

Dereham Church of England Junior Academy

Gilpin's Ride, Littlefield's, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1BJ

Inspection dates

3–4 July 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The new headteacher has raised expectations of all staff and has been quick to tackle underperformance in the school.
- School leaders, governors and Diocese of Norfolk Academy Trust (DNEAT) have established a drive for improvement in all areas of the school. This has resulted in more rapid improvement in the last year.
- The skills of middle leaders are developing. Senior leaders acknowledge that there are further improvements required to enable middle leaders to ensure the best possible progress for all pupils in all subjects, particularly for pupils who are disadvantaged and others receiving additional support.
- The quality of teaching is now good, because teachers have responded well to the frequent support and advice received from leaders and the academy trust.
- Assessment is accurate and is enabling all leaders to establish where pupil support is most needed. The school has been proactive in changing some support where it does not have impact, and has prioritised the monitoring of all interventions to ensure further improvements.
- The curriculum is well planned with the needs of pupils in mind. Newly appointed middle leaders have established an effective system of monitoring coverage and quality of the curriculum. This means that children are learning more effectively across all subjects.
- The curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal and social development. Pupils feel safe, behave well and enjoy learning. New approaches to behaviour are having a positive impact on the quality of relationships in the school. There is still more work to do to ensure that parents understand and support the good work that the school does in this area.
- Outcomes at the end of Year 6 in 2017 were above national averages and pupils are making good progress as a result of the good teaching that they receive.
- Not enough attention is given to addressing the very basic skills which some pupils do not have on entry to school, particularly disadvantaged pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the basic skills of handwriting, spelling, reading and speaking are improved quickly on entry to school, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, by:
 - developing more opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and knowledge accurately across the curriculum
 - developing systems to ensure that reading material is accurately pitched at an appropriate level for all pupils.
- Strengthen the skills of middle leaders by:
 - developing their skills in making plans which help to remove barriers to learning, so that all pupils make the best possible progress in all subjects
 - improving the leadership and oversight of the impact of the pupil premium funding
 - ensuring that all interventions and catch-up programmes are monitored rigorously to ensure maximum impact on pupils' progress.
- Engage effectively with parents so that they understand the good work that the school is doing, particularly around behaviour.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The new headteacher has raised the expectations of all staff. There is a drive for improvement across the school from governors, senior leaders and middle leaders. Supported by the school improvement team from the trust, the school is improving. This is because everyone is working together to ensure that the pupils get better teaching and outcomes than previously. One parent commented, 'The school has improved dramatically since September.'
- Leaders' and governors' evaluation of the school is accurate and identifies the key priorities to drive improvement forward.
- The staff who responded to the online survey and were in the school at the time of the last inspection feel that the school is a lot better now. They also say that leaders do all they can to support and challenge them to improve their teaching. As a result, the staff, including support staff, are motivated and effective. Staff are clear that the training that they receive from the academy trust and senior leaders has helped them to improve their practice.
- The curriculum contributes well to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. This is because pupils are taught to how to stay healthy and safe and respect others' differences. Pupils learn about other cultures and know that people are different.
- Leaders record and analyse behaviour incidents effectively to bring about further improvements so that the school continues to improve its provision for all pupils' well-being. As a result, pupils are happy and enjoy school.
- Leaders use the additional funding that they receive for pupils who are disadvantaged, including those in local authority care, effectively. This includes ensuring that pupils attend school regularly. As a result, pupils who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities have attendance which is better than other pupils in the school and disadvantaged pupils have attendance well above national averages for non-disadvantaged pupils.
- Middle leaders are growing in skills and confidence as a result of the effective support provided by senior leaders. They have ensured that the curriculum better suits the needs of all pupils. They have effective systems to ensure that pupils receive a broad, interesting and varied curriculum. However, there is further work to do to refine the systems that these middle leaders use. This is in order to ensure that all pupils are making the best possible progress in all subjects across the curriculum.
- The sports premium has provided an increased variety of sporting activities. It has also provided a new multi sports area. As a result, pupils are engaging well with a different range of sports and they enjoy the activities provided. However, the sports premium plan is not yet rigorous enough in establishing the impact of the provision, including the requirement to ensure that all pupils can swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6.
- School leaders and staff have benefited a great deal from the partnership and collaboration with other schools. This includes schools in the DNEAT family but also schools that are not part of it, particularly St Michael's Junior School. Staff say that

they have valued the opportunity to look at pupils' work with other teachers and ensure that their assessments are accurate.

