

Inspection of a good school: Denton Community College

Taylor Lane, Denton, Manchester, Lancashire M34 3NG

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 November 2021

Outcome

Denton Community College continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have a positive view of Denton Community College. They appreciate how staff take the time to get to know them. Pupils feel safe in school. They are confident to be themselves. Pupils accept and value each other's differences. Staff resolve any rare incidents of bullying quickly and effectively.

Pupils are confident, happy and articulate. They have a strong voice in this school. For example, pupils told staff about the different clubs and activities that they would like to participate in. As a result, leaders have increased the range of clubs to match pupils' interests. Leaders successfully support pupils' personal development.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils understand and value leaders' systems for managing behaviour. Around the school, pupils conduct themselves well and they are keen to learn in class. They pay attention and concentrate well on their work. Pupils forge strong relationships with their peers. They are equally mindful of each other's well-being.

Leaders and governors have high ambitions for all pupils' learning. They do all that they can to help pupils do well in school. Staff prepare pupils well for their future lives. Pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils, achieve well.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders, including governors, have a clear vision for the quality of education that they expect all pupils to receive. They ensure that by accessing a broad and suitably ambitious curriculum, pupils achieve well. This includes those pupils with SEND.

Overall, leaders have planned the curriculum effectively. In most subjects, curriculums help pupils to know, remember and build upon the essential information that they need to be successful in future learning. However, in a small number of subjects, leaders' plans

are not as well developed. On occasion, some pupils miss out on useful information and knowledge. Leaders are in the process of fine-tuning their curriculum plans to develop these subjects further.

Teachers choose suitable activities to deliver the curriculum. Staff ensure that classrooms are positive places for pupils to speak, listen and learn. Teachers check pupils' learning effectively. They are quick to identify misconceptions. They support pupils to correct any errors that they make. This helps pupils to build up their subject knowledge with accuracy.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use this to enthuse pupils. Teachers regularly recap important learning. As a result, pupils remember what they have learned previously. They apply this knowledge with confidence to new and more ambitious learning.

Leaders are effective in identifying the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers and other adults make effective use of the information that they gain about these pupils. This helps pupils with SEND to access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Leaders provide an effective catch-up reading curriculum for those pupils who are behind with their reading knowledge. These pupils quickly become confident and fluent readers. Teachers successfully foster a love of reading among pupils.

Pupils behave very well in lessons. They are proud of their schoolwork. They are sensible and respectful when moving around the school site and during social times.

Leaders have introduced a behaviour management system that is based on listening, respect and care. Pupils said that most staff use this approach well. However, some pupils said that a small minority of staff are not always polite to them when things go wrong. These pupils said that sometimes these staff do not consider their feelings and well-being effectively enough.

Leaders prioritise the personal development curriculum, which is well planned. They ensure that pupils receive appropriate relationships, sex and health education. Leaders aim to capture the interests of every pupil within the range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that they provide. These include drama, music and pride clubs.

Staff appreciate how leaders and governors protect them from excessive workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding at Denton Community College. Staff know how to spot the signs that pupils are at risk of harm. Leaders are raising pupils' and staff's awareness of the risks and issues associated with peer-on-peer abuse.

Pupils know how to report any worries. They told inspectors that they are confident to seek help from staff when they need it. Staff process this information in a timely manner. They quickly identify whether pupils require additional support from external agencies. Leaders ensure that pupils and their families get the help that they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A minority of curriculum areas are not planned as effectively as leaders want them to be. As a result, some pupils do not cover, or remember, as much knowledge as they should in these subject areas. Leaders should finalise the remaining curriculum plans that they are currently working on to ensure that pupils know and remember more of the intended curriculum.
- Leaders have introduced a new behaviour policy. Most staff have embraced this new approach and apply it. However, some pupils said that a small minority of staff are not polite to them when things go wrong. These pupils said that sometimes these staff do not consider their feelings and well-being effectively enough. Leaders should continue to evaluate their new behaviour system to ensure that all staff apply the policy fairly and consistently.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2015.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	135122
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10199561
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1384
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mel West
Headteacher	Greg Rule
Website	www.dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 October 2015, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at three external providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of governors and other members of the governing body.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's records of safeguarding checks and referrals to the local authority. Inspectors spoke with staff about how they keep pupils safe. Inspectors also asked the pupils how they learn how to keep themselves safe and what to do if they have any concerns.

- Inspectors held discussions with staff and considered the responses to Ofsted’s online staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from all year groups and considered the responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire for pupils.
- Inspectors considered the views of the parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted’s online parental survey. This included reviewing the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the views of the parents who contacted them by email during the inspection.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in art and design, English, mathematics and science. Inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and looked at samples of pupils’ work from some other subjects.

Inspection team

Stephen Ruddy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Elaine Parkinson	Ofsted Inspector
Lindy Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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