

Denaby Main Primary School

School Walk, Denaby Main, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN12 4HZ

Inspection dates

28–29 June 2016

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Senior leaders have not dealt successfully with the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.
- Teaching over time has not ensured good progress because expectations of what pupils can and should do are too low.
- Pupils, especially the most able and particularly for those in lower key stage 2, are not challenged well enough. Underachievement is evident for these pupils in particular.
- Pupils' writing skills are weak and their mistakes are not corrected with sufficient rigour to enable them to understand how to get better.
- Teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively.
- Questioning is not used well enough to check pupils' understanding.
- Improvement plans lack precision and clear measurable indicators so that governors can check if interventions are making a difference. This limits their ability to challenge leaders so that they are certain that teaching is improving for all pupils.
- Not all subjects are taught frequently in all year groups and this limits opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures.
- Attendance is not improving and an increased proportion of pupils are persistently absent.
- Children in the early years make limited progress in reading, writing and number.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher and the head of school are starting to make a positive difference. Their detailed analysis of the school's weaknesses has ensured that weak teaching is being tackled appropriately and action taken where necessary.
- Staff and governors have significant confidence in senior leaders' ability to bring about improvements. As a result, staff morale has improved significantly and governors are well aware of the issues in the school.
- Pupils are polite and friendly when speaking to adults. Pupils support each other at playtime and in the classroom. They have confidence that any form of bullying will be dealt with effectively.
- Pupils welcome the breakfast club, out-of-school activities and visits that are provided. These help to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to gain an understanding of the world beyond the school and their immediate environment.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least consistently good in all subjects and all key stages, including early years, to ensure good progress for all pupils and children by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils and children, especially the most able, can and should do
 - skilfully questioning pupils and children so that they learn how to develop their answers and deepen their thinking
 - ensuring that all pupils and children are engaged in learning at all times
 - ensuring that all pupils and children understand how to make their work better, especially when they are writing
 - making sure that teaching assistants are always deployed effectively.

- Improve attendance and continue to work with parents to reduce the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent.

- Increase the impact of leaders at all levels and governors by making sure that:
 - the quality of teaching of all subjects is checked thoroughly to make sure that it is at least good
 - the interventions planned and implemented contain measurable indicators so that leaders and governors can check their impact so that they can be sure if all pupils, especially the most able, are making at least good progress
 - all subjects in the curriculum are taught at the times indicated on class timetables
 - opportunities are taken to develop pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures
 - communication improves between the school and parents.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, there has been considerable turbulence at senior leadership level, changes to members of the governing body and a number of staff changes. This has had an adverse impact on leaders' and governors' ability to address issues from the previous inspection. As a result, improvements in the quality of teaching and the outcomes for pupils are relatively recent but recovery is evident. Consequently, the school has serious weaknesses because teaching over time and the progress made by all pupils are inadequate.
- Despite these significant barriers, the executive headteacher and the head of school have worked tirelessly to improve the morale of each staff member. In this they have been successful, as shown by the positive comments provided by members of staff during the inspection. They feel valued, challenged and supported appropriately.
- Middle leaders are more engaged in monitoring the quality of teaching and progress made by pupils in their subject areas. They feel empowered and are clear what they need to do. They welcome being held to account by senior leaders and governors when they report their findings and when they hold training sessions.
- Systems for checking pupils' progress and the quality of teaching take place regularly and leaders' findings are fed back to individuals robustly. Senior leaders know that teaching is not good enough in several places and there are wide variations in the quality. Leaders are also aware that there is inconsistency in the way pupils' books are marked which does not always accord with the school's marking and feedback policy.
- Systems for managing the performance of teachers have been clarified this year and are reviewed at regular intervals. Support is given to those who need it but in some cases this has not had the intended impact. There is, this year, a system of performance review for teaching assistants that identifies and checks the quality of their work.
- Plans for improvement identify the key issues for the school and are checked regularly to see if action has been taken. However, the plans do not have measurable indicators. As a result, leaders and governors cannot check if improvements in the quality of teaching and the progress of all pupils are as expected.
- The curriculum is supported well by visits and clubs which are enjoyed and welcomed by pupils. Year 6 pupils visited London recently and were keen to tell inspectors about places they had visited. The visit and the written work done by these pupils contributed well to their understanding of democracy and the rule of law. However, other pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain is less well developed.
- The curriculum for pupils in key stage 1 has been focused mainly on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. For these pupils and others, the range of subjects taught has been haphazard. Evidence in pupils' books confirmed that not all subjects, especially the arts, French and science, are taught as indicated on the timetable. Changes to the curriculum are in place for next term, including plans to ensure that all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness are developed consistently.
- The pupil premium funding is monitored carefully to ensure that it is used wisely. Leaders can identify where the money spent has made a difference in the improved outcomes for pupils. The money is also used to subsidise trips and visits for all pupils and to fund the breakfast club which is enjoyed regularly by a number of pupils. In this respect, leaders are promoting equality of opportunity for all, but because the quality of teaching and pupil outcomes are inadequate, equality of opportunity is not secure.
- The primary school physical education and sports funding is used well. There are good sporting opportunities for pupils. Staff believe that their ability to teach physical education has improved as they have had support from external coaches.
- Very few parents responded to their questionnaire and the majority of those who did have concerns about communication between themselves and the school. Leaders and governors know that improvements must happen and have tried a number of ways to get parents involved in the work of the school, but to date they have been unsuccessful.
- The local authority brokered support from the executive headteacher of a neighbouring primary school so that senior leadership could be strengthened. The local authority officers monitor the school regularly. However, their view of the effectiveness of the school is more positive than that seen by inspectors. Local authority reports do not measure progress against the targets set so that they can challenge underperformance effectively. The senior leaders have made good use of links with other primary schools locally to ensure that their judgements about how well pupils are doing are secure.

