

# East Dene Primary School

Doncaster Road, East Dene, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S65 2DF

## Inspection dates

3–4 May 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Strong and effective leadership and governance has brought about substantial improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes since the last inspection.
- Disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, make exceptionally strong progress in upper key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Provision for children in the early years is excellent. This enables them to make speedy progress from mostly below-typical starting points.
- There is some variation in the rates of progress across year groups, but most pupils make good progress because of the overall good teaching they receive. Achievement has been weaker in key stage 1, but has turned a corner and continues to improve. A minority of pupils are struggling to catch up in reading and writing mid key stage 2.
- In the past, hardly any pupils achieved greater depth in learning by the end of key stage 1. Leaders have identified pupils who should have done better. As a result, the most able pupils are beginning to reach the higher standards of which they are capable by the time they leave the school.
- Teaching is quickly improving in subjects such as science, geography and history, where progress is not as strong as in as it is in English and mathematics.
- Senior leaders are highly organised and thorough in their work. Middle leaders, some of whom are early in their development, receive clear guidance so take increasingly effective action.
- East Dene is a caring school. The provision for pupils' personal, emotional and physical development is very effective, especially for the most vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils show tolerance and respect for each other. Pupils of different cultures and backgrounds play and work well together. Leaders recognise that there is more to do to help pupils develop a better understanding of diversity in modern Britain.
- Behaviour is good in and out of the classroom. Pupils work hard throughout lessons because of engaging teaching and an increasingly stimulating curriculum. Pupils demonstrate self-discipline and are welcoming and friendly.
- Attendance is improving and near to the national average. Leaders have made small improvements in the rates of persistent absence, but these remain too high for some of the most vulnerable pupils.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve outcomes so that:
  - any differences in rates of progress between year groups diminish
  - progress in a wide range of subjects matches that in reading, writing and mathematics
  - more of the most able pupils reach higher standards, especially in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2
  - those pupils in key stage 2 making slower progress in writing learn to write more accurately and fluently, and those doing less well with reading catch up to the standards of their peers.
- Further improve teaching by:
  - strengthening teachers' subject knowledge and assessment in non-core subjects
  - making sure that all teachers precisely identify the needs of readers and writers who have fallen behind in their learning and use this information to address weaknesses
  - ensuring that teachers more consistently challenge the most able pupils in all year groups
  - giving pupils more opportunities to practise and apply their mathematics learning in other subjects, especially science.
- Introduce a more systematic approach to increasing pupils' understanding of diversity in modern Britain by:
  - teaching pupils more about a range of modern cultures, world faiths and different ways of living
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to debate current affairs.
- Further reduce rates of persistent absence, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The quality of teaching and pupils' progress has improved considerably since the last inspection because of highly effective leadership. The very experienced executive headteacher, head of school and deputy headteacher have together strengthened leadership at all levels. Senior leaders are adept at spotting talent and giving inexperienced colleagues opportunities to lead and prove themselves.
- Senior leaders and core subject leaders uphold high expectations of other leaders and teachers and are thorough in their work. They make systematic checks on the quality of teaching and so have a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses in each teacher's practice. They set challenging targets for teachers and ensure that they receive ample training to help them in their work. Teachers accept responsibility for their own professional development, collaborating with colleagues to think of further ways to improve their practice. As a result, teaching goes from strength to strength.
- Leaders are equally meticulous in the way they track the progress of each pupil. Leaders and teachers therefore have an accurate picture of each pupil's progress, including that of disadvantaged pupils, the most able, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. This means that teachers identify those pupils who are not achieving as well as they should and provide extra teaching to help them catch up.
- Senior leaders have appropriately prioritised teaching in reading, writing and mathematics, subjects that give pupils key skills to tackle work in other subjects. Rapid improvements have come about because of the strong leadership of English and mathematics. Senior leaders support and challenge the less experienced middle leaders who manage the other subjects. Middle leaders of subjects such as science, geography, history and religious education are becoming more effective but are early in their development. Consequently, progress in these subjects lags behind the better progress in English and mathematics, but is improving quickly.
- Leaders have improved the curriculum over the last two years so that it is more interesting and stimulating for pupils. Topics begin with a visit to a place of interest or with a special visitor or event in school to spark pupils' enthusiasm and contribute to their cultural development. Middle leaders are gradually improving teachers' knowledge so that work in a range of subjects is becoming more challenging and progress is strengthening.
- Pupils benefit from and value a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. Leaders make efficient use of the additional government funding for sport and physical education, in part to provide professional coaching and a range of out-of-school-hours sports opportunities such as boxercise, gymnastics and cricket. Older pupils develop confidence and independence as they attend residential visits.
- Leaders' spending of pupil premium funds has been effective because leaders and teachers have carefully considered the considerable social and emotional barriers to learning of many of the disadvantaged pupils, as well as their learning needs. The pastoral leader ensures that a range of initiatives result in pupils learning to control their behaviour and emotions and better engage with their learning. Leaders have been

