

Denmead Junior School

Bere Road, Denmead, Waterlooville, Hampshire PO7 6PH

Inspection dates

3–4 February 2016

Overall effectiveness

Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- As a result of strong leadership, this school is improving very rapidly. Pupils in all year groups make good progress in English and mathematics.
- The school is led very insightfully by the headteacher. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior members of staff.
- School leaders evaluate the school's effectiveness accurately. This helps staff to plan further improvements where they are most needed.
- Teaching is good. Teachers plan closely together and engage and assess their pupils well. In each year group, the classes generally have similar experiences.
- Pupils' behaviour is consistently good. They listen attentively and work well in lessons. They are friendly and polite.
- The staff look after and safeguard pupils well. Pupils feel very safe, secure and happy.
- Most teachers lead a subject. They do this skilfully. As a result, pupils enjoy a very interesting and stimulating range of lessons in all subjects.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress. The extra provision for them is well managed.
- Pupils entitled to the support of the pupil premium generally achieve well.
- Staff enjoy working at the school. Their performance is managed effectively. They have good opportunities to develop their skills to the benefit of the pupils.
- Teaching assistants, administrative, premises and support staff, along with volunteers, contribute well. They are clear about their roles.
- The governing body carries out all of its duties effectively.
- Parents are generally pleased with the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The school still has more work to do to develop and embed the very positive improvements it has made.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6, although now making good progress, are working at too low a level in English and mathematics.
- Although useful work on this has begun, the staff do not know clearly how well pupils are learning in the subjects beyond English and mathematics.
- There are some minor inconsistencies in the quality of teaching from class to class.

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop and embed the improvement work which is well underway, ensuring in particular that:
 - everything possible is done to raise further pupils' attainment in the current Years 5 and 6
 - the quality of all teaching matches the very best in the school
 - high quality, manageable assessments of pupils' learning are developed for subjects beyond English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher is a strong leader. She applies her considerable experience and insight very well. She sets a high standard and decides on clear and realistic priorities. This helps keep the workload of staff reasonable and their efforts well focused.
- The headteacher ensures that other staff develop their skills and contribute well. The work of the deputy headteacher is a major asset. She models strong teaching and has taken over responsibility for managing the assessment of pupils' work across the school. She is organising significant changes to this very well to ensure that every pupil's progress is carefully and reliably checked.
- The school is making huge improvements to the curriculum at a fast pace. This is very effectively overseen by a senior member of staff. Lessons in all subjects have good, challenging content. This is made possible because of the strong leadership given by each subject leader.
- The positive effect of this was seen, for example, in a successful Year 4 geography lesson. Pupils researched and thought for themselves about where in Europe there might be most danger from volcanoes and earthquakes. This was complex learning, partly about the movement of tectonic plates. Pupils had some misconceptions needing to be addressed, but they took to the advanced subject content very well.
- The school operates a very worthwhile programme of visits out of school, including residential visits. Rightly, the headteacher is pointing out the importance of no pupils missing out on these activities. The school also has a developing link with a school in Mexico, involving some joint trans-Atlantic curriculum planning and internet contacts. Spanish lessons for all pupils helpfully support this.
- Teachers and other staff work together very effectively as a team. They are constantly cheerful and positive; no one holds progress back. All know their particular roles and understand their responsibilities to each other. They hold each other accountable for the learning of the pupils. From well-organised discussions with pupils, the staff know much about the effectiveness of teaching in every subject in every class. However, they recognise that there is more to do to check closely how much pupils know, understand and can do in the subjects apart from English and mathematics.
- Pupil premium funding is spent effectively. The school monitors the academic progress of the pupils concerned carefully. Overall, the pupils do well. This includes pupils from service families, whose needs are carefully considered and met.
- The school spends its sport premium funding effectively. It is used to increase participation in school sport. There are matches and events involving other schools.
- The school also has useful links with the Hampshire music hub, with many pupils participating. Overall, the take-up of the school's range of out-of-school-hours activities is high. The school is rightly beginning to check carefully whether any groups of pupils are over or under-represented in these.
- Parents like the school. They say that their children are happy and learning. There is generally high attendance at parents' evenings and school events. Some parents would like to receive more information from the school about their children's academic progress.
- The local authority provides highly effective support to the school. In all the key areas that are improving, local authority officers have contributed valuably. The local authority has closely and efficiently monitored the performance and improvement of the school throughout its period in special measures, effectively challenging it to improve. It rightly intends to continue its valuable support, albeit at a lower level.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. An administrative member of staff supports the headteacher well in leading this work. A designated governor checks carefully that the school's procedures for keeping the pupils safe are implemented correctly. Staff are regularly and properly trained to look after the pupils and to deal with any child protection concerns. They are well aware of their responsibilities to prevent extremism. The school assesses risks correctly. Proper checks are made about members of staff when they are recruited, and as needed. Pupils are aware of safety rules, and the reasons for them, including those related to using the internet.

