

Inspection of Denham Village School

Cheapside Lane, Denham, Uxbridge, Buckinghamshire UB9 5AE

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils identify kindness as one of the main characteristics of this school. Pupils know staff want the very best for them and say they can rely on each other too. Pupils of all ages play together and know each other well. Because of this, pupils feel happy and safe at school.

Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They learn in calm and purposeful lessons. Because staff know them so well, they benefit from personal help and support. Pupils enjoy working together. One pupil commented, 'I learn so much at school that it seems boring at home!'

Pupils are active members of the school community. The school council includes pupils of all ages. The council, alongside eco-warriors and playground pals, keenly supports the school community. Pupils and families take part in poetry readings and make good use of the school holiday community library.

Pupils benefit from a range of additional opportunities. They enjoy different clubs, including sports and art activities. Leaders use the school's small size as an advantage when helping to develop pupils' shared experiences. A recent whole-school trip to the pantomime was popular and memorable. Pupils liked being there together, and they enjoyed the show and the ice cream.

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

In many subjects, pupils learn through a carefully considered curriculum that meets their differing needs. This is particularly evident in reading, writing and mathematics, but it is also evident in other subjects across the wider curriculum. In these subjects, teachers have strong subject knowledge, which they use to deliver the intended curriculum confidently. As a result, pupils quickly develop their knowledge and skills. However, this is not the case in those subjects that are in the process of being redeveloped. In these subjects, teachers are less clear on the order of when to teach some of the important knowledge. This means pupils are not always secure in their understanding before moving on to new learning. Leaders have rightly prioritised this work to ensure pupils learn well across the full curriculum.

Teachers regularly check what pupils know. Where pupils find aspects more difficult, teachers efficiently review and recap previous learning. Pupils are helped to 'warm up' before embarking on new learning, and this builds their confidence. Because teachers know their pupils very well, they can quickly adapt lessons based on individual needs. All staff are dedicated to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve as well as possible. Any identified needs are well understood. This means the individual support and care provided help pupils with SEND to flourish.

Reading is carefully considered. The phonics programme is adapted effectively to ensure that all pupils develop their fluency regardless of their starting point. Phonics teaching starts early in Reception. Reading and writing activities are embedded across many areas of learning. Reception staff have a strong understanding of the needs of each pupil and put effective support in place to meet these.

Pupils are expected to behave very well. They rise to this challenge and are proud to do so. As a result, behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Secure relationships help pupils feel confident to take learning risks and try their very best. Leaders regularly check that all pupils benefit from the school's positive behaviour approach. Help is quickly provided to those pupils who need additional support. Leaders' relentless focus on punctuality and attendance has been effective. They continue to strive to understand their families well, leading to personalised help and advice where required.

Pupils hold a deep connection to the school's values and consider them to shape the positive way that staff and pupils treat each other. Pupils reflect on the school's mantra of 'happy and safe', which they all know how to sign, as a way of considering others. They are helped to explore their understanding of concepts such as equality and diversity. Leaders are continuing to strengthen the personal development curriculum, to help pupils develop a much greater awareness of society and life in modern Britain.

Pupils understand about the link between keeping physically and mentally healthy. They use sports activities and equipment to keep active at break and in clubs. The nurture groups help pupils to develop individual strategies where they are needed. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the pastoral help their children are given. Parents, pupils and staff were highly positive in their responses to Ofsted's questionnaires, include Ofsted Parent View. They rightly value the positive impact of the new leadership team, as well as the school's 'family feel'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum is not yet as precisely considered as it is in others. This means that learning does not always build sequentially, which can lead to pupils having gaps in their knowledge. The school should continue to fully implement curriculum developments and to provide staff with the required training and support to teach each subject as well as possible.

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	110219
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10296152
School category	Community school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jennifer Holden
Headteacher	Seema Sharma
Website	www.denhamvillageschool.com
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 October 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2023.
- The school is a smaller than average-sized school. It has some mixed-year group and some single-year group classes.
- The school offers a before-school breakfast club.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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 of the school since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, early years leader, curriculum leaders, and other staff.

- The inspectors met with governors, including the chair of governors. They also talked to a local authority representative.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read. The inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Ed Mather, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Christine Bulmer

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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