less effective in reducing the persistent absence of those disadvantaged pupils who miss school on average more than half a day a week.

- Special educational needs funding is used effectively because the special educational needs coordinator ensures that pupils' needs are properly diagnosed and that staff are well trained, for example in how to help pupils who have conditions such as dyslexia and ADHD. Consequently, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leaders take action to develop the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. For example, as well as assemblies, pupils take part in regular philosophy lessons. They learn how to form views about challenging issues, to justify their opinions and how to disagree respectfully. Leaders recognise that more work is needed to develop pupils' understanding about different cultures, world faiths and gender issues if pupils are to be even better prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The multi-academy trust (MAT) keeps a close eye on the development of the school in partnership with the other two Central Learning Partnership Trust (CLPT) schools in Rotherham. All three schools have benefited from collaboration. Leaders of English and mathematics lead their subjects across the partnership. The trust has ensured the appointment of strong leaders, facilitating this by providing extra funding. It has set up a clear governance structure so that leaders are properly held to account.

## **Governance of the school**

- The MAT's well-structured scheme of delegation means that trustees, directors and governors are clear about their responsibilities.
- A local executive governing board and working group hold leaders to account under the leadership of a very experienced chair. The chair is a local man who is passionate about the success of the pupils in this community. His determination means he does not give leaders an easy ride but checks what they say is accurate by visiting the school regularly to see for himself.
- Other governors have the skills and experience to interrogate the ample information they receive about the progress of groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged pupils. They fulfil their responsibilities well, including their safeguarding duties and making sure that performance management and pay arrangements are robust. Governors recognise, however, that school staff dominate the local working group. This has the potential to weaken accountability as leaders sometimes check the impact of their own work.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective because leaders ensure that all staff are well trained and clear about their responsibilities. An efficient electronic system aids good communication. Leaders keep detailed and accurate records of all conversations and agreed actions and chase professionals to make sure that they do what they say they will do.
- Adults are caring and sensitive to pupils' needs. They are watchful, knowing the signs to look for that a child may be at risk of radicalisation for example, and other types of

abuse. Adults have identified signs of abuse and taken swift action so that children have received the help they urgently needed.

- Proper checks are made on adults during recruitment to make sure that they are suitable to work with children. An accurate record of these checks is kept.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, resulting in faster pupils' progress and raised attainment.
- Teachers' thoughtful questioning and probing of pupils' understanding helps pupils to explain their thinking and to give full answers. Pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, are successfully encouraged to answer in full sentences.
- Teachers assess pupils' work accurately during and following lessons. They give helpful feedback in line with the school's policy so that pupils know what they need to do to improve. Teachers are good at helping pupils to assess their own learning, which hastens their progress.
- Teaching assistants receive good training and so make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers direct teaching assistants well so that support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, especially, promotes good progress. Teaching assistants are adept at helping children who speak English as an additional language to speak and write with increasing accuracy.
- Teachers plan learning that largely challenges pupils of all abilities well, including the most able pupils. However, this is not consistently the case across all year groups and subjects. Increasing numbers of pupils are reaching the highest standards by the end of Year 6 because teaching stretches them, though this has been slower to begin to take effect in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2.
- Teaching is especially effective in upper key stage 2 where pupils make remarkable progress in reading, writing and mathematics, helping them to catch up from starting points much that were lower than they should have been at the end of key stage 1.
- The teaching of phonics has improved, helping to raise standards in early reading and writing by the end of Year 2. A minority of pupils mid key stage 2, who did not get a good enough grounding in these skills in the past, are struggling to catch up to where they should be in reading and writing. Leaders recognise that teachers need further challenge and support to accelerate the rate of progress of these pupils.
- Mathematics teaching is effective in developing pupils' reasoning skills and developing fluency in calculating. Increasing numbers of pupils are learning to recall their multiplication tables quickly. The most effective mathematics teaching really stretches pupils of all abilities so that they develop staying power as they grapple with tricky problems.
- Teachers' expertise in teaching subjects such as science and the humanities is not as well developed as their teaching of English and mathematics. This means that progress in these subjects, though no weaker than average, is not as strong as progress in

