

Delce Infant School

Fleet Road, Rochester ME1 2QA

Inspection dates	21–22 June 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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and staff have built well on the improvements evident at the last inspection.
- Standards for all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics have continued to improve significantly.
- Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception Year, so that they are well prepared for Year 1.
- The teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is strong, so that pupils are able to use their skills successfully in reading and spelling.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel safe.
- Leaders work effectively with teachers to develop the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. It is typically good in both key stages.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for improving the school, which staff share and value.
- Leaders and governors are ambitious and forward thinking so that the school is developing well. Governors are knowledgeable about the school.
- The positive environment and conduct of both adults and pupils clearly demonstrate the school's core principles and ethos.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some strengths in teaching are less securely embedded in key stage 1.
- The expectations of staff for written work, particularly for handwriting, presentation and spelling, are sometimes not high enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of teaching, learning and assessment further, especially in key stage 1, by:
 - continuing to use training and other support to ensure that all teaching is of a consistently high quality.
- Ensure that all teachers set and model consistently high expectations for pupils' written work in all subjects, including handwriting, presentation and spelling.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders and staff have built well on the improvements already recognised by the previous inspection. As a result, standards at the end of both key stages have risen significantly.
- The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership. She is ably supported by the skilled and knowledgeable deputy. Other leaders and staff share their forward-thinking vision. Morale is high and there is a clear sense of teamwork.
- Leaders know the school very well. They celebrate improvements but are honest about areas that still need to develop further. They are ambitious and use every opportunity to improve outcomes for all pupils.
- The school has a strong ethos. Its core 'star' principles of success, teamwork, aspiration and respect are evident in all aspects of the school's work. Good relationships and enjoyment create a positive environment for pupils and adults.
- Leaders' actions to improve teaching are generally effective. They identify strengths but are frank about areas that still need developing. They provide a range of support to enable individual teachers to develop and improve their own practice.
- Middle leaders are committed and enthusiastic about their roles. They plan carefully to improve teaching and learning. They reflect on their actions and evaluate the difference they have made honestly. They feel supported and empowered by the headteacher and senior leaders.
- Teachers and leaders meet regularly to check the progress of each pupil, focusing carefully on disadvantaged pupils. This leads to swift and, in some cases, innovative actions to help individuals or groups of pupils to catch up. Leaders check on gaps between the performance of different groups across the school. They have been successful in closing or eliminating these gaps since the last inspection.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The school continues to develop a broad and balanced curriculum that provides many opportunities for learning, enriched by a range of visits. The school promotes British values well because they link strongly with its own 'star' principles. School council members can talk about actions they have taken, for example, to improve playtime.
- The school provides a range of clubs at lunchtime and after school, which add to the richness of children's learning. They range from football and French to choir and computing.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to enable disadvantaged pupils to make good progress from their starting points. The leader commented that individuals' needs 'are at the heart of what we do'. Clear and specific planning for the use of the funding is focused on narrowing gaps. This has been successful in both key stages. Innovative therapies, such as dog therapy, are having a noticeable positive effect on enabling pupils to be ready to learn. Other uses of the funding include targeted teaching in small groups and support in class, access to enrichment visits and the valuable work of the home school support worker. Information on the difference the use of this funding is making is not yet provided for parents on the school's website.
- The school uses the additional sports funding from the government to enhance teaching through support, coaching and training. The funding has also enabled the introduction of new sports such as tag rugby. Parents are provided with an evaluation of the use of this additional funding on the website.
- The local authority has played an important and valued part in the school's journey. It has been proactive in working with leaders to provide a range of support matched to the school's development needs. It has challenged leaders effectively through feedback.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors know the school well. They are realistic and knowledgeable about how it is improving. They make a strong contribution to the school's reflection on how effective its actions are.
 - The governing body takes decisive actions to improve its own effectiveness, for example through matching new recruitment to identified gaps in its skills. Governors are also working actively to raise their profile with parents. This includes the new governors' newsletter.
 - Governors hold the school to account. They have taken action since the last inspection to ensure that these challenges are properly recorded and followed up.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school completes all relevant checks on staff systematically and the governing body monitors these arrangements. Occasionally, information that has been appropriately checked is not fully recorded.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching is carefully planned and well focused. Pupils usually understand what they have to do to be successful in lessons because this is explained clearly by the teacher.
- There are established routines and expectations in all classes so that behaviour is typically good and there is a calm and motivating atmosphere.
- Learning in lessons is purposeful. Pupils are enthusiastic and eager to talk about their work. For example, in one lesson children talked about the exciting verbs they were using in their writing. In a mathematics lesson, good relationships enabled the teacher to use humour to capture pupils' interest.
- Work in pupils' books provides clear evidence of the progress they make over time. The school's use of its 'talk for writing' approach is clearly enabling children of all abilities to improve their writing in each sequence of lessons. The most able pupils' writing exceeds the expected standard for their year group. The quality of writing is not yet as consistent when pupils are writing in other subjects.
- Teachers value leaders' action this year to give more flexibility in the timetable. This is allowing them to provide extended time for writing. It is also enabling them to change the timetable for those subjects such as design technology that they feel are best taught in a block of time.
- Precise teaching of phonics in groups, based on assessments, has led to improved standards. Teachers plan phonics teaching together and provide some opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge to writing. However, leaders recognise that sometimes teaching of phonics in key stage 1 is not sufficiently accurate.
- Teachers give pupils helpful written feedback in their books and give them time to follow this advice, for example to correct or improve their work. Sometimes pupils' corrections continue to include mistakes that are not followed up. This means that pupils do not learn from their mistakes as well as they could.
- Teachers very regularly record brief assessments against the expected outcomes in pupils' books. School leaders ensure that assessments are checked and accurate.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, for example through asking questions that support their learning. Occasionally, teachers do not use them to help pupils throughout lessons as well as they might.

