

Inspection of Denby Dale First and Nursery School

Gilthwaites Lane, Denby Dale, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD8 8SG

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2023

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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Denby Dale is a nurturing school where leaders have high expectations of pupils. Staff have worked diligently to develop the curriculum, and pupils now learn through a wide range of subjects. Staff motivate pupils and help them to succeed, both academically and personally. This includes all pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders have established consistent routines to support the school's high expectations of behaviour. There are very respectful working relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Incidents of bullying are extremely rare. When they do happen, pupils know that adults are quick to sort out the problems.

Pupils are happy, feel safe and enjoy learning. They are so proud when they earn any of the school's badges of honour. If they have any concerns or worries, pupils know that they can talk to an adult or access other support to help them keep calm. This includes spending time with the school's reading dog, Baxter.

Pupils have many opportunities and experiences to broaden their personal development, for example listening to visitors, going on trips and taking part in outdoor learning. The school develops pupils' cultural understanding well. Pupils are involved in fundraising for charities, including through national events.

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

Since starting at the school, leaders have overhauled the curriculum to ensure that it develops year on year from early years to Year 5. Most subjects are now carefully planned, identifying what pupils need to learn. Educational visits are incorporated into plans to bring learning alive. Pupils have many opportunities to revisit previous learning, including through recap activities at the beginning of lessons. This helps pupils to remember more over time. Older pupils had good recall when talking about aspects of history. They discussed, in depth, different Chinese dynasties and how they have developed their understanding of hierarchy. However, not all subjects are well planned in terms of identifying the key knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn. Leaders recognise this and have already started to develop these subjects further.

Reading is the key priority for the school. Leaders are determined for pupils to develop as confident readers. Staff have all been trained and they teach phonics well. They provide swift and effective support for those pupils who start to fall behind. Pupils read books that are well matched to the sounds they are learning. They develop as fluent and confident readers. A love of reading is promoted widely, including through daily story times and access to attractive reading areas in classrooms.

Pupils' behaviour and attendance across the school are good. Leaders have introduced a new behaviour policy. The positive impact of its implementation has been recognised by parents and carers and visitors alike. All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They work closely together to help pupils make the right choices. Pupils are eager to learn.

Pupils with SEND do well. Staff are aspirational for them. Staff use appropriate adaptations and resources to support these pupils in their learning. All pupils are fully included in lessons and other activities.

Children make a strong start in early years. Staff are calm and very friendly towards the children. They work hard to help children to develop their speech and vocabulary and grasp early reading and mathematical skills. Staff question children well to deepen their understanding, assess what children have learned and support any who fall behind. Children are provided with many exciting activities to help their development, both indoors and outside. For example, some children were totally absorbed when investigating how far a toy car could travel when released down a cross-section of drainpipe. Parents are welcomed into school to attend workshops and other events.

Pupils develop an understanding of, and respect for, individual differences. In addition to taking part in other activities, pupils have the opportunity to take part in outdoor learning, which helps develop their resilience and teamwork. The school offers a wide range of clubs that are well attended. Pupils are taught how to keep healthy, both in mind and body. They take part in daily activities, such as yoga, to support their personal development. Pupils take on responsibilities in the school, including the role of eco-councillors. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to debate issues and ideas.

Leaders manage the school well. They have been resolute in their actions to improve the school and know what to focus on to make it even better. Governors are unwavering in their support and visit the school regularly. They have seen the improvements leaders have made. Many staff are new to the school. They feel valued by leaders and recognise actions taken to support them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subjects do not match the quality of other, more developed curriculum areas. Because of this, pupils know more and understand more in some subjects compared with others. Leaders should further develop the curriculum so that it is of a consistently high quality across all subject areas.

- The school does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to debate. This contributes to many pupils not knowing how to debate issues. The school needs to plan more activities that enable pupils to debate, practise and consolidate what they have learned.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	107688
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10289942
Type of school	First
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Michelle Brear
Headteacher	Geoff Billing
Website	www.denbydale.education
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since September 2022.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders and visited a sample of lessons. In addition, inspectors looked at curriculum plans, spoke to teachers, talked to some

pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also met with senior leaders and looked at curriculum plans for science and at examples of pupils' writing.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff and pupils from conversations with them.
- An inspector spoke to some parents during the inspection. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including written comments.

Inspection team

Andy Taylor, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lindsay Lomas

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children’s social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023