Governance of the school

- The school is led by an interim transition board made up of governors and school improvement leads from DNEAT.
- Governors and trustees have worked effectively to challenge the school and leaders to improve. They are ambitious for the pupils in their school. For example, the school is employing pastoral leaders to support pupils better at key times during the day as a result of an effectiveness report carried out by the governing body.
- Governors are supported well in their work by the leaders of the DNEAT Academy Trust. Governors use the information provided by the trust on pupil attainment and progress to identify areas for improvement. For example, the focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and previously higher-attaining pupils has been successful. As a result, more pupils are assessed at working at higher levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics this year, including disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors are clear of the priorities for the school and meetings focus on these aspects, including the progress that pupils make and how good their outcomes are. They use the focused visits to school to follow up on previous visits and ensure that areas that needed improvement have improved.
- Governors have carried out parent and pupil surveys and these have given a positive picture of how well parents feel that the school is doing. They have also further prioritised relationship with parents to ensure that all parents are clear about how the school is improving.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The checks that leaders carry out on staff employed in the school to ensure that they are safe to work with pupils are effective.
- Safeguarding leaders and their assistants work tirelessly to support pupils at times of need. They keep detailed records of meetings with parents and other agencies and record incidents which might result in harm to pupils. They are persistent in their work with other agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support that they need. This includes working with translation services where communication is difficult for families who speak English as an additional language.
- The records of training that staff have, including training to protect pupils from the dangers of extremism, are rigorous. As a result, it is clear when staff need updates and so all training is current and up to date.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good and improving across the school. Where teaching has been less than good, leaders have taken swift action to support and challenge staff to improve. As a result, pupils are making effective progress.

- The systems that are used consistently across the school to challenge pupils, including higher-attaining pupils, are having a positive impact. This is because there are a range of challenges in all mathematics and English lessons which pupils can move on to if they are able. Pupils are positive about the way these challenges help them to know when they are improving in their learning.
- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge when teaching. They ask important questions of pupils to help them think further. Teachers encourage pupils to reason and justify their answers. This is helping to improve progress rates across the school because pupils have to think harder and remember things that they have learned.
- Teachers also use the school's 'marvellous mistakes' strategy to encourage pupils to learn from their errors. This strategy, coupled with the work that the school is doing on teaching pupils how to be good learners, is supporting pupils' improved attitudes and levels of resilience in their learning. As a result, pupils are making effective progress because their confidence is increasing.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They cooperate well with other pupils and behave well in lessons. Very little teaching is interrupted by behaviour issues and, where it is, teachers deal with it effectively. Consequently, learning time is rarely lost.
- Leaders have planned the curriculum effectively and it is clear from pupils' books how important knowledge is developed over time in school. For example, in mathematics, pupils in Year 3 were developing the skills of measuring the perimeter of simple shapes at the end of the spring term. By June they could make their own polygons from a defined perimeter.
- Year group leaders ensure that the curriculum is covered appropriately, and subject leaders monitor progression in key knowledge across the school. The most experienced teachers support the planning process so that there is consistency across year groups in the quality of what is taught. As a result, pupils in the same year group have equal access to the wide and varied curriculum and no pupils are disadvantaged by limited experiences.
- Learning environments support current learning and, in some classrooms, pupils are encouraged to use the resources available to help them to be independent learners. Pupils say that these learning walls help to remind them about how to be successful.
- The school has worked effectively in response to parents' questions about the curriculum. Leaders provide curriculum overviews each term so that parents are aware of what will be covered. Parents and families are invited to whole-school curriculum events, including the circus performances and family cafes. This enables parents to see what children are learning across the curriculum. However, the school is aware that they need to work harder still to ensure that the whole community is positively engaged with the work of the school to improve pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders and teachers are not yet acting swiftly enough to address strategically the gaps in pupils' knowledge on entry, particularly in English. As a result, although pupils make effective progress over time, they are not yet getting every opportunity to apply their basic skills across the curriculum quickly enough and early enough. For example, a small amount of reading material was not well matched to pupils' abilities and handwriting expectations are not rigorously enforced.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and talk positively about their school. Their attitudes to learning are good and they behave well in class. They listen to each other and the adults around them and they work effectively together on their learning. As a result, lessons are orderly and calm, and learning is rarely interrupted.
- Expectations of behaviour during lessons are re-enforced by adults and pupils respond well to reminders of the class rules. Pupils are accepting of each other's differences and say that some pupils find it harder to manage their behaviour than others. However, they know that adults in school support them with this.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They are very aware of how to stay safe on line. They know how to store personal details correctly and who to go to if they have concerns about people that they meet online. Pupils are aware that people can be unkind and racist, but say that this doesn't happen in their school.
- Pupils are taught the dangers of the sun and are confident when discussing how to keep themselves safe around water and when they are crossing the road or on a bike. This is because the curriculum is planned well to ensure that pupils know about important dangers.
- The work that the school is doing to improve pupils' engagement and resilience in learning is having a positive impact. It is supporting pupils, and in particular disadvantaged pupils, to accept mistakes as part of learning. Pupils are keen to point out that they 'can't do things yet', not that they can't and won't learn to do them.
- Older pupils also learn about extremist views and that they can come from a range of people and cultures. Many pupils enjoy the range of sporting clubs after school, but some would like a wider variety of clubs so that they can develop new skills and knowledge.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and attendance is good. Disadvantaged pupils have particularly good attendance. This group's attendance has improved this year as a result of new strategies and the support put in place for individual pupils.
- Behaviour is managed well. Rigorous and effective systems for tracking and logging incidents, including discriminatory incidents, have enabled leaders to carry out detailed analysis of behaviour concerns. As a result, incidents have reduced significantly during this year. This is because training has been provided for leaders to support teaching staff in managing behaviour in lessons and around school.
- Staff believe that they are well supported by leaders in managing pupils' behaviour and say that pupil behaviour is good.
- Lunchtimes can be boisterous in the large outdoor play area. Leaders recognise this

