

# Danehill Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Danehill, Haywards Heath, East Sussex RH17 7JB

## Inspection dates

16–17 January 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The interim headteacher is determined that pupils in this small school receive the best possible standard of education. She is held in high regard by parents, staff and pupils.
- Governors are impressively proactive in all aspects of their work. They provide a high level of challenge and support for school leaders.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well. They have respectful relationships with each other and the staff.
- Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school. They feel their children are safe, well cared for and treated as individuals.
- Safeguarding is a strength of the school. Leaders and staff know pupils well and are highly responsive to their needs.
- Teaching is good. Teachers and support staff appreciate the useful opportunities the headteacher gives them to develop their skills.
- The small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils make good progress because they are supported well.
- Children get off to a strong start in the early years. They settle into school quickly and happily.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, leaders' work to deepen pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in subjects other than English and mathematics remains a priority.
- High expectations and challenge for pupils, including the most able, are increasingly evident but there is a lack consistency across the school, and within some subjects.
- Overall, pupils achieve good outcomes at the end of key stages 1 and 2. Current pupils are making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The skilled teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) and recent improvements in the teaching of reading and writing are beginning to reap benefits. As a result, pupils make strong progress in these subjects.
- Teachers assess pupils' work accurately in reading, writing and mathematics. However, subject leaders do not rigorously monitor teaching and learning, to ensure that the highest standards are maintained, in subjects other than English and mathematics.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Further improve teaching and assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics so that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are deepened.
- Ensure that subject leaders rigorously monitor teaching and learning to maintain the highest standards across the curriculum.
- Continue to raise the expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly for the most able.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, staff and governors are united in their ambition for all pupils to have the best possible school experience. They are unwavering in their determination to ensure that high standards are maintained. They are not complacent and work effectively together for the benefit of all pupils.
- Since the arrival of the interim headteacher, in September 2017, the pace of improvement has further increased. The impact of her work is evident and recognised by the pupils themselves. One pupil stated, 'The headteacher has made a big difference to this school.'
- Staff work remarkably well as a team and morale is high. The headteacher encourages and supports staff to reflect deeply about their practice. Staff appreciate the thoughtful attention given to their professional development. One teacher commented: 'The headteacher has brought a whole new way of thinking and trusts us to implement our ideas.' As a result, teachers have strong subject knowledge and are becoming increasingly more innovative in their approach.
- Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. The headteacher scrutinises the school's performance from every possible viewpoint. Leaders are quick to provide support where needed and swiftly address aspects of the school's performance that may occasionally dip. For example, leaders have updated the school's library to encourage pupils to read often and widely, in order to enhance pupils' enjoyment of reading.
- Subject leaders are developing their roles and are enthusiastic about their work. They are knowledgeable about the school's priorities for improvement and how their work must contribute to these. However, the impact of their work in bringing about improvements is not yet consistent and lacks some urgency.
- The curriculum is balanced. Pupils learn a broad range of subjects, which are enhanced by trips to interesting places. For example, pupils visited the British Museum and a Roman site to bring alive their learning in the classroom. However, leaders recognise that further work is needed to improve the teaching and assessment of subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Leaders use the government's additional funding for sport effectively. Despite the physical limitations of the school's site, leaders are determined that pupils should engage in a range of sporting activities. Leaders have improved the quality of physical education teaching through appropriate and regular training. An impressive proportion of pupils take part in a range of after-school sports clubs, such as netball and football, and the school competes in many sporting events. The use of a neighbouring school's swimming pool means that pupils' swimming skills are developed well. Pupils are rightly proud of their many successes at local swimming galas.
- Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND are cared for well and this area of the school's work is led with exceptional skill. Leaders' inclusive approach means that this group of pupils receives the necessary support in class. Staff are trained to provide specific interventions to support the learning of individual pupils. Pupils are provided with appropriate and helpful resources to aid their learning. As a result, pupils with SEND

make good progress from their starting points.

