



Denton Primary School

Address: Vicarage Lane, Denton, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN7 1DT

Unique reference number (URN): 121814

Inspection report: 10 February 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have clear systems and processes in place to support pupils to attend regularly. They work closely with families and offer well-tailored support. Leaders ensure that they understand the reasons why pupils are absent. They use attendance information to support and encourage pupils, and their families, to improve attendance. Attendance for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged is improving. Pupils attend school regularly.

Leaders have high expectations of behaviour. The school communicates these expectations to parents and carers, staff and pupils effectively. Staff have received appropriate training to support a consistent approach to behaviour management. They make appropriate adjustments to support pupils with SEND. Pupils behave well. They are able to learn without disruption. Pupils commit to their learning and take pride in their work. They are self-motivated, and they work cooperatively and collaboratively. Leaders know and understand their pupils and the context of the school well. Pupils who need help to improve their behaviour get the support they need. As a result, the number of incidents of poor behaviour has reduced over time. Pupils are confident that bullying is not tolerated in school. Leaders have created a culture where staff support and protect pupils.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that children get off to a positive start in the early years. Leaders have a clear understanding of the context and starting points of children. They work effectively with parents and carers to ensure a smooth transition into school. All staff know the children very well. Adults support children to develop their independence. For example, on arrival, children vote for the story of the day and 'sign' the register sheet. They do this without fuss. They are happy, and they want to learn.

The curriculum supports learning and progress. It identifies what children need to know and remember. The school ensures that children develop the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics that they need to be good learners. Children secure their knowledge of phonics to be able to read and write. They practise what they have learned in early mathematics. For example, they develop their understanding of doubling. Leaders identify the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and put appropriate support in place. Children, including those with SEND, achieve well and are ready for their next steps.

Some adult interactions with children are of high quality and develop language and communication; however, this is not consistent.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders identify and assess the needs of pupils effectively. They work productively with parents and carers, as well as external agencies, to support pupils to achieve well. Leaders

create individual learning plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The plans provide teachers with the right information to better meet pupils' needs.

Staff benefit from effective training to meet the ever-changing needs of pupils. In many lessons, teachers support pupils to overcome the barriers to their learning well. This is through adult support or using additional resources in mathematics. In reading and mathematics, teachers identify gaps in learning and provide pupils with the support to catch up with their peers. Leaders carefully monitor the impact of the additional sessions to ensure that they are making a difference and that pupils are making the progress that they should. Leaders acknowledge that the adaptation of learning in the classroom is an area in need of further development.

Staff know and understand the barriers that disadvantaged pupils may face. Leaders use funding effectively to ensure that pupils access the enrichment activities on offer and can overcome barriers to their learning. Pupils are fully included in the life of the school.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, know the school, the community and pupils well. Leaders are highly visible. They promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school, the positive relationships and the support for the pupils.

Those responsible for governance are knowledgeable about their statutory duties. They carry them out effectively. Governors provide appropriate support and challenge to school leaders. They are fully aware of the quality and impact of different aspects of the school's work. For example, they understand the effectiveness of the school's work to support disadvantaged pupils.

Leaders want to achieve the best possible outcomes and experiences for pupils. They take a strategic approach to improvement. Identifying the right priorities enables them to secure positive outcomes and experiences for pupils. Leaders take action to improve areas for development. However, the work to improve the provision for developing pupils' writing has not been swiftly implemented.

Staff benefit from a range of appropriate professional development opportunities. This training has strengthened their understanding of how to support pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour.

Leaders ensure that staff's workload is manageable. Staff appreciate how leaders are mindful of their wellbeing. Leaders collaborate in partnership with other rural schools to share ideas and improve provision.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The personal development curriculum is well sequenced. Pupils revisit learning to embed their knowledge. It supports pupils' physical and mental health development. The relationships and sex education and health education programme is age-appropriate. This programme helps pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including when online

and in the community. The curriculum is adapted to reflect the school's context. Leaders introduced their own 'Global curriculum' to broaden pupils' understanding of wider world issues. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their learning regarding children less fortunate than themselves who do not get fresh drinking water. They are proud of their sponsored walk to raise money for 'Water Aid'.

Pupils demonstrate a developing understanding of world faiths. They know about fundamental British values and how these align with the values of the school. They appreciate the need to treat all people with respect and celebrate differences.

Pupils feel welcomed, valued and respected, and feel that they belong in the school. Each morning, they reflect on how they are feeling. They choose which 'feelings flower' best reflects their emotions. They know that adults will then support them if they need them. Pupils enjoy supporting one another through their leadership roles.