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 say that teachers know them well and listen to them.
- Pupils are proud of their work but they do not always take care with their handwriting and the presentation of their work. This indicates that their attitudes to their learning are not consistently as good as they should be.
- Pupils feel safe. They understand how they are kept safe in school, for example through fire drills and secure doors. They know about keeping safe online but are less clear about water and rail safety.
- Pupils of all ages know what bullying is and are confident teachers will act if needed. They feel there is no unkindness and say that 'racism does not happen here'. They say that 'rude things are not said very often'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- All pupils are very clear about the school's systems to manage behaviour and like them. Even the youngest can explain exactly how they work. As a result, good behaviour is seen in lessons and around the school. In some lessons pupils become fidgety and this slows the pace of learning.
- Pupils are polite and respectful, both to adults and to each other.
- Pupils value the rewards linked to the behaviour management system. For example, the youngest pupils talked about the special table at lunch for birthday pupils and those who have earned 'super stars'.
- Leaders have ensured that staff are trained to manage any problems with behaviour consistently. Because of this, fewer vulnerable pupils are out of class and their concentration and behaviour for learning are improved.

- Behaviour at playtimes and lunchtime is good. Pupils eat together happily and manage their trays, helping themselves to salad independently. The school council has had a role in some improvements at lunchtime. Some pupils from Year 2 have marshalling responsibilities and wear yellow tabards. They provide feedback to other children such as 'well done for not running'.
- The school provides a very attractive and well-maintained environment that sets and reflects high standards.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about behaviour. Inspectors did not find any evidence to substantiate the concerns of a very few parents.
- Leaders have successfully improved attendance since the last inspection so that it is now above average. However, attendance for pupils eligible for free school meals and for some pupils who have special educational needs is well below average. Pupils are tracked very carefully and actions are taken to support pupils and their families to improve attendance. The 'bright starts' breakfast club and the use of attendance rewards are helping to ensure that pupils come to school regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils make good progress across key stage 1.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics last year were significantly above the national average. School data shows that pupils in both year groups are on track to maintain or exceed these standards this year.
- The proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard for phonics at the end of Year 1 has risen sharply to above the national average. School evidence indicates that pupils in the current Year 1 are on track to maintain or exceed this standard. Last year most pupils who had not met the standard in Year 1 caught up by the end of Year 2.
- The gaps between standards for disadvantaged pupils and others are reducing steadily because leaders act promptly and successfully to meet the needs of these pupils.
- The most able pupils in Key Stage 1 make similar progress to their peers. As a result, these pupils exceed the expectations for their age and standards continue to show improvement. In early years, the number of most-able children on track to exceed expectations by the time they start Year 1 is also continuing to increase.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make increasingly good progress from their starting points in line with other pupils. Strong leadership with rigorous strategies is ensuring that prompt action is taken to ensure teachers meet these pupils' needs.
- Pupils read widely and often. They can explain how they learn through independent and guided reading. They use a variety of books and visit the library every week. They use their knowledge of phonics to sound out unfamiliar words and can self-correct if their first attempt does not make sense. Parents are invited in once a week at the start of the day to read with their child. These sessions are welcoming and relaxed and both parents and pupils clearly relish them.

