

Deeplish Primary Academy

Derby Street, Rochdale, Lancashire OL11 1LT

Inspection dates

17–18 October 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	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 are not making fast enough progress because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and in expectations of pupils' work
- Middle leaders have not accurately checked the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. Their plans for improvement lack the detail and urgency necessary to ensure increasing rates of progress to reduce the legacy of underachievement.
- Leaders and governors have an overly generous view of the school's performance.
- There is inconsistency in the application of school policies and pupils are not clear how they need to improve their work, particularly in key stage 1.
- Leaders have recently developed more robust plans and actions to monitor and evaluate its provision for disadvantaged pupils, which are demonstrating an improvement in the quality of pupils' work and progress. However, previous procedures to monitor and evaluate provision was not secure enough to result in sustained progress.
- Mathematics books show that pupils' understanding of key number facts is insecure, leading to misconceptions in learning.
- Pupils' writing books are poorly presented and they do not have a consistent handwriting style or letter formation. Teachers' expectations of pupils' writing are too low to enable pupils to improve at a fast enough rate.
- The wider curriculum is not taught in sufficient subject-specific depth to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding, especially in art and music.

The school has the following strengths

- High-quality teaching and raised expectations in upper key stage 2 for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for the most able pupils in most classes are improving attainment and progress in mathematics and English.
- Leaders and governors ensure that pupils are kept safe. Partnerships with agencies to support vulnerable families are strong.
- Children make good progress in the early years due to effective teaching. Phonics teaching in the early years and the development of their spoken English skills are well taught.
- Pupils behave responsibly in class and around school; they are polite and well-mannered. The school's work to develop pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Years 1, 2 and 3 and, as a result, raise standards and pupils' progress, by ensuring that:
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve
 - opportunities are taken to share the best teaching practice across the school
 - all teaching staff have consistently high expectations of pupils to form letters correctly, to use joined handwriting and to present their work neatly.
 - adults' checks on how well pupils are learning are improved so that they can better help those who are struggling.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - middle leaders' plans and actions are implemented with some urgency to improve teaching and learning in their subject areas
 - middle leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and learning are more focused on the impact of their challenge and support.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that teaching or pupils' work in books over time are consistently good. As a result, leadership and management requires improvement.
- Leaders have not ensured that assessment and monitoring systems are sufficiently robust. Tracking of pupils' development is focused on attainment and progress but lacks the depth to ensure that standards of work are matched to age-related expectations. As a result, leaders and teachers do not always have accurate information to ensure that work is set for pupils at the correct level. In most classes, teachers' expectations are not high enough and inconsistencies in teaching remain. Pupils' progress and attainment are too variable, especially in Years 1, 2 and 3.
- Middle leaders have monitored their subjects and drawn up appropriate action plans to address their findings. However, they have not implemented improvements to teaching, learning and assessments swiftly enough to remove the legacy of underachievement. Current training and support for individual members of staff are improving the quality of teaching and learning. For example, the teaching of mathematics in Years 4, 5 and 6 is more effective than in other year groups because leaders have introduced an agreed approach to develop pupils' reasoning and thinking skills, which staff in these classes are following. However, leaders have not challenged and supported staff sufficiently to reduce the variability in practice and in the work in pupils' books.
- Leaders have worked hard to plan a relevant, broad and balanced curriculum based around high-quality texts. They supplement this with relevant visits, including a residential visit during key stage 2. However, work in pupils' books, displays around school and evidence from discussions with pupils suggest that pupils do not receive a rich and engaging curriculum. The work in pupils' books is minimal, poorly presented and not to the standard expected for pupils' ages. Subject leaders have begun to monitor the quality of provision in their subjects, but this is not fully developed and does not focus on strengths and areas for improvement.
- The use of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has not, until recently, been focused on pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Leaders recognise that a lack of analysis of the impact of interventions has hitherto hampered their ability to hold teachers and teaching assistants to full account for the slow progress of these pupils. However, leaders have now developed procedures to analyse the progress of these pupils more closely.
- The management of the performance of teachers is robust. Reviews are directly linked to the teachers' standards and the progress that pupils make. Appraisal targets are linked very closely to the school's identified development priorities and are quality assured by other leaders within the trust. Leaders and governors are not afraid to tackle underperformance.
- Leaders' work to promote pupils' rights, respect and responsibilities is evident around school, particularly their promotion of respect. Pupils are tolerant and respectful of each other and of adults. The promotion of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils' spiritual development and knowledge of other faiths is

well developed.

