

Inspection of a good school: Denby Church of England Voluntary Aided First School

Goose Green, Upper Denby, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD8 8UN

Inspection date:

1 December 2021

Outcome

Denby Church of England Voluntary Aided First School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Denby Church of England Voluntary Aided First School is a friendly and welcoming village school. Behaviour is strong, allowing pupils to learn and make progress. The behaviour policy is well understood and is fairly applied. Bullying is rare. Effective provision is in place to help the few pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour. As a result, pupils are happy and feel safe. They enjoy the time they spend in school. One parent summarised the school and said, 'The school provides a lovely nurturing environment. Pupils are well behaved and polite and treat others with respect and kindness'.

Pupils learn about the school values of faith, knowledge and love. They develop an understanding of the values in themselves and in other people. As one pupil said,, 'We know how to say sorry and then we can continue to get along'. Pupils make a positive contribution to the community. Close links with the local church supports their personal development well. Leaders plan a variety of activities, visits and visitors that broaden pupils' experiences. Pupils value these opportunities and talk about the benefits they have on their learning.

The curriculum in most subjects is taught well. However, in some subjects, for example history and design technology, there is still work to do. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. They have an understanding of Christianity. However, pupils' knowledge of other faiths is less strong. They have fewer experiences around other faiths.

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

The school continues to provide a good education. All staff and governors share high aspirations for their pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff value the leadership of the headteacher. They recognise her determination for all to succeed. Staff said that senior leaders are caring and

approachable. They appreciate how leaders carefully consider staff's workload and well-being when planning further improvements to the school. Staff morale is high.

Pupils and staff are passionate about reading. They readily recall their favourite books and authors. They enjoy reading on a daily basis. Pupils talk eagerly about the texts they share in their classes and look forward to their visits to the school library. Pupils start learning the sounds that letters make as soon as they start school. Leaders introduced a new phonics programme in September 2021. This is providing a systematic approach to teaching phonics and early reading. Younger pupils are reading books that match the sounds they know. Throughout key stage 1, reading is assessed regularly. Staff provide pupils with extra help when needed so that they do not fall behind in their reading. Older pupils read a wide variety of books and use these to improve and develop their writing.

Teachers deliver a well-planned mathematics curriculum. The curriculum is carefully sequenced and broken down into small steps. This ensures that pupils have a secure knowledge of mathematics that builds coherently. Mathematics is well taught. There is a clear routine in the way pupils learn. Teachers plan activities to build pupils' skills and knowledge over time. This has led to pupils achieving well in mathematics. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of learning. Pupils' work shows that they work hard, taking pride in their learning.

Children make a strong start in the early years and settle quickly into school. Staff plan interesting learning activities that develop children's language skills. Children enjoy listening to stories that adults read to them.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) keeps a close eye on the provision for pupils with SEND. Teachers provide additional help, if it is needed, to make sure that pupils with SEND can learn alongside their classmates

Leaders make sure that pupils study the full range of national curriculum subjects. Plans for all subjects show how pupils' understanding will build over time. In some subjects, for example art, leaders have broken down plans to show precisely the subject-specific knowledge and skills pupils will learn when they are studying a particular topic. This helps teachers check that pupils are learning and remembering what they should be. In some subjects, for example history and design technology, plans lack the same level of detail. Links to the local area help to make learning relevant for pupils. For example, pupils recently visited Denby Delf nature reserve where they studied birds, flowers and wildlife. Pupils say that this helps them with their artwork.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There are robust systems in place to check that all adults who work with pupils are suitable to do so. Records of these checks are comprehensive and up to date. Staff and governors are trained to understand their responsibilities and how to spot the signs of abuse or neglect. They know how to report their concerns. The school works well with

agencies to seek specialist support when necessary. Leaders take appropriate action to safeguard pupils.

Governors check regularly on safeguarding processes to ensure that they remain robust. Pupils have a secure knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all curriculum plans are sufficiently detailed. They do not consistently show what pupils will learn in each subject to make sure that pupils build their knowledge and remember more. This means that, in some subjects, it is more difficult to check if pupils have learned what teachers intend them to learn. Leaders need to make sure that all schemes of work are precise about exactly what knowledge and skills pupils will learn, particularly in history and design technology, so that all pupils are able to learn more and remember more.
- Although pupils learn about different faiths and cultures, their experiences of faiths other than Christianity are few. As a result, pupils do not have detailed knowledge of different faiths and cultures.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2011.

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	107742
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10200205
Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Love
Headteacher	Claire Minogue
Website	www.denbyfirstschool.kirklees.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school works in a formal partnership, Green Hills Federation, with Farnley Tyas Church of England (C) First School and Thurstonland First School. The headteacher leads the three schools.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher (who is also the SENCo), the assistant headteacher, a representative from the local authority, curriculum leaders

for English, mathematics and art, a representative from the local authority, groups of staff and representatives from the governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors visited a sample of lessons in reading and mathematics.
- An inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and scrutinised the schools checks on recruitment. Inspectors looked at how the school keeps pupils safe.
- Inspectors considered 11 responses to the staff survey, 17 responses to the pupil survey and 17 responses to the parent survey.

Inspection team

Gerry Wilson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Judy Shaw

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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