

# Inspection of Denham Green E-ACT Primary Academy

Nightingale Way, Denham Green, Buckinghamshire UB9 5JL

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Inspection dates: 4 and 5 October 2022

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils love their school. They are enthusiastic about their lessons and learning. Pupils are proud to receive special mentions from the headteacher, such as 'star of the week' or a 'proud cloud'. Pupils want to 'do the right thing' at Denham Green.

Pupils, including children in the Reception Year, feel happy and safe. Leaders regularly check in on how pupils feel. Pupils know staff are ready to listen and act on any worries. The pastoral support in the school is very strong. Leaders want the best for all pupils.

Pupils learn about why being a good friend is important. They understand that they are unique, and are respectful of others. During the inspection, pupils attended an assembly about neurodiversity. They know a range of strategies to support their friends when needed.

Leaders have set their behaviour expectations out clearly. Pupils follow the 'Denham Green Way' to behave in lessons and around the school. They are kind, honest and show great empathy to each other. Pupils' manners are excellent. Low-level disruption in lessons happens at times. Teachers quickly refocus pupils back to learning. Bullying is rare. Leaders investigate any incident thoroughly.

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

Leaders have planned an ambitious and engaging curriculum. They have sequenced learning well in all subjects, from Reception to Year 6. Leaders have made sure that teachers understand how pupils, including children in the early years, learn best. Teachers ensure that pupils have opportunities to recap and retrieve knowledge. For example, in geography lessons, teachers remind pupils about key concepts such as the definition of a city or a settlement. This helps pupils remember more over time.

Assessment is used well overall by teachers to check how well pupils are learning what they should. In most subjects, but not all, leaders have made sure teachers have strong subject knowledge to be able to teach their lessons. However, sometimes teachers plan activities that do not link closely enough to what leaders want pupils to learn. Leaders know that there is still some work to do in setting out the curriculum in foundation subjects clearly and in making sure teachers have the knowledge to teach it.

Pupils enjoy reading and listening to the high-quality texts that leaders have selected. Pupils read regularly at home, keen to ensure that their class wins the reading trophy for the term. Author visits inspire pupils to try different books and read widely. Teachers give pupils who are learning to read books that match the sounds they know. This helps them to become fluent, avid and confident readers. Leaders introduced a new way to teach phonics in September 2022. Well-trained staff deliver phonics lessons expertly.

Leaders have ensured the curriculum helps pupils extend their vocabulary in each subject. Pupils use these new words in the right context. For example, in Reception, children practised using the words 'taller', 'longer' and 'shorter' while building towers and comparing dinosaur bones. Staff adapt learning and provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) so these pupils learn well. For example, staff preteach the key vocabulary before lessons. Pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their classmates. Leaders have clear processes in place to identify pupils who need extra support.

In September 2022, an additional Reception class opened. Staff have worked hard to ensure that they provide all children with a well-equipped learning environment. Staff plan engaging activities which capture children's interests and build on previous knowledge, skills and experiences.

Leaders have designed an effective curriculum for pupils' personal, social and health education. They make sure that pupils learn about global and national issues. For example, pupils learn about refugees, the monarchy and British values during 'drop down days' and the annual British heritage day. Pupils talk confidently about democracy. They are very much looking forward to the upcoming school elections. Pupils benefit from leadership responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council or a well-being champion. The great majority of pupils enjoy all that the school has to offer. However, a small number of pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Leaders are working well with families and improving this.

The school is well led. The trust provides effective governance. The trust knows the school well and provides a useful level of challenge and support. Staff are proud to work at the school and there is a real sense of team spirit. Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. Morale is high.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a sharp eye on the safeguarding of pupils at all times. Staff understand their responsibilities. They know the signs to look out for and report concerns quickly. Leaders take swift action to safeguard pupils where required.

Leaders know their pupils and families well. They work closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils have the help they need. Leaders provide families with a high level of effective support.

The trust makes regular checks to make sure that the arrangements for safeguarding are robust.

Through lessons and assemblies, staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, the precise content that leaders want pupils to remember is sometimes not clear enough. Teachers do not always know exactly what pupils have learned in the past, so they cannot build on what pupils know and can do. Leaders should specify, with absolute clarity, all the knowledge that is most important, in all subjects, so that teachers know exactly what pupils must learn and remember.
- Sometimes, in some foundation subjects, teachers plan lessons that do not support the intended curriculum. This means that, in those subjects, pupils are not learning as well as they could. Leaders should make sure that teachers have the training they need to teach the curriculum well.

## 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.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139679
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227479
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	225
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Lord Jim Knight
<b>Headteacher</b>	Cesare Nocera
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://denhamgreenacademy.e-act.org.uk">https://denhamgreenacademy.e-act.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of E-ACT Multi-Academy Trust.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2019.
- The number of pupils on roll increased in September 2022 due to Reception Year 2022 being two-form entry. All other year groups are currently one-form entry.
- The school uses one alternative provider, which is registered with Ofsted.
- The school offers a breakfast club and an after-school club.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff, pupils and parents.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and geography. Inspectors spoke to subject leaders, staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. An inspector heard pupils read to an adult from the school. Inspectors also spoke to leaders, visited lessons, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector met with the interim chief executive officer, the national director of primary and the regional education director from the E-ACT Multi-Academy Trust. She also met with two parent ambassadors, who are the link between the parent community and the trust.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements. This included safer recruitment checks and the school's records of concerns. Inspectors also spoke to staff, the trust and pupils about safeguarding.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation of the school and school development plans.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the day. They spoke to pupils about their views on behaviour in school. Inspectors considered how the school is supporting pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors took into account parents' responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' free-text comments. An inspector spoke with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Lea Hannam, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Deirdre Crutchley

Ofsted Inspector

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