

Denmead Infant School

Hambledon Road, Denmead, Waterlooville, PO7 6PN

Inspection dates 22–23 October 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school benefits from the very strong leadership of its executive headteacher and head of school. Staff, governors, and parents and carers support them well in raising achievement.
- In Reception and Years 1 and 2, children and pupils achieve well. Attainment is consistently above average by the time pupils leave.
- Those pupils at risk of falling behind, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding, achieve well.
- The continuous focus on teaching quality means pupils are consistently well taught. Well-planned lesson activities engage pupils' interest and promote good progress.
- Excellent behaviour management results in relationships throughout the school being outstanding. Pupils behave exceptionally well.
- Very effective systems for checking the school's work ensure that improvement planning is well targeted to support weaker aspects.
- Improvement has accelerated especially well over the past year with remaining weaknesses already being addressed. The school is very well placed to improve further.
- The governing body fulfils its duties well. Governors are very knowledgeable about teaching quality and pupils' achievement, and hold leaders to account well for these aspects.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in writing, although improved, is not as good as in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to work independently and take on responsibility for their learning.
- Reading targets are not as good as in other subjects and do not encourage pupils to move on in their learning. Little time is given for pupils to respond to teachers' marking.
- Not all teaching assistants are skilled at questioning pupils well enough to help their understanding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons or parts of lessons, of which three were joint observations with the executive headteacher or with the head of school.
- They observed special-group work to help pupils identified as falling behind to catch up, extra-curricular activities for physical education and sport, heard a sample of pupils read and scrutinised a sample of pupils' written work.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils; members of the governing body; staff, including senior and middle managers; and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 23 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and they spoke to a small number of parents and carers bringing their children to school.
- An analysis of the 26 staff questionnaires was undertaken.

Inspection team

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Diane Wilkinson, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Christopher Crouch | Additional Inspector |
| Jacqueline Good | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- Denmead is a large infant school with three classes in each year group. Since its last inspection, it has become part of the federation of Denmead Infant and Junior Schools. They share an executive headteacher and governing body. Denmead Infants also has a head of school.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported by school action is slightly above the national average. The proportion supported by school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is below average, but higher than this in some year groups; for example in Year 2 last year.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides funding for children in local authority care, those from service families and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic families, including those who speak English as an additional language, is low.
- The adjacent children's centre provides before- and after-school care for both infant and junior school pupils. This was not part of this inspection.
- Since the school's last inspection there have been a number of changes in subject leadership.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the strategies for raising pupils' achievement and enhancing teaching quality by:
 - ensuring there are more opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' marking, and taking responsibility for their own learning so they can plan and carry out work independently
 - setting reading targets that are closely linked to the skills that pupils are learning so they recognise how well they are doing and how to improve
 - planning more activities that focus on writing for a range of purposes
 - making sure that, in discussions or when questioning pupils, teaching assistants probe pupils' understanding and help them recognise what they are learning rather than just giving them the answer.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children enter Reception with skills in line with those expected for their age, although weaker in communication and early writing skills. Children's good progress ensures their attainment is above average by the end of the year.
- The school's tracking data show good progress continues in all classes and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at Year 2 has been securely above average for a number of years.
- The 2012 Year 2 attainment in national assessments was higher than when the school was last inspected, but dipped in 2013 due to the much higher proportion of pupils with significant special educational needs. Nevertheless, tracking data indicate this year group also made good progress.
- Improved teaching quality has ensured current Year 2 pupils are further on in their learning than in previous years. The majority exceed the levels expected for their age, with attainment very well placed to rise further.
- Results in the 2013 Year 1 screening check for phonics (the sounds letters make) improved well on 2012, with pupils' reading skills continuing to rise. They are very enthusiastic about reading and develop a wide range of skills other than phonics to help them understand the text.
- Attainment in writing has been lower than reading and mathematics, with the school working strenuously to address this. Handwriting, spelling and vocabulary have improved well. Pupils' work is interesting because they use a range of connectives and similes to engage the reader. However, pupils are less skilled at writing for different purposes unaided, and addressing this is a key priority for the school.
- Pupils calculate accurately with hundreds, tens and units, applying their skills well when working with measures or in problem solving.
- The strong commitment to equality of opportunity is evident in the quality of support for pupils with different needs and starting points. As a result, these pupils achieve as well as their classmates.
 - The strong promotion of boys' achievement has seen them closing the gap on girls well.
 - Effective use of pupil premium funding ensures that these pupils make good progress and rapidly close the gap on their peers.
 - Effective in-class support and special group activities help disabled pupils and those with special educational needs reach the levels expected for their age.
 - Pupils from different ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress.
 - Increasingly effective provision for the most-able pupils ensures they achieve well and consistently exceed the levels expected.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved well over the past year. It is consistently at least good and a significant minority is outstanding.
- Exemplary behaviour management means activities are rarely interrupted so good learning takes place in all lessons.
- Planning effectively emphasises the learning expected of different groups of pupils, with activities supporting this well. As a result, pupils' progress has accelerated and attainment is rising, although the full effect of this on the results in national assessments has yet to be seen.
- Good account is taken of different pupils' needs and interests, and ensures all achieve well, and

that most reach at least the levels expected for their age and increasingly exceed them.

