

Inspection of a good school: Deeping St James Community Primary School

Hereward Way, Deeping St James, Peterborough, Lincolnshire PE6 8PZ

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Outcome

Deeping St James Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Parents and carers are proud to choose this school for their child. They like how leaders develop pupils' interests in sports, the arts and music. For example, the school's rock band performs concerts at other local settings. Some pupils have extra lessons to develop their vocal ability, but all learn to sing in harmony during assemblies. Many perform at local community events, some even at local theatres. Parents relish watching their child's performances and successes. As one parent commented, typical of many: 'I feel the opportunities my children have here go beyond my expectations of a primary school.'

Pupils are friendly, polite and caring. They know that adults will listen to their worries and concerns. Year 6 pupils appreciate time to discuss their feelings ready for their move to secondary school. Others spoke of how they previously struggled with their emotional needs but now feel well supported to make good choices. Although pupils do not have any concerns about their safety, many commented that teasing and name-calling happens.

The wider school's curriculum is in a period of refinement. Leaders continue to adapt some subjects to ensure that it matches the needs of their pupils.

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

Initially, leaders prioritised the development of reading and mathematics in school. They now have an accurate understanding of what is working well and what needs to be developed in these subjects. In the wider curriculum, leaders ensured that a sequence of knowledge for all subjects was present. Much of this order of knowledge relied on external plans. Leaders opted for this because it supported teachers' well-being and workload at the time. They recognise that these subjects now need further refinement to fully meet the needs of the pupils it serves.

In some subjects, such as mathematics and physical education (PE), pupils recall key knowledge well. In these subjects, leaders ensure that all staff receive the right training

and support. They make checks to ensure the subjects are well taught. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support to learn the same curriculum as their peers. This helps all pupils to make meaningful links in their knowledge and understanding. It has had a positive impact on pupils' recall of these subjects. However, this is not consistent in all curriculum areas. Some subject leaders continue to develop their understanding of how to make checks on their area of responsibility.

The word tree in the school hall helps pupils to make choices in their vocabulary. Most pupils learn to read well, including those at the early stages of reading. Leaders prioritise reading for all pupils because they know it will help them to learn the whole curriculum. They ensure that reading books are well matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils who need additional support to read receive precise support in their area of need.

Children in the early years learn to create their own games and take turns. For example, some children designed a turn-taking game to see who could roll the correct amount to reach number 10 first. Others make their own puppets for a seaside theatre show. There is a clear focus on communication and language development for children who are new to the English language. Adults help children to use grammatically correct language structures in all activities.

Learning behaviour booklets are a prized possession for pupils. They like how they can see their positive behaviours build towards bronze, silver and gold certificates. These are celebrated in weekly assemblies. The school's 'Mini Police' have opportunities to work alongside real police officers. They strive to look for positive behaviours in school. As one pupil said: 'We don't just pick up on negatives because everyone makes mistakes.' A few pupils, including those with SEND, do not understand the consequences of their words and actions, particularly towards different groups within society.

All pupils, including those with SEND, relish the different roles and responsibilities leaders offer. 'Sports ambassadors' lead assemblies to promote fair play and sportsmanship. 'Kindness ambassadors' use toys at breaktimes to play alongside anyone who may feel lonely. Others gather reflections and comments from peers that demonstrate compassion and empathy. They proudly display these on the school's kindness board.

The school's governing body makes regular checks on its statutory duties. It supports and challenges leaders to ensure that the school continues to develop.

Leaders work well with staff. They provide regular training. Most staff are positive about the professional support they receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff know the signs that may indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. They know how to report and record their concerns. Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular training and updates for safeguarding. This ensures that staff are always vigilant. Governors make

regular checks on the school's safeguarding records. Leaders continue to develop staff's understanding of how to report concerns for other adults.

The school's curriculum ensures that pupils learn about how to stay safe in their local community. For example, despite the closure of local swimming facilities, leaders ensure that Year 6 pupils learn to swim.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, pupils do not make meaningful links across the curriculum. Occasionally, activities and approaches teachers use do not help pupils to recall more of the subject. This slows pupils' learning. Leaders must ensure that the whole school curriculum is implemented as intended to enable all pupils to make meaningful links over time.
- Aspects of the school's behaviour systems need further refinement. Pupils' understanding of the consequences of their words and actions, particularly towards different groups in society, needs further development. This hinders pupils' understanding of contemporary British society and the rule of law. Leaders must ensure that further work is done to ensure all pupils, including those with SEND, understand, appreciate and respect difference and diversity across communities. They must ensure that pupils understand the implications of derogatory words and actions.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

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	120396
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10240882
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ben Plumridge
Headteacher	Richard Westley
Website	www.deeping-st-james.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 and 28 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in leadership. A new chair of the governing body has been appointed. The head teacher took up position in April 2021.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held various meetings with school leaders to understand school development and curriculum leadership. A meeting was also held with representatives of the local governing body.
- The inspector completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, geography and mathematics. Aspects of the school's curriculum for PE, art and design and personal, social and health education were also sampled. The inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, met with pupils and listened to

them reading to adults.

- The inspector met with different groups of pupils at various times during the inspection, including during social times. The school's records of behaviour incidents were also sampled.
- The inspector also spoke with parents during the inspection. Views of parents, pupils and staff expressed through Ofsted surveys were also considered.
- The single central record was scrutinised as part of the inspection of safeguarding. The inspector spoke with a range of staff and pupils and sampled documentation relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Shaheen Hussain, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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