and as a result, have taken the decision to employ pastoral leads. This is to support with further improvements in behaviour and increase supervision at key times in the school day.

- Parents have mixed views about behaviour and a small number of parents shared concerns about bullying with inspectors through the online questionnaire, Parent View. School leaders have prioritised the importance of ensuring that all parents are clear of the processes and systems in place to keep pupils safe. They know that there is more work to do in ensuring that all parents know about the good work that they are doing.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017, more Year 6 pupils achieved expected standards than pupils nationally. However, fewer pupils than nationally achieved the higher standards of attainment.
- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are making effective progress. This is because the quality of teaching is good and improving.
- Leaders' ambition for pupils is clear and, because teaching has improved, outcomes across the school are improving, including for disadvantaged pupils. More pupils, including previously high-attaining pupils, are currently achieving the higher standard of attainment at the end of Year 6 than in previous years.
- Pupils are developing knowledge across the curriculum in a wider range of subjects because the curriculum is well planned and implemented. However, there is more to do to ensure that subject leaders across the curriculum enable pupils to practise their basic skills in all subjects, including developing stamina and skill in extended writing tasks.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making progress against their individual targets. Increasing numbers are meeting age-related expectations. However, like other pupils, they are not expected to apply the basic skills learned across the curriculum because their individual plans do not always address the very specific barriers to learning that they have. This is slowing progress for some of these pupils in some year groups.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making progress in line with other pupils. In Years 5 and 6 they are making more rapid progress. Year-group leaders oversee the provision for these pupils. They are adapting provision so that teachers lead interventions and catch up programmes because this has most impact on pupils' progress. As result, the gap between the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and other pupils is decreasing over time. For example, standardised scores for Year 6 pupils in the national tests improved faster than for other pupils in the school in 2017.

School details

Unique reference number	142395
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10052620

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	434
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	David Lennard Jones
Headteacher	Helen McCarney
Telephone number	01362 693876
Website	www.derehamjunior.dneat.org
Email address	office@derehamjunior.dneat.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Information about this school

- The school is a sponsored academy and joined DNEAT in 2015.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The headteacher is also the headteacher of another federation of two schools which are not part of DNEAT.
- School improvement services are provided by the academy trust and the partner school.

- The school is currently led by a transition board of governors with the support of senior leaders and trustees of the academy trust.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed lessons across the school in all year groups. This included a range of reading, writing and mathematics lessons and some lessons in other subject areas.
- They read with pupils from all year groups and looked at pupils' workbooks.
- Inspectors spoke to parents as they arrived with their children for school and took account of the 37 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the 17 free texts.
- Meetings were held with leaders of the school, governors and representatives of DNEAT.
- A range of internal and external documents were examined, including reports from DNEAT and an external consultant that the school commissioned to provide a review of the pupil premium spending.
- Inspectors also looked at the range of governor reports and minutes, and reports received by the governing body.
- Inspectors checked the school's single central record of pre-employment checks and other documentation concerned with the safer recruitment of staff and volunteers.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils throughout the school day and met with two groups of pupils formally. They observed mid-morning break and lunchtimes.
- They also considered the 36 responses from the online staff survey and spoke to the two newly qualified teachers employed by the school.

Inspection team

Debbie Rogan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lynsey Holzer	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Daniel	Ofsted Inspector

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