- Sports funding has been used effectively to provide specialist teaching. This is having a positive effect on pupils' enjoyment of physical education and on the quality and quantity of provision. More pupils are joining after-school sports clubs and participating, with increasing success, in competitive sports.
- Funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well. Staff have created very good relationships with families and pupils and review progress and successes informally between more formal reviews. Teaching and learning are very well matched to pupils' needs and, as a result, these pupils are making rapid progress to meet the standards expected of their year groups.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school very well. Leaders regularly provide governors with detailed information about pupils' performance, including the achievement of groups of pupils. On this basis, governors hold leaders to account for their actions. They challenge leaders about any weaknesses or problems, and expect them to explain how these will be resolved. However, reports written by governors and members of the trust give an overly generous view of how well the school is performing.
- Governors exercise strong financial controls and make sure that the school works within its budget. They have used funding well to provide additional staffing in the early years and in Year 6 classes and have checked on the impact of this with tenacity. They check on the expenditure of additional funding provided to support groups of pupils and are aware of its improving positive impact on pupils' progress and participation in sporting activities. They make appropriate arrangements with the trust for the management of the principal's performance.
- The governing body fulfils its role in helping to keep children safe. It has a thorough understanding of the risks faced by pupils in the local community, including those associated with radicalisation. It has a good knowledge of online safety and the role the school's curriculum plays in teaching pupils how to keep safe in a variety of circumstances.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, governors and staff implement safeguarding policies and procedures which meet statutory requirements. Staff are well informed and have received training on safeguarding which follows the most recent national guidance. Staff are fully aware of the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about the safety and care of pupils.
- The school works effectively with local agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families are identified and well supported. Leaders successfully engage with parents to make sure that pupils are safe and supported in school. This includes a regular item in the school's newsletter.
- Pupils understand the school's procedures and policies for keeping children safe while using the internet. The school's curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to learn

about personal safety, including a visit to a locally organised day covering water, fire and home safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are too variable across the school to be good. Inconsistent teaching, particularly in Years 1, 2 and 3, has resulted in too many pupils underachieving. Despite some recent improvements, pupils' work in books is not showing the progress that should be expected of them. In particular, low and middle prior attaining pupils and disadvantaged pupils are not sufficiently supported to improve rapidly from their starting points.
- Discussions with pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3, and checks of work in their books, show that they have an insecure understanding of number facts and mathematical processes. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 do not have sufficient opportunities with the appropriate challenge to reason and solve problems in mathematics. However, in Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils' understanding of mathematics is improving because of recent changes to the curriculum, higher expectations of pupils' work and the sharing of quality teaching by subject leaders.
- The quality and quantity of pupils' writing in Years 1, 2 and 3 are not good enough. The presentation of pupils' work, including their letter formation and handwriting, is inconsistent. Other than that of the most able pupils, the writing of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 is more typical of younger pupils. As a result, leaders accept that teaching and learning have not been good enough to tackle underachievement with sufficient urgency.
- The school's policy on marking is not consistently applied across all classes. Consequently, some misconceptions are not picked up and future learning is not matched to pupils' understanding. Pupils are not always clear as to how they can improve their work. Very effective assessment of work seen in upper key stage 2 lessons enables the teachers to give useful feedback to pupils to support their understanding and address their misconceptions or provide additional challenge to those pupils who need it.
- Leaders have developed assessment procedures to track the standards pupils are achieving. However, these are sometimes focused too much on attainment at the expense of pupils' progress. Systems have not had sufficient time to give leaders clear information to draw robust conclusions about the quality of teaching and learning.
- The quality of support offered by teaching assistants is varied. Support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong and is enabling these pupils to make improved progress. Pupils and their parents value the support offered. However, the support offered to other pupils is not sufficiently focused on the lesson content and pupils do not have the opportunity to make the rapid progress needed to meet age-related expectations.
- The most able pupils across the school and pupils in upper key stage 2 are completing work which is sufficiently matched to their assessed learning needs, including challenge in English and mathematics. Their writing includes varied sentence structures and openings, adventurous vocabulary and the correct features of the type of writing to engage and interest the reader. These pupils are developing good reasoning and

