

Inspection of East Dene Primary

Doncaster Road, East Dene, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S65 2DF

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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?

Leaders at all levels have helped to ensure that the school is a harmonious place for all the school community. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils feel proud of their school and appreciate the care and help that they get from staff. Parents and carers are also proud of the school and feel included in what happens through events like 'early bird reading'.

Pupils are polite and well mannered. They move from one part of the school to another sensibly. On the rare occasions that pupils do not conduct themselves to the high standards staff expect, teachers deal with this calmly and fairly. Pupils enjoy their breaktimes and lunchtimes where 'active leaders' help them find activities to do to keep them fit and healthy.

Pupils enjoy listening to stories at the end of the day. This is one of the many ways that pupils learn new words and ideas. Some of these stories have important themes around diversity such as gender respect or what it is like to be a refugee. These themes help to engender tolerance and respect. This is then further built on through assemblies, where pupils gain a clear understanding of British values, like individual liberty.

Pupils say that bullying is not an issue. Leaders are not complacent about this. They investigate issues and support pupils who may be experiencing difficulties. Pupils are reassured by all that staff do to keep the school a friendly and pleasant place to be.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance have all had a laser-like focus on the quality of education in the school. Trust leaders and school leaders have worked together to construct a curriculum that is both well planned and right for East Dene pupils. Leaders have planned out the important knowledge that pupils need. They have then mapped out what teachers need to do to ensure pupils build up to this knowledge.

Leaders have identified the words and phrases that pupils need to talk about what they know. Teachers use these in their lessons to ensure that pupils learn more vocabulary and become increasingly confident in talking to others. Teachers make sure pupils get the chance to practise speaking to their classmates before presenting what they know to the class.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn new words from the books and texts that pupils read. Leaders have ensured that pupils get off to a positive start in reading through the rigorous phonics programme. Pupils are taught the sounds that make up words and then read books with these sounds in to practise what they know. If any pupils fall behind, then staff give them short and helpful catch-up sessions. Most pupils can read fluently and confidently when they get into Year 3.

In phonics, pupils get to practise and revise sounds that they have learned in the past. This regular recapping of what pupils know is also present in other subjects. Leaders have planned out what teachers should come back to and when to do this. Leaders have also made sure that how teachers set up their lessons includes opportunities to recap, like in the 'six part' mathematics lessons or 'I do, we do, you do' in English. This regular revisiting helps pupils to remember what they have been taught in the long term.

Leaders have ensured that pupils receive exceptionally thoughtful and effective pastoral care. Pupils who are experiencing difficulties at home or are struggling to focus in school are given the help that they need. This helps classrooms to be calm and purposeful. Pupils come into school happy and ready to get on with what is needed.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit greatly from this care. They are given support and changes to their work that help them to be successful. Pupils with SEND can learn independently and contribute to class discussions. However, some pupils with SEND do not have some of their academic objectives broken down into the even smaller steps that they need. Some of these pupils struggle to blend sounds to make words even though they know the individual sounds, or are not getting better at forming letters or counting quickly enough.

Leaders have planned out the curriculum for children in the early years and are starting to add more detail to it. Leaders have ensured that there is a focus on language and stories in the early years. Staff focus on supporting children to improve their speaking. Sometimes staff do not do this as well as leaders intend. Staff sometimes ask general questions about what children are doing and do not model language or show children clearly what to do. Leaders are aware of this and have plans and resources in place to train and develop staff.

Leaders have clear and robust systems for checking on the attendance of pupils. Leaders make regular contact with and support families to get their children to school. Leaders have identified that persistent absence continues to be stubbornly high and that they and governors must continue to reduce it.

The arrangements for governance in the school are suitable and have contributed strongly to recent improvements. A school representative group (SRG) meets with leaders to check on what is happening to improve the quality of education. A local executive governing body (LEGB) work with other Rotherham trust schools to put in support and extra capacity where needed. Trustees then check that this is having the desired impact and ask questions where they have concerns. Trustees check that all staff have the training they need to do their job, including keeping pupils safe.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders work very well with external agencies to secure support for families who need it. They work with trust leaders and staff at Rotherham local authority in order to do this well. Staff record any concerns that they have about children, so that small details that might be needed by safeguarding leaders are not missed. Leaders knock on doors or call families if they are worried that a child is not at school and families respond well to this as relationships are strong.

Leaders know the specific issues that pupils are more likely to face in the local community. Leaders teach pupils about the dangers of online gaming and staff know what to look out for if pupils are being targeted by criminal gangs outside of school. Leaders respond to any concerns quickly and involve parents, so that pupils are fully supported.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the curriculum in early years has been developed recently and staff have not been fully trained in how to implement it. Some interactions that staff have with children are not purposeful and do not support children in improving their spoken language or skills. Leaders should train all staff in the early years on the new curriculum and how to model language. They should explain what children should do while learning independently, in a way that matches the curriculum.
- Leaders have not precisely defined some of the small steps of knowledge and skills that some pupils with SEND need to be successful in English and mathematics. Some pupils know the sounds in words but struggle to blend these together to read them. Other pupils with SEND practise counting or writing but do not get better at it quickly enough as they are not building up the full range of knowledge and skills that they need. Leaders should ensure that all specific objectives for pupils with SEND are broken down into sufficiently small steps of knowledge and skills for the pupils to be successful, particularly in reading.

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

Unique reference number	139225
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10228112
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	303
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Robert Turton
Headteacher	Louise Ridge
Website	www.eastdene.org/
Date of previous inspection	3 – 4 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Central Learning Partnership Trust (CLPT) multi-academy trust. There are three schools in Rotherham that are part of this trust. Trust leaders from these schools work with East Dene Primary School, including the deputy headteacher who works in this school and another in the trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There is a Nursery class for three- and four-year-olds.
- There is a breakfast club at the start of the day.

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 the headteacher, deputy headteacher, trust leaders from the Rotherham CLPT schools, a member of the SRG, the chair of the LEGB and spoke to a trustee over the phone.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, English, mathematics, physical education and history. In each subject, inspectors met with the subject leader, visited lessons, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke with teachers and pupils about their learning. Inspectors checked on how the early years contributed to each subject as part of each deep dive.
- Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work in science and French.
- Inspectors met with leaders about the plans for pupils with SEND and looked at how teachers were using these specific plans.
- Inspectors observed breaktimes and lunchtimes and asked pupils about behaviour in the school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and took note of all the responses to the online surveys, including ParentView.
- Inspectors looked at the records leaders keep for the safeguarding of pupils. Inspectors checked that leaders were ensuring that all staff in school are safe to work with pupils.

Inspection team

Matthew Knox, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Yeomans	Ofsted Inspector
Trudi Bartle	Ofsted Inspector

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