

Inspection of Denver Voluntary Controlled Primary School

19 Ryston Road, Denver, Downham Market, Norfolk PE38 0DP

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils arrive at school happy and smiling. They are cared for by the staff and feel safe. They enjoy their learning. The school's values of discover, value, celebrate and praise are apparent in all aspects of school life. Pupils are respectful and friendly to each other and to adults.

Pupils behave well. They know what is expected of them. Their learning is rarely disturbed by others' behaviour. Bullying is rare. Pupils agree this is the case, but there are occasional acts of unkindness. Teachers deal with these quickly.

Pupils enjoy studying a broad and balanced curriculum. They respond well to teachers' high expectations and try to do the best they can. Pupils achieve well.

Pupils are proud of their school. They are encouraged to take on leadership roles. They can join the eco or school councils. They are excited about the outdoor learning opportunities.

The expressive arts are a feature of the school. Pupils enjoy their musical experiences. Visits to the local church at Christmas and Easter help them become confident in musical performance.

Parents are positive about the work of leaders and staff. They would recommend the school to other parents.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is broad and ambitious. They want learning to be exciting. Leaders have identified the knowledge they want pupils to learn. The learning of this knowledge begins in the early years. In some subjects, such as mathematics and reading, the sequence in which pupils learn this knowledge has been expertly ordered. This helps pupils make strong progress. However, in a small number of subjects where leaders are new, this is not the case. In these subjects, leaders have not identified clearly enough the order in which pupils will learn knowledge, so that it builds well on what pupils have learned before. This means that in some lessons teachers do not focus on the specific content they want pupils to learn and understand. As a result, pupils do not make as strong progress in these subjects.

Leaders have high aspirations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their classmates. Teachers adapt their teaching and provide pupils with personalised support, where necessary, so that any barriers to learning are removed. As a result, pupils with SEND make strong progress in their learning and development.

Leaders' reading curriculum is well thought through. Children are introduced to reading from the very start in Reception. Phonics is taught consistently and well. Pupils read books matched to their phonics knowledge. This helps pupils to practise their phonics knowledge and become fluent, accurate readers. Teachers spot pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge. Staff effectively support them to catch up. Pupils read a range of diverse texts, which helps them to develop a love of reading and extends their knowledge of the world.

Teachers check on pupils' understanding thoroughly. They identify misunderstandings and provide further explanation and guidance to pupils. This helps pupils to correct any errors and misconceptions.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They listen carefully to teachers and follow instructions. This means lessons flow smoothly. When moving around the school, pupils show good self-discipline. Pupils listen well to each other and remind each other of the rules when necessary. They play sensibly in the playground. Children in the early years learn routines quickly. They soon develop positive attitudes to learning.

In the early years, teachers promote the development of children's communication skills. They read to them regularly. Teachers encourage children to think about and answer questions well.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn about diversity and difference. They learn to treat everyone equally. Pupils know about the many different faiths and cultures in the world. They understand the meaning of democracy and how this affects them, for example, when they decide who will be on the school council. Pupils know how to stay safe and lead healthy lives.

Leaders prioritise the well-being of pupils and staff. All staff feel supported by leaders. Parents say that staff 'go above and beyond' to care for their children.

Leaders seek what is best for pupils. They listen to advice and feedback from professionals and parents well. Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are ambitious to achieve further improvements. Governors visit the school regularly and check on the information leaders provide for them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established effective systems to keep pupils safe. All staff take their responsibilities for the safeguarding of pupils seriously. Staff receive thorough training, so that they know what to do if they identify any concerns. Leaders work with external agencies to make sure that vulnerable pupils and families get the support that they need. Detailed records of leaders' actions to manage concerns are well kept.

Pupils know who to talk to if they have a worry. They know that the adults will help them. They learn to stay safe in public places and online through their lessons and assemblies.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders are new to their role. In a small number of subjects, these leaders have not identified precisely the subject knowledge that pupils need to learn or the order in which it should be taught. As a result, teachers do not always plan learning activities that build effectively on pupils' previous learning. Leaders need to ensure that subject leaders have precisely identified the knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which the subject content is taught in all subjects, so that teachers plan lessons that help pupils build on previous learning more quickly and efficiently.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	121069
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10255100
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Carole Reich
Headteacher	Louise Jones
Website	www.denver.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Ely.
- An inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school's denominational education and worship, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, took place in January 2018. The next section 48 inspection will take places within eight years of this date.
- The school operates a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- Some subject leaders are new to their roles.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior teacher, special educational needs coordinator, early years leader, subject leaders, and teaching and support staff.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, music and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to an adult.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the systems and processes in place to keep pupils safe in school. They reviewed the single central record, staff training and recruitment procedures, and records of concern. Inspectors also spoke to teachers, to support staff, pupils, and governors about how well pupils are kept safe.
- Inspectors reviewed the records of attendance, behaviour and bullying incidents. They spoke with pupils to seek their views and experiences of the school. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during play times.
- Inspectors considered 54 responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also took into consideration 18 staff survey responses and nine pupil survey responses.

Inspection team

Rod Warsap, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Gammons	Ofsted Inspector

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