

Inspection of a good school: Decoy Primary School

Deer Park Road, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 1DH

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 January 2023

Outcome

Decoy Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Decoy Primary is an inclusive school with a family ethos. Leaders have high expectations for all. Pupils rise to these by working hard and acting on the guidance adults provide. As a result, pupils achieve well in most areas of the curriculum.

Pupils know the 'golden rule' well and they treat others how they wish to be treated. They enjoy one another's company and are courteous to all. On the rare occasion that bullying happens, adults sensitively and swiftly put things right. Pupils enjoy participating in a variety of clubs available to them, including football, coding and choir. They enjoy attending a range of trips that bring their learning to life.

Pupils are active members of their school and local community. They are keen to help and they are proud of the range of responsibilities they have, such as playtime leaders. Pupils raise funds for local and national charities through whole-school events. Many pupils, individually, raise funds for charitable causes important to them.

The majority of parents value the work of the school. One summed up the views of many, saying this is a place where children are 'accepted and celebrated'.

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

Following a period of change in leadership, the newly appointed headteacher has quickly established a clear and accurate view of the school. Governors challenge leaders about the impact of their actions and are clear what still needs to improve. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support and consideration they get from leaders. However, a number of subject leaders are new to their roles. This means they do not yet know how well their plans are working.

Leaders have established an engaging curriculum carefully outlining what pupils should learn and when. This starts from the early years and ensures new ideas build on what pupils already know. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are

accurately identified to ensure they get the support they need to successfully access the curriculum.

Leaders have rightly prioritised reading. Pupils benefit from access to high-quality, diverse texts across the curriculum. This encourages them to try out many different genres of literacy and widens their reading repertoire. Children in Nursery are carefully helped to develop their speaking and listening skills. Those in early years quickly learn to recognise letters and the sounds they represent. They enjoy listening to staff reading exciting stories. As pupils move through key stage 1, they build the skills they need to read fluently. Staff use the expert training to deliver the phonics programme effectively. They ensure that the books pupils read help them to practise the sounds they learn. Pupils who need extra support have regular additional sessions. These help them keep up.

Staff have secure subject knowledge and use this well across the curriculum. They plan activities that allow pupils to recap on what they have previously learned before, introducing new concepts. Staff support pupils with SEND well to access the learning. As a result, all pupils' work across the curriculum is of high quality. For example, in art, pupils rehearse important sketching and colour mixing skills that lead to high-quality outcomes. In most subjects, teachers provide pupils with effective feedback to ensure that gaps in pupils' understanding are addressed. However, this is not yet the case for all subjects in the wider curriculum. In these subjects, teachers do not always accurately check pupils' understanding before moving on to new learning. As a result, pupils do not achieve as they could.

Pupils' attitudes towards learning are positive. This begins in the early years, where children receive a range of learning opportunities and experiences. Early years staff skilfully support children to improve their communication and language skills. In lessons and around the school, pupils behave well. They are happy and safe and value their friendships.

Leaders plan and promote pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn resilience and independence across the curriculum. These values, as well as sporting and academic achievements, are celebrated during weekly assemblies. Pupils have an active voice in the school. Through leadership opportunities, such as the school council or eco-action teams, pupils take positive steps in improving their school and wider community. For example, the Eco Council contributes to the local authority's 'war on waste' project. Pupils are kind and tolerant. They know it is unacceptable to judge someone based on their appearance, faith or gender. This creates an ethos of acceptance and belonging for all.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, both in person and when online. They know how to report anything that may concern them.

Leaders have created a strong culture of vigilance. Staff receive regular training and understand the systems to record and report the slightest concerns. Record-keeping is

thorough. Leaders act swiftly where there are any concerns about a pupil's safety. They work effectively with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families have the help they need. There are robust processes for the safer recruitment of adults who work in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Across the wider curriculum, teachers' checks on pupils' understanding are not always precise enough. This hinders pupils' learning where they do not identify or address gaps or misconceptions. Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently check and help all pupils secure their knowledge of the important ideas in all subjects.
- Some leaders are either new to their role or to the school. This means that they do not yet know how well their subject plans are working. Leaders should ensure that they have a secure understanding of how well pupils are learning and achieving in all subjects.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2016.

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	113209
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10226869
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	439
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Simon Barnes
Headteacher	Sally Herbert
Website	www.decoyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher started in her post in September 2022.
- The governing body manages a nursery for 3- to 4-year-olds and before- and after-school childcare provision.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They also met with members of the governing body and representatives from trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- During the inspection, inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to them informally during social times.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke to the safeguarding leader and scrutinised a wide range of information, including a selection of the school's records. They also spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding and looked at how pupils learn to keep themselves safe.
- Inspectors met some parents to gain their views of the school. They reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They also took account of staff responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Laura James, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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