- Leaders ensure that the provision for disadvantaged pupils is effective. These pupils receive bespoke academic and pastoral support so that they learn successfully and achieve well. Provision for these pupils is tracked rigorously to ensure they receive the specific help they need. As a result, this group of pupils makes good progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Carefully planned experiences are woven through all aspects of school life. Strong Christian values permeate the school. These are enhanced through weekly assemblies and close links with the local church. Weekly 'candle time' allows pupils time for deeper reflection, when they consider profound and meaningful questions. Pupils have an increasing understanding of the different faiths and beliefs which are explored through assemblies and the wider curriculum. For example, in dance lessons pupils have been learning dance routines from different countries.
- All parents spoken to and those who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were effusive in their praise for the school. They appreciate the efforts of leaders and staff, and feel strongly that the school plays a central and important role within the community. Parents say their children are happy and flourishing. One parent, expressing a view voiced by many, stated: 'There is a strong sense of community here, the school feels like a family.'
- The local authority has an accurate understanding of the school. It offers useful support and challenge to leaders, helping the school to improve and ensuring that outcomes remain high.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors care deeply about the school and are focused on its improvement. They have an insightful understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They actively seek to improve their skills and regularly receive training. Governors seek out information so that they can carry out their statutory duties to the highest standard.
- Governors work hard to ensure that the school's finances are used effectively. They give admirable attention to forward planning and judiciously reflect on ways in which the school can develop. They have taken a highly proactive approach to sustaining the school's long-term future and have been successful in attracting families, increasing the number of pupils on roll. They sensibly keep parents informed and work closely with the local community for the benefit of the school.
- Governors rigorously challenge school leaders. They use well-informed questioning to highlight areas that could further improve. They consistently probe for information, inviting staff to their meetings and monitoring the work of school leaders for themselves.
- Governors' attention to safeguarding is meticulous. They regularly check the school's single central record and are clear that pupils' safety is paramount. For example, they undertake an annual safeguarding audit and make sure that actions are followed up swiftly.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff training in safeguarding is frequent and appropriate. This ensures all staff are well informed and share the collective responsibility for keeping pupils safe. Staff are highly vigilant. Parents, and in some cases the wider community, trust leaders and staff to help with any concerns they may have regarding the welfare of pupils.
- Staff have an in-depth knowledge of their pupils. They are well trained to identify and report any concerns they may have. Concerns are acted on swiftly and leaders take robust action to help pupils and their families get the support they need.
- All parents feel that their children are safe in school. Pupils say they feel safe. They appreciate that staff keenly look out for their welfare and safety and say that the adults in school are very kind and caring.
- Pupils have frequent opportunities to learn about staying safe online. This is done through regular class discussions, distinctive and informative posters around the school and focused events. Consequently, pupils are clear about how to avoid online risks.
- Leaders ensure that the school's recruitment processes are fit for purpose. All the appropriate checks on adults working in school are carried out and recorded effectively.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teachers' strong subject knowledge and generally highly effective teaching means pupils enjoy their learning. The high expectations set for pupils' achievement motivates them to try their best. As a result, pupils make good progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Teachers encourage pupils to reflect on their learning habits and how these impact on their work. Pupils in key stage 1 were impressively able to explain that they were demonstrating the learning habits of 'curiosity' and 'resilience' when researching their topic on birds.
- In mathematics, pupils are given many opportunities to solve problems and explain their reasoning, both verbally and in their written work. Teachers provide pupils with a range of resources which help support their mathematical understanding. Teachers plan activities carefully so that pupils build a secure understanding of mathematical concepts. For example, pupils working on decimals were able to be successful because of their secure knowledge of place value.
- Leaders' effective work in English has resulted in pupils making rapid progress. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils read regularly and write at length. Teachers use high-quality texts to develop pupils' vocabulary and skilfully support pupils to edit their work. An example of this was pupils carefully considering their word choices, changing words such as 'pretended' to 'feigned', and 'shouted' to 'boomed', to bring increased precision to their writing.
- In English and mathematics, the most able pupils are generally provided with work that challenges them. However, sometimes work does not challenge these pupils well enough across the wider curriculum, limiting the progress that they make in some subjects.
- Teaching effectively meets the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.

Staff know pupils well and use this knowledge skilfully to plan pupils' learning and tailor support. Additional adults work closely with teachers and leaders to ensure that the support they provide is closely focused on improving pupils' learning. As a result, pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils typically make the same strong progress as others, from their starting points.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are confident and becoming increasingly self-assured. They value the varied opportunities they are given to contribute to the life of the school, and feel they have a 'voice' in the school's developments. For example, pupils reflect maturely on how the new system for peer mentoring on the playground is working.
- Pupils are kind and caring towards each other. They accept each other's differences readily and say everyone is warmly welcomed into the school. This was exemplified by the comment of one pupil, 'It's not about what you look like; it's about who you are.'
- Teachers encourage pupils to collaborate harmoniously, at all times. This is a strength and reflects the supportive atmosphere across the whole school. It is illustrated vividly by one pupil's astute observation, 'We are connected. We are one big group.'
- Religious education lessons offer opportunities for pupils to consider complex questions. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were able to impressively explain their thinking about the statement, 'God doesn't have favourites.'
- The school skilfully celebrates and nurtures each pupil's individuality. Parents agree. Comments from parents included, 'My child has a growing sense of confidence and belief in himself' and 'There is genuine care from all the staff.'

