accuracy.

Leaders have recently introduced an online approach for recording assessments of children's progress; this is at a very early stage of development and it is too soon to see the impact.

- The headteacher has taken steps to strengthen leadership in early years. The deputy headteacher, who has very lately assumed leadership in this area, is receiving appropriate support from a local authority adviser. The headteacher has looked for effective practice to improve the early years provision and has begun to access support from the leader of an outstanding infant and nursery school. This support is starting to develop leaders' understanding of how to bring about improvements.
- Parents are positive about the provision provided in early years. Parents acknowledge that their children enjoy attending school and that they have settled well. Parents find staff approachable and friendly.
- Since the last inspection, the school has introduced provision for a very small number of two-year-olds. The provision meets these children's safety and welfare needs.
- Safeguarding is effective and the welfare requirements are met.

School details

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 114086 |
| Local authority | Durham |
| Inspection number | 10023998 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 2 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 186 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Michael Scurr |
| Headteacher | Pauline Northcott |
| Telephone number | 01740 651 512 |
| Website | www.deanbank.durham.sch.uk |
| Email address | deanbank@durhamlearning.net |
| Date of previous inspection | 2–3 October 2012 |

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Since the last inspection, the school has introduced provision for two-year-olds.
- The current headteacher took up post in September 2015.
- Most pupils are White British. A very small minority of pupils come from ethnic minority groups. A few are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is well above that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below that found

nationally.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in a range of lessons and part lessons in all classes. The headteacher joined the lead inspector for all observations in lessons on the first day of the inspection.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around school and reviewed the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The inspectors observed pupils in the playground and during lunchtime.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and the teachers responsible for leading English and the early years, as well as the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with three governors, including the vice-chair of the governing body.
- A group of pupils discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with an inspector. The inspectors listened to four pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of the 13 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View, and held discussions with parents at the beginning of the school day. There were no responses to staff and pupil questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including minutes from meetings of the governing body, information about pupils' achievement, the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plans. Reviews were made of behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding. The inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in their books.

Inspection team

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Michael Reeves, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Anne Humble | Ofsted Inspector |
| Dawn Foster | Ofsted Inspector |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017