effective problem-solving skills in mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe; staff and parents agree. Pupils have a good understanding of the leaders' actions to keep them safe, including improvements to the security of the school grounds. The curriculum promotes well pupils' healthy lifestyles and their emotional and social development.
- Pupils report that bullying is rare. They are confident that any poor behaviour will be dealt with firmly and fairly. They report that adults will listen to them carefully and resolve any conflicts that they may have.
- Participation in clubs has increased across the school following the appointment of a full-time sports coach. Strong teaching and good relationships have encouraged pupils to actively participate in netball and football clubs. Members of the school football team are justifiably proud to be playing in a local final at Rochdale Football Club.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils have a good awareness of other religions. The curriculum, particularly the respect aspect, has raised pupils' awareness of different faiths, diversity and important national events.
- Pupils have opportunities to develop responsibility and leadership through their work on the school council. Friday sports sessions with pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding are improving these pupils' self-confidence, resilience and leadership skills.
- Some pupils do not have enough pride in their work because teachers' expectations of handwriting and letter formation are not high enough.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is good. They are polite and well-mannered, frequently holding doors open for adults and other visitors. Pupils behave responsibly and respect other points of view.
- Behaviour records show that pupils' behaviour is well managed. Pupils understand the school's expectations, value the rewards available for good behaviour and recognise the consequences for poor behaviour.
- In a very small number of lessons, inspectors saw a few instances of low-level disruption.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality has improved over the past two years. The proportion of pupils with persistence absence has remained static at a high level, but leaders have effective systems to monitor and follow up instances, including meetings with parents and the issue of fixed-penalty notices.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In the national assessments in 2017, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was average compared with schools nationally. Key stage 1 pupils did not make enough progress from their starting points and too many underachieved. Work in pupils' books shows that learning at the expected standards for pupils' ages is inconsistent.
- Too few of the most able pupils achieved the higher standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2017. Attainment at greater depth for these pupils in writing and mathematics was well below national averages. However, work in current pupils' books shows that the most able pupils are beginning to make stronger progress towards these higher expectations.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making similarly inconsistent progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Their progress is not swift enough from their starting points to help these pupils meet year group expectations. The positive impact of additional sports activities for these pupils is improving their self-confidence and resilience. However, it is too early to see any impact on higher standards in the pupils' books.
- Younger pupils read confidently, but do not have a sufficiently well-developed understanding to check that what they have read makes sense. They use their phonics well to read unknown words. Older pupils read with confidence. The most able pupils' reading is fluent and expressive. Given that reading is a focus for the school, reading records indicate that pupils have few opportunities to read to the teacher. As a result, teachers are not able to track the phonic development and comprehension skills of older pupils carefully enough. Consequently, progress for these pupils is not as rapid as it could be.
- The quality of pupils' writing, including writing across the curriculum, is inconsistent across the school due to low expectations of pupils' use of grammar and sentence structures. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to broaden their vocabulary but this is not always applied to their independent writing. In too many pupils' books, there is insufficient evidence of the application of English and mathematics skills.
- Work in pupils' books shows a mixed picture, with inconsistencies in progress from starting points and attainment across Years 1 to 3. In these classes, work is not well matched to pupils' learning needs. Consequently, pupils complete work that they find easy or attempt work that they find too difficult. In Years 4, 5 and 6, teaching is well matched to pupils' needs, but this is often below age-related expectations.
- Outcomes in the phonics screening check in 2017 again rose. Phonics is taught well in the early years and in Year 1 as a result of good teaching and a revised curriculum that better meets pupils' needs.
- Progress for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving rapidly due to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Work is well-matched to pupils' identified learning needs. Teaching assistants have undertaken training to improve their skills and knowledge of individual pupils' needs and this has enabled them to tailor support better to meet specific needs.
- Pupils in upper key stage 2 are making improved progress and attaining higher levels in English and mathematics. As a result of high expectations and high-quality teaching,