Leaders ensure that pupils access the pastoral support that they need. Sensory circuits and 'time out' sessions are available for those who need them. This support ensures that pupils are in a positive position to access their learning.

Leaders create curriculum-enrichment opportunities. They check attendance to ensure that all groups of pupils are included. Pupils enjoy attending clubs that help to develop their character. Leaders ensure that pupils' interests and talents are identified and nurtured, for example through school performances such as 'Young Voices'. Pupils enthuse about the annual residential trips.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Staff do not consistently model the agreed handwriting style. They do not have high-enough expectations of how pupils should form letters after they have been taught how to do so. Staff do not identify gaps in pupils' knowledge in letter formation or fluent handwriting. As a result, these gaps are not closing.

In some subjects, pupils achieve well in national tests. The published outcomes fluctuate due to the small cohort size and changing context. This includes the number of disadvantaged pupils in each year group. Outcomes in writing have been above national averages over time. However, this was not reflected in pupils' writing during the inspection.

Teachers identify gaps in pupils' knowledge in reading and mathematics. They provide appropriate support to help pupils catch up. As a result, pupils make progress in these subjects.

Pupils across all year groups learn the intended curriculum. In some subjects, pupils talk about their learning confidently. They progress well through the curriculum.

Leaders have not ensured that staff consistently use their checks of what pupils already know to make the right adjustments to their teaching. Sometimes pupils move through an activity without understanding the key concepts. This results in confusion, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, they do not make the progress that they should.

In some classes, the curriculum meets the needs of pupils with SEND well. When this is effective, pupils progress well through the curriculum, for example when completing number activities with the support of practical resources.

Leaders know how well teachers deliver the curriculum. They have secured improvements in the teaching of reading and mathematics. Leaders have accurately identified the areas where teaching needs to improve. They have introduced a new approach to writing. This is beginning to impact positively on pupils' spelling. However, letter formation and handwriting are not taught consistently well.

The school's curriculum identifies what pupils will learn. It is well sequenced and builds on what pupils have learned over time. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations. They introduce challenging vocabulary. In some classes, teachers revisit prior learning to remind pupils what they have already learned. When this happens, pupils achieve well.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Staff and pupils are proud and happy to be part of this small school at the heart of the village. Pupils arrive at school eager and ready to learn. They want to be in school. As a result, pupils attend school well.

Staff build warm and positive relationships with pupils. Pupils have their 'helping hands', which remind them of adults who will help them. They know that staff will listen to them if they have a concern. Pupils say they feel safe. They say that bullying is rare, and if it happens, adults deal with it quickly.

Pupils play well together across the year groups. This includes the Nursery children, who wear bright bibs so that adults and other pupils can easily see them. Older pupils are mindful of the little ones. The youngest children benefit from socialising with the mixed ages.

Pupils take part in enrichment activities, including dancing, table tennis and the running club. They enjoy their leadership roles. For example, they can be a member of the school council or a librarian, where they like helping the younger children choose a book.

Well-established routines and high expectations of behaviour lead to pupils learning in a calm environment. Pupils live out the school's golden rules of 'be kind, be safe, be respectful and responsible'. They behave well. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning.

In some subjects, such as art and history, pupils talk about what they have learned with confidence and enthusiasm. Most pupils are prepared for the next stage of their learning.

However, teachers do not consistently check what pupils are learning. As a result, some of the work provided to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is not well matched to what they know.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment information to check what pupils already know, in particular when adapting learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They should ensure that activity choices support pupils to embed their learning.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers identify gaps in pupils' learning to improve all aspects of pupils' writing, including letter formation and handwriting.
 - Leaders should continue to develop high-quality interactions between adults and children in the early years.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Anthony Williamson.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other leaders, the vice-chair of governors, a representative from the local authority and a range of teaching and non-teaching staff. They also spoke to a wide range of pupils throughout the school during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not make use of alternative provision.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. The headteacher was appointed in September 2024.

Headteacher: Rosie Gibson

Lead inspector:


Donna Chambers, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Ben O'Connell, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 10 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

92

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

144

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

13.79%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.26%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

10.87%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	65%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	54%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	85%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	59%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	74%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	69%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	92%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	65%	73%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	84%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	92%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	92%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	71%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	79%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	77%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	100%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	65%	73%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	50%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	63%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	63%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	63%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

'S' in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	50%	68%	-18 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	63%	80%	-17 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	63%	78%	-15 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	63%	80%	-17 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

'S' in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been

mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	5.2%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.9%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	4.8%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	12.0%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	8.8%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	12.4%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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