

Inspection of The Deenway Montessori School

3-5 Sidmouth Street, Reading RG1 4QZ

Inspection dates: 4 to 6 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love school. They value Deenway's strong community atmosphere and like the fact that everyone knows each other well. Strong relationships ensure that pupils feel safe. The school promotes independence and responsibility from the start. Pupils develop increasing levels of responsibility as they move up through the school. They take care of the school's equipment and put things away sensibly. Children in early years delight in learning and chat excitedly about what they are doing. The school's religious ethos provides a firm framework for work and play.

Pupils respond very well to the school's high expectations of their behaviour and achievement. They are impeccably polite, behave exceptionally well, and their attitudes to learning are impressive. The school's well-designed curriculum prepares pupils effectively for the next stage of their education. Pupils achieve well in all phases and develop valuable personal and learning skills. The oldest pupils feel confident about the forthcoming move out of the school. They recognise the positive impact the school's curriculum has had on preparing them for future independent study. Pupils gain GCSEs in a range of subjects, including English, science and mathematics.

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

Leaders have addressed the key issues for development identified at the last inspection. They have given great thought to the precise detail of what pupils in each stage need to learn in every area of the curriculum. A whole school curriculum map details the content of what pupils learn from early years to Year 11. The school complies with the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage.

The curriculum demonstrates the school's high expectations for pupils' personal and academic achievements. The Montessori curriculum is followed from the start of early years and continues through lower and upper elementary classes. Pupils are well prepared for the transition to the liberal arts curriculum, which they follow in the secondary department. The older pupils study GCSEs in a range of subjects. Links with a local school developed since the last inspection have enabled the school to extend the range of GCSE subjects available.

Robust assessment procedures mean that staff have a clear view about pupils' learning. Staff routinely complete careful observations and assessments as a routine part of everyday practice, in line with the school's Montessori approach. They are reflective about what is working well and about where further adjustments to the curriculum may be needed to support individual pupils. No pupils currently in the school have formally identified special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders are mindful, however, that this may change in the future and are currently considering how and where adjustments to the curriculum may be needed should this be the case. They work constructively with parents, who are pleased with the education provided by the school.

The teaching of reading is a notable strength in the curriculum. The school's effective and consistent approach ensures that pupils develop strong reading skills. A well-established phonics programme ensures that they quickly learn the sounds that letters make. Pupils learn how to read actively as they move up through the school, increasingly questioning and analysing what they are reading. Books and literature are a key feature of the school. The youngest children choose from an enticing mixture of books which they thoroughly enjoy. Pupils engage with an increasingly wide range of texts, from classics by Charles Dickens to non-fiction books about Muhammad Ali's life. Staff read with energy and expression, so that books are brought to life and children are excited about reading.

Pupils enjoy physical education lessons, enthusiastically joining in with activities. They develop strong team and cooperation skills which complement their learning across the curriculum. In early years, activities such as circle time activities, action songs, and games in the playground support the youngest children's physical development well. However, the school is not currently using resources such as playground equipment as fully or routinely as it could to develop the youngest children's physical development.

Attendance has improved since the previous inspection. More robust procedures are now in place to monitor, analyse and report pupils' attendance than at the time of the previous inspection. This means that leaders have a clearer view of patterns and trends in attendance. They continue to emphasise the importance of pupils' regular attendance with parents.

Improvements in the premises identified at the progress monitoring inspection in July 2023 have been sustained. Suitable fire safety arrangements are securely in place and much of the building has been redecorated since the last inspection. The school is bright, attractive and well maintained. Classrooms are equipped with high-quality resources to support classroom learning. The school continues to comply with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Since the last standard inspection, the school has established a committee, known as the executive element of the advisory board. This group has played a key part in providing support and challenge for leaders to ensure that the unmet standards identified at the last inspection have been addressed. The headteacher, who is sole director of the proprietor company, has a clear vision of how the advisory board's role will develop over time. The school's capacity to secure further developments is strong. Staff feel well supported by leaders, who they say are open and responsive to feedback.

Pupils' behaviour makes a significant contribution to the school's quiet, calm and studious atmosphere. Pupils of all ages behave sensibly. They move around the school and between lessons maturely and politely, showing respect for adults and for each other.

The curriculum provides a broad and rich curriculum. Academic learning is enhanced with a wide range of visits and events, such as the annual spring tea, sports day,

farm workshops, and visits to local amenities. The school has a suitable careers programme in place. However, leaders rightly recognise that there is scope to develop this further, so that pupils are even clearer about the breadth of options available to them in the future.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The school's careers programme is not as well developed as it could be. Pupils are not as fully informed about future career options as they could be as a result. The school should review and update its careers programme to ensure that pupils are even clearer about the breadth of options available to them in the future.
- The school is not currently using all its resources as fully as it could to support the youngest children's physical development, which is not as well developed as it could be as a result. The school should make sure that resources and equipment are used fully and routinely to engage children in a wider range of physical activities than is currently the case.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	135995
DfE registration number	870/6016
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10322334
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	The Deenway Company Ltd
Headteacher	Munawar Karim
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,710 to £5,700
Telephone number	0118 957 4747
Website	www.deenway.org
Email address	community@deenway.org
Date of previous inspection	1 to 3 November 2022

Information about this school

- This is an Islamic school.
- For primary-aged pupils, and children in early years, this is a Montessori school, led by Montessori principles and practice and following the training and guidance of the Association Montessori Internationale. Pupils follow a liberal arts curriculum from the age of 11.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in November 2022. A progress monitoring inspection took place in July 2023.
- Currently, there are no pupils in the school with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors held a wide range of meetings during this inspection. These included discussions with the headteacher, senior leader and other members of staff.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were gathered through Ofsted's surveys and discussions. Inspectors spoke with pupils during lessons and at other times of the school day. They also met with two groups of key stage 3 pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and physical education. Deep dives included visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking with leaders, teachers and pupils.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alan Johnson

Ofsted Inspector

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