pupils' writing is beginning to show evidence of better sentence structures and vocabulary choices. The most able pupils are able to select words to create atmosphere and describe characters, for example, 'He was despondent, depressed and heart-broken.' The most able pupils are expected to provide explanations and reasons for their thinking and this is deepening their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. This quality of teaching, high expectations of pupils' work and faster rates of progress allow most pupils to be prepared for the next stage of their education.

Early years provision

Good

- Children join the Nursery and Reception classes with skills and knowledge which are below those typically expected for their age, particularly in language development and in health and self-care. In 2017, the proportion of children who reached a good level of development by the end of the early years was broadly in line with the national average. This demonstrated an improving trend over the past three years.
- Leadership of the early years is effective and leaders have created a strong staff team. The early years leader has ensured that staff are appropriately trained to identify and plan for individual children's needs. Staff use assessment information well to plan activities which capture children's imagination. The children are keen to participate in their learning. Leaders have recognised the importance of a partnership between home and school and have encouraged parents to contribute to their children's records of learning.
- Teaching and learning in the Reception class is well matched to the assessed needs of the children. Teachers provide appropriate support or challenge to allow children to make good progress in the acquisition of spoken and written English. Due to this good provision, most pupils are well prepared to start Year 1.
- In Nursery, leaders have prioritised developments in the prime areas, especially communication and language, as key to children's future development across the curriculum. Consequently, staff supplement the overall good-quality provision by additional targeted speech and language support.
- Assessments of children's development are accurate. However, leaders recognise that this could be further improved to better demonstrate what children need to learn next. Currently, Nursery and Reception children are making improving progress from low starting points.
- Children are well looked after. Staff give children's safety high priority and make sure that the statutory welfare requirements are met. Relationships between parents and staff are positive. Parents state that important information is shared so that they know how well their children are learning.
- Children's behaviour is good. There is a wide range of activities which are well supported by staff. This enables children to become confident and enthusiastic learners.
- The classroom and outdoor area are well resourced, allowing children access to a range of learning experiences. However, the outdoor area offers fewer opportunities for children to engage in early language and number activities, compared to those on

offer inside.

School details

Unique reference number	141365
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10036587

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	433
Appropriate authority	Focus-trust
Chair	Mrs Elaine Hibbert
Principal	Mr Ewan McPherson
Telephone number	01706 392480
Website	www.deeplishprimaryacademy.co.uk
Email address	deeplish@focus-trust.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is larger than the average primary school.
- The school became a sponsored primary academy within the Focus-Trust multi-academy trust from 1 December 2014. The trust provides a wide range of support to teachers, leaders and the governing body.
- The majority of pupils are of Asian heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is above

the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and who are receiving support is slightly below the national average.
- There have been significant changes in the teaching team over the past few years, including the recent appointment of an assistant principal. The school has also grown in size as its planned admission number has increased from 45 to 60.
- In 2017, the school met the national floor targets for pupils' achievement.
- At the previous inspection, the academy's predecessor school was judged inadequate.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning throughout the school. Some learning walks were carried out jointly with the principal. In addition, inspectors scrutinised pupils' work.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read.
- The inspectors met with pupils, formally and informally, to listen to their views.
- Meetings were held with the principal, deputy principal, assistant principal, other leaders and teachers/coaches, members of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation that covered: information about pupils' attainment and progress; the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan; minutes of meetings; and records relating to teaching and learning, pupils' attendance and behaviour and safeguarding of pupils, including those prepared by improvement partners from the trust and governors. Scrutiny of the website was also undertaken.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed by parents through informal meetings as well as seven comments received via the free-text facility on Parent View.

Inspection team

Ian Shackleton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Ofsted Inspector
Barbara Harrold	Ofsted Inspector

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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.

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