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The school is an exceptionally calm and orderly environment. Pupils conduct themselves well at breaktime and when they move around the school. Lunchtimes are harmonious and civilised occasions, when pupils show impeccable manners.
- Leaders and staff expertly model the conduct they expect from pupils. The school's clear behaviour policy is understood by staff and pupils. Leaders track behaviour patterns carefully, putting in place personalised programmes when necessary. Consequently, incidents of poor behaviour are very rare.
- Behaviour in lessons is positive and focused on learning. Pupils pay attention to their teacher and contribute readily to discussion. They cooperate well together, working in pairs or groups, helping and supporting each other. For example, pupils in key stage 1 worked happily together to design and make bird boxes out of construction bricks.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Overall attendance is high and above national figures. Leaders track attendance diligently. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is higher

than that of their peers and rising. Leaders provide individual and intensive support for the families of pupils whose attendance is low.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- The teaching of early reading is effective, and pupils quickly get to grips with the skills needed to read. High-quality teaching provides pupils with the strategies they need to sound out unfamiliar words successfully. In 2017 and 2018, below-average proportions of Year 1 pupils met the expected standard in the phonics screening check. However, the school's current performance information shows a sharp improvement.
- Pupils achieve well as they move through key stage 1, building on their good start in Reception. Provisional end-of-key-stage-1 results for 2018 show that the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standards and greater depth, in reading, writing and mathematics, were above the national figures.
- Provisional end-of-key-stage-2 outcomes for 2018 show the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics were above the national averages. Overall, pupils made broadly average progress in all three subjects, with slightly less progress in reading.
- Current disadvantaged pupils make the same good progress as others in the school because they receive effective support. Work in the books of current disadvantaged pupils shows that there are no significant differences between the standard of their work and that of others.
- Pupils with SEND receive carefully tailored support that is well matched to their individual needs. As a result, most pupils with SEND progress well towards their personal targets, with many exceeding them.
- On the whole, most-able pupils achieve well. The provisional results for 2018 show that, by the end of key stage 2, the proportions of the most able achieving the higher standards in writing and mathematics were above those seen nationally. However, in reading their attainment of the higher standard was below the national average.
- Recent work to improve pupils' writing and reading outcomes is showing early signs of success. Pupils enjoy writing and teachers provide pupils with many authentic and purposeful opportunities to write. For example, pupils in key stage 1 were observed writing leaflets for the headteacher about their class topic. The development of the new library area is successfully contributing to pupils' evident enjoyment of reading.
- Pupils use their well-developed English and mathematical skills in other subjects. Work in pupils' books shows some evidence of creative links between subject areas. However, in some subjects, such as science and art, pupils' progress is more variable because pupils' learning has not been planned or assessed precisely enough.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Children get off to a strong start in early years. Children start school with skills broadly typical for their age. By the end of Reception Year, the proportion of children achieving

a good level of development remains consistently above the national average and has risen over the last two years.

- The leader of early years has a clear vision for the children in her care. She is ambitious for them and is working creatively to make improvements to the outside area to further develop and stimulate children's learning.
- Leaders manage children's transition into school well. They build positive relationships with parents and offer useful opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning.
- Strong routines and clear expectations mean children know what is expected of them. They respond quickly and sensibly to adults' instructions. Children successfully develop their independence skills, for example by putting their jumpers on and getting ready for outside play.
- Children make strong progress because of the good teaching which is based on the accurate assessment of children's needs. Staff focus carefully on all aspects of children's welfare and learning. For example, adults carefully observe how children hold their pencils and crayons. Consequently, children make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Children get on well with each other and enjoy imaginative play together. Children were observed making cages for their dinosaurs, mixing paint colours and being shopkeepers, carefully counting out money.
- Children enjoy learning in their safe early years environment. Adults have high expectations for children's behaviour and pay close attention to their well-being. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Staff keep a watchful eye on children to ensure that they are kept safe.
- The teaching of early reading is effective and includes structured daily phonics sessions. Children are encouraged to explore letter sounds and words through books. For example, children are learning about cats and reading stories about catapults. Children have useful opportunities to apply their knowledge of letters and the sounds they represent to their writing.
- Reception children share the outside area with pupils in the adjacent key stage 1 class. Resources are shared, and sometimes children from both classes take part in the same activities both inside and outside the classrooms. This prepares children well for their transition to key stage 1.



## School details

Unique reference number	114499
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10085497

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gordon Denslow
Headteacher	Lizzie Overton
Telephone number	01825 790388
Website	<a href="http://www.danehillcepschool.org">www.danehillcepschool.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@danehill.e-sussex.sch.uk">office@danehill.e-sussex.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	6–7 May 2009

## Information about this school

- Danehill Church of England Primary School is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The interim headteacher joined the school in September 2017.
- The school comprises one class for Reception children and three other classes, covering key stage 1, lower key stage 2 and upper key stage 2.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and the proportion with SEND are below the national averages for primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national figure.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

- A Section 48 inspection was carried out in March 2015.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in all classes. All observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector held two telephone calls with a representative from the local authority.
- Parents' views were considered through face-to-face informal discussions and 39 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and looked at work in their books.
- The inspector spoke to pupils informally and met with a group of pupils from Year 1 to Year 6.
- The inspector held meetings with senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders, and also met with a representative group of staff to gather their views.
- A range of documents was scrutinised, including: the school's self-evaluation; information on pupils' attendance and behaviour; records relating to pupils' safety; and the school's own information on pupils' progress and outcomes.

## Inspection team

Frances Nation, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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