The governance of the school

- The governing body is well organised. Members know the school well. They are highly committed to the school's future success and development. They are adept at checking how their strategic work makes an impact on the day-to-day work in school, including improvements in teaching. They constantly improve their work by thinking afresh and attending relevant training. They ask challenging questions of the

headteacher and staff, recently sharpening the way they do this by referring explicitly to Ofsted criteria. They have helped to promote the rapid improvements the school has made.

- Governors make thorough arrangements for the headteacher's performance management. They ensure that decisions about staff pay are robust and fair.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The staff have worked hard together to improve teaching, achieving much very quickly. Teaching is now good. Aspirations for the pupils are high. Teachers rightly use the same key techniques as each other. For example, they all expect pupils to find out and think for themselves. They all explain clearly how the pupils can be successful in lessons.
- Teachers know their subjects well. They provide efficient and clear explanations to the whole class, to groups and to individuals. Pupils are thus able to get on with their own work in good time. There are very positive relationships between adults and pupils. One pupil said, 'Teachers are serious at points when they need to be, but they have a joke too and are nice to us.'
- Staff provide useful feedback for pupils, who are able to use it effectively to improve their thinking and work.
- In a design technology lesson, pupils worked hard to make mechanical cams. This was a tricky task but purposeful discussions among the pupils and well-focused feedback from the teacher led to pupils being successful.
- Teachers generally provide well for the different learning needs of pupils in the class. The specific interventions for pupils who have special educational needs or disability are well organised.
- Teachers provide useful additional teaching or revision of key concepts for those pupils who feel they need it while others are working independently. This school policy works well in ensuring that pupils do not fall behind or develop gaps in their learning.
- Teaching assistants have clear and purposeful roles in each lesson. They contribute well, knowing which pupils they need to support most, how and why.
- Classrooms are well organised and attractive places for pupils to learn. Resources are readily available. Pupils like taking personal responsibility for some of their equipment. Classroom and corridor displays are stimulating and attractive.
- Despite the significant improvements, there is still some more work to do to improve practice further. On some occasions, one class in a year group may get a slightly better deal than another. For example, in one class, pupils discussed powerful descriptions and the teacher encouraged them to think deeply in discussions. Pupils used words such as 'alliteration' and 'metaphor' confidently and naturally. In another class, in the same year group, doing the same lesson, pupils did not have the same opportunities to think in depth for themselves. The headteacher is aware of these anomalies.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel safe, well supervised and cared for at all times of the day, including lunchtimes and playtimes. They feel strong trust in all of the staff. One said, 'You can speak to them [the staff] about any personal matter. They will sort it out.'
- There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, as school councillors or house captains for example. Year 3 pupils enjoy having 'buddies' from Year 6 who help them to settle into the school, make friends and deal with any problems.
- The school works well, when needed, with external agencies and parents to support pupils who may become particularly vulnerable for any reason.
- Pupils' attendance is consistently above the national average.
- The interesting and broad curriculum promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development very effectively. Pupils know, and try to apply, the school's explicit values. Lessons and assemblies also promote fundamental British values, such as tolerance and self-discipline, effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are consistently polite, composed and friendly.