■ The governance of the school

- Governors have worked quickly to take action following the review of governance which was carried out by the local authority. They had audited their skills and benefit from the experience of the current chair and other governors who have experience in education. They are in a stronger position to challenge leaders than previously.
- Governors ensure that all safeguarding issues are appropriate and meet current requirements. They confirmed that the safeguarding policy has been ratified and is known by staff. Governors visit the school regularly. They meet with and receive detailed information from middle and senior leaders. As a result, they are well aware of the weaknesses that exist in the school.
- Governors check the funding of the school carefully and ensure that it is allocated effectively. They now have a clear understanding of the arrangements linking teachers' performance to pay and to pupils' achievement. They set appropriate targets to be reached by the head of school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are appropriately trained, vigilant and understand how to identify potential issues. The appropriate policies are securely in place and there are strong links with external agencies and parents and carers when needed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- Teaching is not of a consistently high quality to help pupils make rapid progress and catch up on lost ground. Too often teachers' expectations are too low and pupils are not challenged appropriately. This is reflected in the fact that in some books poorly presented work is allowed to go unchallenged. Scruffy and inaccurate work is accepted and given inappropriately positive comments. Spelling and grammar mistakes are not always corrected. Many pupils are unsure how to improve their work because teachers' comments are too complex.
- The questioning of pupils by teachers is often undemanding and does not stretch them to think for themselves and develop their initial answers.
- Low-level disruption is evident in some lessons because pupils are bored and they do not remain engaged in learning. Inspectors saw that this behaviour was not always corrected swiftly.
- Over time, teaching is not challenging enough. As a result, pupils of all abilities, but especially the most able, are not making the progress that they should be. The same work, in mathematics particularly, is repeated several times despite the fact that pupils understand the particular mathematical concept.
- There is some stronger teaching in the school where pupils are engaged, challenge is appropriate for all pupils and learning moves at a good pace so that all pupils make strong progress.
- Teaching assistants do support some pupils who find learning challenging well. However, too often their impact is inconsistent because they are passive in lessons and not deployed effectively.
- Leaders have put in place a range of training and support activities to help teachers improve their teaching. Clearer guidelines around planning for pupils with different abilities are in place. Teachers show a very evident will to improve, but it is too early to judge that the quality of teaching is improving consistently throughout the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. The guidance pupils are given so that they have a secure understanding of life in modern Britain is inconsistent. Pupils know very little about other faiths and cultures. They do understand right from wrong and display this well when playing and working together in class.
- Pupils understand what constitutes bullying and they say that it does happen. School records confirm this. Pupils are confident, though, that any form of unkind behaviour will be dealt with appropriately by adults.
- Pupils are generally confident when speaking with adults. Many politely hold doors open for adults and greet them sensibly. Pupils take their positions of responsibility confidently.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. They are clear about how to adopt safe practices when working with technology and using the internet.
- Pupils enjoy the sporting and other activities available to them. They know what to do to keep fit and

healthy. Year 5 pupils returning from the swimming gala, which took place during the inspection, were proud to have done well and to have won medals.