Early years provision

is good

- Children make good progress across Nursery and the Reception Year. From starting points that are at or just below those typical for their ages, children catch up quickly. For the last two years the proportion reaching a good level of development has risen above the national average, so they are well prepared for Year 1.
- The school has been very successful in closing the gaps between standards for disadvantaged children and others. These gaps have been eliminated for some of the early learning goals.
- Adults' assessments of children's knowledge, skills and understanding are accurate. They use these assessments well to match learning activities to each child's needs.
- Phonics is taught to small groups of children at a similar stage in their learning. Activities are varied and carefully planned so that they capture children's interest. Adults reinforce the use of these skills in reading and writing throughout the day.
- Children's work in books shows that all pupils make progress with their writing and number skills. They work with adults to choose examples of work to add to their learning journals.
- Children thoroughly enjoy their wide range of interesting activities, both indoors and outdoors, and so behaviour is good. Many activities are linked to a theme such as minibeasts or to a storybook such as 'The Gruffalo'.

- Children are keen to learn and confidently talk about their learning. Children learning about minbeasts talked about knowing that spiders have eight legs. Some children then counted and added the number of legs on two spiders.
- Adults interact well with children during their different activities to move their learning on. One group of children worked keenly and successfully with the teacher to write their version of the story of 'The Gruffalo'.
- Where disadvantaged children start with a lower level of knowledge and skills than other children of the same age, the leader ensures that additional funding is targeted in varied ways to help these children to catch up. This is helping these children to make progress.
- Leadership of this key stage is strong. The leader is passionate, skilled and knowledgeable. She is highly committed to the continuous further development of teaching and learning, to ensure that improvements since the last inspection become firmly established.

School details

Unique reference number	118330
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10012297

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola Archenoul
Headteacher	Jane Shields
Telephone number	01634 844127
Website	www.delceinfants.co.uk
Email address	office@delceinf.medway.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 June 2014

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average infant school.
- The school serves pupils from mainly White British backgrounds. Other pupils come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average. Pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority (disadvantaged pupils).
- The proportion of pupils identified to receive additional school support for disability or special educational needs is average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The headteacher has changed since the last inspection in June 2014. The current headteacher started in January 2015.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website about how effectively pupil premium funding is used to narrow gaps in standards.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes to gather evidence about what teaching and learning are like typically. They spent time watching lessons and an assembly, looking at a range of pupils' work and displays throughout the school, talking to pupils and discussing with leaders what they had seen. Many of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders from the school.
- Pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority met with inspectors to discuss different aspects of the school. Inspectors also spoke informally to a range of people, including parents, to gather views.
- Inspectors analysed 24 responses to the online Ofsted Parent View survey and took account of 20 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors sampled other aspects of the school's work, including leaders' own records of the school's effectiveness, and scrutinised safeguarding arrangements.

Inspection team

Stephanie Fane, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Judy Grevett	Ofsted Inspector
Rosemary Addison	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