- New skills in reading, writing and mathematics are explained and demonstrated well. An effective range of resources, for example related to phonics or vocabulary, and number lines or 100 squares, are used well to support learning.
- To help pupils apply their skills in other circumstances, the strong emphasis on solving problems in mathematics and comprehension in reading has successfully raised attainment. The current focus is on pupils being able to write independently for different purposes and to have more opportunities for improving their work, which the school has correctly identified as priorities.
- Teachers effectively question pupils to help them really understand what they are learning. Some staff are highly skilled at this; for example, in a mathematics lesson, the teacher questioned pupils so well that they discovered new things for themselves, without having been given the answers by the teacher. Not all teaching assistants are as skilled in this aspect and training is already in place to address this.
- Pupils' written work is well marked and helps pupils recognise how to improve, but until recently, insufficient time has been provided for pupils to correct the weaknesses identified and ensure they are not repeated.
- Good improvement targets are set for writing and mathematics which help pupils understand what they need to do to make good progress. However, reading targets are not well linked to the skills that pupils need to acquire, which limits their understanding of how to achieve them.
- The strong commitment to pupils' well-being is evident in the good teaching seen in physical education lessons and after-school activities.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Outstanding behaviour management and positive reinforcement result in pupils' excellent behaviour in class and around the school. This supports their learning exceptionally well.
- Those pupils who find good behaviour difficult are supported really well and their behaviour improves considerably over time.
- Good relationships are fostered especially well. Pupils are friendly and polite to adults and each other, and their group or partner work in lessons is very good. The very strong discouragement of discrimination results in bullying in any form or exclusions being very rare. Pupils are totally confident that adults always deal with incidents swiftly and successfully.
- Pupils very much enjoy school, are keen to attend and work hard in lessons. Excellent induction procedures for the move to junior school means pupils are very well prepared for the future.
- Pupils approach new work with confidence and enthusiasm, quickly seeking help if they are 'stuck'. Their self-esteem improves considerably because of the rewards they receive for positive behaviour or good work.
- Pupils are proud of their school and very much enjoy taking on responsibility; for example as lunchtime monitors, which they do really well. Recognising this, staff are now encouraging pupils to take on greater responsibility for planning and checking their own learning.
- Pupils are well aware of how to keep themselves safe in and around school and how to ensure others are safe too. They know how to deal with risks, for example when using computers.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher and head of school are strongly committed to continuous improvement. Effectively supported by staff and governors, they have successfully driven forward improvement especially well over the past year.
- Comprehensive, rigorous and very regular checking of the school's work and pupils' progress help ensure strategic planning is very well targeted at weaknesses. This, together with the accelerated rate of improvement in the last 12 months, provides a very strong indication that further improvement is achievable.

- Performance management procedures for both teaching and support staff have raised teaching quality especially well over the past year, eradicating weaknesses and increasing the number of outstanding lessons. The targets set clearly relate to improving pupils' achievement, including through current school priorities, and are effectively underpinned by very regular monitoring and good opportunities for professional development.
- Federation with the junior school has enhanced:
 - the range of training provided for infant school staff
 - opportunities for joint planning and monitoring
 - consistency in the approach to pupils' education from nought to 11 years
 - provision for pupils who might be at risk of underachieving as the result of the effective work of the federation inclusion manager
 - the extent of expertise amongst governors.
- Over the last academic year, the executive headteacher and governing body have had a strong impact on improving provision in the infant school. Although pressing needs at the junior school limited the amount of time available for focusing on infant school needs prior to this, the head of school and other leaders continued to lead the school well.
- The curriculum is well adapted to target pupils' needs and interests, with challenging activities in place to help pupils make good progress. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a significant strength, resulting in the excellent behaviour and relationships seen.
- Safeguarding arrangements fully meet requirements and there is considerable expertise in child protection and the vetting of staff. Governors support this aspect especially well.
- The school's engagement with parents and carers is especially strong. Staff work very closely with parents and carers, for example, in helping pupils to achieve their curriculum targets. Parents and carers regularly help in the classroom, including hearing reading for those children who have little opportunity to read at home.
- A 'light touch' school for the local authority, Denmead Infant School staff have also benefited from the wide range of training opportunities that the local authority provided for the federation schools. Recognising the benefits of this and the effective support and challenge offered by the leading learning partner, the infant school has requested continuing support in the future to enhance its improvement work.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an excellent awareness of how well the school is doing and are both supportive and challenging of staff to help move the school forward.
 - They are strongly committed to training, most notably in analysing data, and willingly support school development through their wide range of skills, for example in educational management and information and communication technology.
 - Governors are very thorough in the monitoring of teaching and performance management. They strongly pursue value for money through agreeing salary increases only for good performance.
 - Pupil premium funding is effectively allocated to providing extra staffing, resources and special activities to support those pupils who receive it, which are helping them to successfully close the gap on their peers.
 - Although only recently received, special funding to support pupils' well-being through physical education and sports activities has been well allocated to improving teaching quality and opportunities for competitive sport.
 - Recent reorganisation of committees to allow a strong focus on pupils' achievement in the infant school is enhancing their work further.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 115882 |
| Local authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 426683 |

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

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| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 260 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Tina Lowe |
| Executive Headteacher | Jacqueline Bradshaw |
| Date of previous school inspection | 27 April 2009 |
| Telephone number | 023 9226 2717 |
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