

# Inspection of The Deepings School

Park Road, Deeping St James, Peterborough, Lincolnshire PE6 8NF

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Inspection dates:	11 and 12 February 2025
The quality of education	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Kirstie Johnson. This school is part of Anthem Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Mohsen Ojja, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jay Bhutani. There is also an interim executive headteacher, Hannah Fahey.

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

The work of The Deepings School has improved in recent times. This is recognised by pupils, parents and carers, and staff. The school has established an inclusive culture based on mutual respect. Pupils enjoy positive relationships with staff. Pupils feel safe at the school and the vast majority behave well.

The school has high expectations of what pupils will achieve. It has worked well to develop a curriculum to enable all pupils to be successful. Although the school's published outcomes in national examinations have started to improve, too many pupils do not achieve as well as they should by the end of Year 11. Achievement in the sixth form is stronger. Sixth-form students are well prepared for their next stages in education, training or employment.

Extra-curricular and enrichment activities enhance the school's offer. Pupils develop their talents and interests in sport, music and drama clubs. Trips and visits complement the curriculum and provide memorable experiences. There are opportunities for pupils to develop leadership experiences with the school council or learning council. Many pupils are actively engaged in community and charity projects. Sixth-form students support the school community enthusiastically, acting as mentors and reading buddies to younger pupils.

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

The school has strengthened the curriculum. It is broad and ambitious. The school identifies the important knowledge and vocabulary that pupils will learn. This is ordered well to help pupils gain a deeper understanding as they progress through subject curriculums. In key stage 3, pupils study the full range of subjects. In key stages 4 and 5, pupils select from a well-considered selection of academic and vocational courses. All pupils can choose to take the full suite of English Baccalaureate GCSE subjects. The number of pupils that do so has increased.

Although the curriculum has improved, it is not delivered consistently well. Teachers have good subject knowledge. The school has provided training in planned strategies to support high-quality teaching. However, these are often not implemented effectively. At times, teachers do not check pupils' understanding or correct misconceptions when needed. In some lessons, activities do not focus sharply enough on the knowledge that pupils need to learn. As a result, pupils' learning across the curriculum is often insecure. However, this is not the case in the sixth form. Sixth-form lessons are challenging. Teachers check students' learning carefully and provide detailed feedback. This helps students to deepen their thinking and improve their work.

The school accurately identifies when pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Information is shared with staff so that they understand the specific challenges that pupils with SEND face. Staff have received training to develop their expertise in meeting pupils' individual needs. However, staff do not adapt learning

activities effectively to meet the specific needs of pupils with SEND. These pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

The school ensures that pupils can read well. It has appropriate systems in place to recognise when pupils have gaps in their reading knowledge. These pupils are well supported to catch up quickly.

The school prepares pupils well for their lives in modern Britain. For instance, the curriculum supports pupils to learn about diversity, equality and the fundamental British values. The curriculum for personal, social and health education teaches pupils how to stay physically and mentally healthy. They learn how to keep themselves safe, including online, and to maintain positive relationships. Pupils receive detailed information about their future choices in education and careers. Most pupils in Years 10 and 12 benefit from taking part in work experience.

Behaviour has improved. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and try hard. When incidents of poor behaviour happen, they are dealt with fairly and consistently. Pupils who struggle to regulate their behaviour receive effective support that helps them to improve. Attendance has also got better. The school has strong systems in place to monitor attendance and understands the reasons why some pupils are absent. Staff support these pupils well to help them attend more often.

The school, supported by the multi-academy trust and with a new leadership team, has made much-needed improvements to its provision. This is particularly evident in the work to address poor behaviour, and to develop the curriculum and personal development offers. Leaders from the school and the trust monitor the school's work effectively to assure themselves that it is having a positive impact. They continue to develop the expertise of staff to ensure that all pupils benefit from a high-quality education. While some staff have concerns about the impact of the changes on their workload, most are happy to work at the school. They share leaders' commitment to continue to bring about improvements.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The routines and strategies that the school has identified to help pupils learn subject content securely are not applied consistently across the curriculum. As a result, pupils' learning is sometimes insecure. They do not achieve as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers deliver the planned curriculum well.
- The school does not ensure that staff adapt learning activities effectively to meet the specific needs of pupils with SEND. This means that, too often, pupils with SEND do

not get the support that they need to be successful. The school should make sure that staff have the expertise necessary to meet the needs of all pupils.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137873
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10371059
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1025
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	36
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Jay Bhutani
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Mohsen Ojja
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kirstie Johnson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.deepings.anthemtrust.uk">www.deepings.anthemtrust.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	13 and 14 September 2023, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Anthem Schools Trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements

(quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the interim executive headteacher and other leaders from the school and from the multi-academy trust.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO of the trust and the chair of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, modern foreign languages and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their work in several other subjects.
- 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 held meetings with leaders and reviewed records relating to attendance, behaviour and personal development.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff, pupils, and parents through discussions and using Ofsted's online surveys.

## Inspection team

John Spragg, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Alison Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Roche	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Wilson	Ofsted Inspector
Nyree Parker	His Majesty's Inspector

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