reading, writing and numeracy, particularly for the most able pupils. Good leadership is improving teachers' subject knowledge.

- Teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to practise and apply their writing skills in a range of subjects and this contributes well to children's progress in learning to write. Teachers do not provide nearly enough opportunities for pupils to attempt challenging mathematics work in subjects such as science or design technology.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is good.
- Many pupils are developing resilience and determination. When faced with work that challenges them, such as a difficult mathematics problem, they do not give up easily.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are respectful but warm and friendly. Adults teach pupils how to show respect so pupils remember to say 'please' and 'thank you'. They make eye contact, smile and greet visitors politely.
- Pupils of different cultures mix well. They demonstrate tolerance and respect for each other. Pupils say that they do not hear any racist language in school. However, pupils' knowledge about different cultures and major world faiths is limited, as is their understanding about gender issues.
- Adults make sure that pupils know how to stay safe. For example, they teach pupils how to protect themselves online. They ensure that older pupils especially know about the dangers of grooming and child sexual exploitation.
- Pupils say that bullying does not happen very often and that when it does, adults deal with it effectively. Most parents and carers agree that their children are safe in school.
- Leaders work hard to meet the emotional and mental health needs of pupils. They are sensitive to the stresses young people face in modern society. This is evident, for example, in the short residential Year 6 pupils experience to wind down before their tests.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in class and work hard because teachers plan lessons which interest them. Pupils cooperate and collaborate in lessons.
- 'Friendship cadets' from each class seek advice from adults who help them to involve pupils who may be left on their own, or simply be having a bad day.
- Adults organise breaktimes and lunchtimes well and children behave sensibly as they move about the school and take turns to use the limited outside space.
- Pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour receive support that helps them to get along with their peers and to engage with their learning in class. The fixed-term exclusion rate has fallen because of these successful interventions.

- Overall attendance rates have risen year on year and are now near to the national average. However, persistent absence rates remain too high, particularly for the most vulnerable groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- In both 2015 and 2016, the progress made by pupils by the end of key stage 2 has been among the very best in England. There was no difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and others from similar starting points. The proportion of pupils reaching at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined was above the national average last year. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to achieve as well as pupils did in the last two years. Pupils are well prepared for secondary school.
- Though none of the pupils in last year's Year 6 group reached a high standard when they were in Year 2, many of the pupils with average prior attainment, including the most able disadvantaged, went on to reach the highest standards in the tougher 2016 tests. The most able pupils in most year groups are catching up, so an increasing proportion are reaching the higher standards of which they are capable. Leaders recognise that there is more to be done, especially in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2.
- Pupils make excellent progress in upper key stage 2, where teaching is the strongest. A minority of pupils in Year 4 and Year 5, who did not do well in key stage 1, continue to struggle with aspects of reading and writing and have some way to go to catch up.
- Over a number of years, achievement by the end of Year 2 has been poor because of weak teaching. Outcomes improved in 2016, more pupils reaching the expected standard in English and mathematics. Many pupils left and joined the school in Year 2 last year. Those who were at East Dene for the longest made the best progress. Pupils currently in key stage 1 are making good progress.
- The uneven progress pupils make year on year is improving. Leaders know where the relative strengths and weaknesses in pupils' progress lie. They are taking effective action to strengthen progress where it is not as brisk.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points because of the effective support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants.
- Across the school, there are variations in the rates of progress pupils make in subjects other than English and mathematics, particularly for the most able pupils. Teachers' knowledge about the standards that should be expected in these subjects is developing as leaders more effectively manage subjects like art, design technology, science and the humanities subjects.