- There is a clear focus on the welfare and emotional development of pupils, particularly those with complex needs. The school has very strong systems in place to support both pupils and, if necessary, their families.
- The few parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire were all confident that their children are kept safe and cared for well. They appreciate the work done by the pastoral leader.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In a few lessons mainly, but not exclusively, in lower key stage 2, off-task behaviour contributes to pupils not being fully engaged in their learning. They become bored and find things to do other than working hard in their lessons.
- Behaviour around the school is closely monitored by leaders and the number of reported incidents has decreased this year. However, the number of low-level disruptions in lessons has risen. Senior leaders have identified some of the reasons for this increase and have put in place interventions. Some of these have been successful in improving the behaviour of individual pupils.
- A few pupils take little pride in the way they present their work and this is not always challenged by their teachers. However, there are some colourful displays around the school which show that many pupils do care about the way they present their work.
- Attendance rates remain similar this year compared to those last year and are below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has increased. Leaders are tracking these pupils but strategies to bring about improvement have not had the necessary impact.
- Pupils generally conduct themselves sensibly around the school and many are quick to help others. In those lessons where they are able to, pupils work well in groups sharing ideas and they are keen to learn.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- Over time, there has been a decline in the standards reached by pupils at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. Despite a slight improvement in writing at the end of 2015, attainment remained below the national average. Much of this decline was due to weak teaching over time.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils have made inadequate progress in reading, mathematics and particularly in writing. Gaps between different groups of pupils are evident, with disadvantaged pupils generally making better progress than those who are not disadvantaged. Teachers' expectations are not high enough and the most able pupils, especially, are not challenged appropriately. Consequently, all pupils have underachieved.
- An analysis of the current pupils' work by inspectors showed that during the last year there have been improvements in some areas, with gaps between different groups of pupils starting to close. However, some underachievement, in lower key stage 2 particularly, is still evident.
- The quality of pupils' writing is still a cause for concern. Pupils who are in Year 1 have made significant improvements in their writing this year but are only making up for lost time, and many pupils are behind where they should be.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in subjects other than English and mathematics and found for the most part that their progress is very uneven as they move through the school. It is weakest in lower key stage 2, where gaps between different groups of pupils are not closing. This variability in progress is because work is insufficiently challenging, for the most able particularly.
- Leaders are well aware of the poor progress in some classes. They have worked hard to ensure more pupils in Year 6 make better progress than formerly so that they are better prepared in reading, writing and mathematics when they transfer to secondary school. School information and observations during the inspection confirm that this is the case.
- The most able pupils are not challenged well in all subjects and their progress compared to others nationally is often hampered because of the quality of teaching.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is inconsistent across the school. In 2015, disadvantaged pupils' attainment at the end of key stages 1 and 2 was above others in the school but below others nationally, with wide gaps evident in reading.

- There are few pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and they make similar uneven progress.
- The frequency with which pupils read to adults, in school or at home, varies considerably. Many pupils struggle to comprehend the words they read and this adversely affects their ability to understand work in class. Pupils are encouraged to read often and several told inspectors how much they enjoy going to the library. 'We like the choice of books and the peace and quiet' was a typical comment. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the screening check for reading at the end of Year 1 has declined since the previous inspection. However, school information suggests that improvements in teaching are likely to bring about significant improvement this year.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Very recent hard work by leaders is starting to bring about some noticeable improvements. Over time, there have been weaknesses in the quality of teaching and leadership which has meant that the progress made by children in the early years has been very inconsistent.
- Most children enter Nursery with skills that are below those that are typical for their age. Over time, children make steady progress and leave Reception with skills that are below those expected nationally. Children have not been given sufficient challenge in all areas of their development to make better progress.
- The systems in place to assess children, either when they start in Nursery or at times during the year, have not been checked robustly by leaders to ensure they are accurate. Improvements have been made this year to ensure information is correct. School information suggests that weaknesses in writing, reading and number work are still going to be evident this year. Consequently, more work is needed to ensure that all children are prepared appropriately in all aspects of the early years curriculum so that they are ready for the demands of work in Year 1.
- In 2015, disadvantaged children made stronger progress than others and this situation is likely to continue this year.
- 'Learning journals' are kept for each child. The quality of information in these is inconsistent. Next steps in children's learning are identified infrequently. As a result, it is sometimes not apparent what the correct challenge is for them to move forward in their learning.
- The classrooms and the outside area are bright and welcoming places and they help children learn how to be independent. For example, the outside writing shed is popular and houses much writing equipment and notebooks to encourage children to write regularly.
- The curriculum links children's interests across a range of areas. Inspectors saw children engaged in painting sea creatures, using letter blocks to spell words and games in the outside areas, with a group of children counting how many frogs were jumping into the water. Children were engaged, enjoyed their learning and progress was rapid.
- Staff have positive relationships with parents but links between home and school are not strong. Although leaders are trying to encourage parents to be involved, they are having limited success.
- Caring for all children and ensuring their safety and welfare is a high priority for all staff. Safeguarding is effective and staff are vigilant to ensure that any concern is dealt with swiftly.

School details

Unique reference number	130923
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10002156

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Williams
Headteacher	Sarah Harrison
Telephone number	01709 863622
Website	www.denaby.doncaster.sch.uk
Email address	sarah@denaby.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 December 2013

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds and all speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website. The information regarding the curriculum is out of date and there is no information about how well pupils did in the national tests in 2015. It is unclear whether all policies are up to date and if the safeguarding policy was ratified at the last meeting of the governing body.
- Children in the early years receive part-time education in the Nursery class and full-time education in the Reception class.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- Since the previous inspection the headteacher has resigned. From September 2015, the school has been led by the head of school. She is supported on a part-time basis by an executive headteacher from another school in the authority. A substantive headteacher has been appointed and will take up their post on 1 September 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classrooms. Some of these observations were done jointly with the executive headteacher and the head of school.
- A large number of pupils' books were scrutinised and inspectors listened to pupils read aloud.
- Inspectors spoke formally to two groups of pupils and informally to pupils during social times.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, the chair and another member of the governing body and two representatives from the local authority.
- The views of 10 parents who completed the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account together with their written comments. The findings from 26 staff questionnaires were also considered. No pupils replied to their Ofsted online questionnaire. Discussions were held with a number of parents when they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including school development plans, information on pupils' progress, minutes of governing body meetings and leaders' review of its own performance. They considered information relating to the safeguarding of pupils, their behaviour and their attendance.

Inspection team

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