- Pupils behave very well in lessons. They are keen to learn and know what is expected of them. Teachers have to spend very little time sorting out behaviour problems. Lessons are motivating; they require pupils to be alert but also calm.
- Pupils often talk to each other in lessons. Their discussions focus on the lesson content and assist their learning very effectively. Pupils speak at a sensible, quiet volume which is not distracting to others.
- Pupils report that there is very occasional bad behaviour in lessons but that this is sorted out quickly by staff. They like the rewards for good behaviour and see the sanctions for poor behaviour as fair. They say there is little bullying and it is always dealt with. This view is supported by the school's records.
- Similarly, the school's records show that serious misbehaviour is rare. Pupils agree with this. There has, however, been a small number of recent fixed-term exclusions.
- Pupils move around the school, and enter and leave assemblies, safely and considerately. They look out for others.
- In the playground, pupils play together happily and kindly. They enjoy using the school's equipment, which is planned to be improved further. In the lunch hall, pupils queue and walk about sensibly and respectfully. The noise level stays within reasonable bounds.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Led by the deputy headteacher, staff assess pupils' progress in English and mathematics closely and reliably. These assessments show that, across the school, pupils consistently make good progress in English and mathematics. Pupils' work seen in lessons and their books also shows this good progress. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils worked hard and efficiently to gain a much clearer understanding of how to order fractions by using equivalence.
- In Years 5 and 6, although pupils are now making good progress, their overall attainment remains notably below average. This particularly applies to writing. This problem results from these pupils' historic low attainment which still needs more catching-up. The school recognises that Year 6 national testing results in English and mathematics for 2016 may be below average, as was the case in 2015. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' work in English and mathematics is of a generally good standard for their ages.
- Staff are very clear in helping older pupils prepare for life in secondary school, explaining how it will be different and providing supportive advice.
- The school is developing its work on reading very well. Reading assessments indicate that many pupils who have struggled with reading are now doing much better. Parents, along with staff, are actively involved in hearing children read regularly. The pupils who read to Her Majesty's Inspector did so with accuracy and secure comprehension. They were able to use their knowledge of letters and sounds to 'sound out' difficult words or self-correct. For example, one pupil read 'whether' as 'whenever', but quickly realised this and worked out independently what the correct word was.
- Useful work is underway on the school's system for assessing pupils' work in subjects beyond English and mathematics. However, the school cannot yet say with confidence how well pupils are faring across the full curriculum.
- Inspection evidence, nevertheless, indicates positive learning in a range of subjects. For example, in an assembly pupils sang accurately unaccompanied songs, sometimes in parts, helping to develop their inner ear. They have learned to enjoy some classical music. In a physical education lesson, pupils controlled hockey sticks and balls securely, when moving at slow speeds.

School details

Unique reference number	116043
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10009324

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	313
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shirley Nellthorpe
Headteacher	Elaine Viner
Telephone number	02392 252735
Website	www.denmead-jun.hants.sch.uk
Email address	admin.office@denmead-jun.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 October 2014

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized junior school, mainly serving the small Hampshire town of Denmead. A number of pupils come from further afield. It has three forms of entry.
- Most pupils are White British; almost all speak English as their first language. A lower than average proportion of pupils are officially considered disadvantaged and entitled to the support of pupil premium funding. The school serves a number of children of service families.
- An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs or disability.
- The school meets the government's floor targets. These are the minimum requirements for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- At its last full inspection, the school was deemed to require special measures. Since then, it has received a series of monitoring visits from one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) who also led this inspection.

Information about this inspection

- HMI observed lessons in all classes, all of them jointly with the headteacher. He also observed at playtimes and lunchtimes, as pupils moved round the school and in an assembly.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils and heard some pupils in Years 3 and 5 read.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, other members of staff, governors and representatives of the local authority.
- HMI evaluated school documents, including the school development plan, self-evaluations, information about pupils' progress, records about pupils' attendance and behaviour and minutes of meetings.
- The inspector considered carefully the 101 responses from parents on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- HMI also took account, as appropriate, of evidence gathered on his previous monitoring visits to the school.

Inspection team

Robin Hammerton, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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