## Early years provision

**Outstanding**

- Children enter the early years with skills, knowledge and understanding that are generally some way below those expected for their age across all areas of development. Many enter with little spoken English. The proportion of children reaching

a good level of development by the end of the early years is now a little above the national average. An increasing number of children are exceeding the early learning goals. Most children make progress that is considerably better than typical for children in the early years because of the excellent provision. Children are very well prepared for learning in Year 1.

- Outcomes for boys and the disadvantaged, which have been weaker in the past, are improving quickly because leaders are adept at identifying and addressing areas of weakness. Sharp assessment means that adults know exactly where each child is in their development. This helps the well-managed adults to target children's learning needs with precision. For example, inspectors observed children consistently strongly engaged in well-planned, adult-led mathematics groups across the base, receiving teaching that is just right for them to be able to take the next steps in their learning.
- Children are safe and well cared for, so they flourish. Leaders assess risks regularly to make sure that the space and equipment are safe to use. Children share and cooperate well as they play and explore together. Adults encourage children to make choices and to learn from mistakes. Support for vulnerable pupils, such as those with speech and language difficulties and additional social and emotional needs, is very effective.
- Adults have created an extraordinarily rich learning environment. They arrange the high-quality resources thoughtfully, paying attention to detail so children are drawn in and their interest is sparked. Children concentrate and enjoy their chosen and planned activities. For example, an inspector observed a group of children creating large chalk pictures of the solar system on black paper. They demonstrated patience and control, concentrating and take pride in the finished product. Other children observed this and followed their classmates' ideas, having a go for themselves. Children take up opportunities for mark-making and writing across a range of areas, contributing strongly to their development of writing skills. Provision in the limited outside space is well planned.
- Leaders and other adults have high expectations of children. They are exceptionally well organised and work as a tight-knit team. Adults skilfully question children, including those children who enter the school with very little spoken English, probing their thinking, giving them opportunities to talk at increasing length and building their vocabulary. All adults actively exploit opportunities, encouraging curiosity and independent exploration.
- Leaders understand the children and their community well because they make visits to children's homes and pre-school providers prior to children being enrolled. Leaders successfully involve parents in their children's learning. For example, many parents attend 'stay and play' sessions in which they join in activities with their children. Parents receive samples of children's writing and mark-making to see the progress they are making.

## School details

Unique reference number	139225
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10031972

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ray Griffiths
Headteacher	Louise Ridge
Telephone number	01709 512202
Website	<a href="http://www.eastdene.org">www.eastdene.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@eastdene.org">enquiries@eastdene.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	24–25 March 2015

## Information about this school

- East Dene Primary School is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Half the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, about twice the national average.
- Around half the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and four out of ten pupils speak English as an additional language. Both of these figures are well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is a little above the national average.
- East Dene Primary School is a sponsored academy within the Central Learning partnership Trust (CLPT) based in Wolverhampton. The school works closely with two other Rotherham schools, also CLPT schools.

- The school met the current floor standards in 2016. This is the minimum expectation of pupils' progress set by the government.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about admission arrangements, accessibility and governors' business and financial interests on its website. The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about these same matters.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited almost all classes at least once to observe learning. Many of these observations took place with school leaders. Inspectors chatted with pupils about their learning and looked in their workbooks.
- Inspectors met with pupils across the age range to find out what it is like to be a pupil at East Dene. Inspectors held discussions with the executive headteacher, senior and middle leaders and the chair of governors. The lead inspector had telephone discussions with the chief executive officer of the Central Learning Partnership Trust and a representative of the local authority.
- Twenty-seven responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, were considered, along with several written responses from parents. Inspectors held brief discussions with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors also considered a small handful of responses to the pupil questionnaire and 42 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors examined school assessment information. Documents were scrutinised, including the school self-evaluation document, improvement plans, leaders' monitoring notes and governing body minutes.
- Records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Philip Riozzi, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alan Chaffey	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Birch	Ofsted Inspector

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