

# Denby Grange School

Off Stocksmoor Rd, Midgley, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF4 4JG

## Inspection dates

15–17 January 2019

<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>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The quality of leadership and management is good, and has considerably improved since the previous inspection.
- The proprietor works closely with leaders to monitor standards in the school and ensures that the independent school standards are met consistently.
- Teachers, tutors and support staff have generally high expectations of pupils. They know them well and are very committed to preparing them to be successful citizens.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is continuing to improve and hence pupils' outcomes are improving, because leaders provide clear guidance and coaching on what is expected from teachers.
- Pupils' behaviour is good because they enjoy trusting and supportive relationships with staff.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. Staff have a good understanding of pupils' complex needs and work hard to keep them safe.
- Leaders have ensured that the newly refined curriculum helps pupils to learn because it interests and challenges them.
- The school's work to foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their appreciation of British values is effective.
- In some lessons, learning is slower because it is not clear what teachers want individual pupils to achieve. Work in pupils' books does not consistently tell them what they need to achieve or how to improve their work.
- A well-thought-through assessment system has been recently introduced, but is not yet providing information about the progress that pupils make over time.
- Although pupils' attendance has substantially improved since the previous inspection, leaders know that there is more work to be done to improve it further.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, by making sure that:
  - pupils' targets are sharp and subject specific, to make it clear what they must achieve
  - pupils know how to improve their work.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, by making sure that:
  - the new assessment system allows leaders and the proprietor to check the progress of individual and groups of pupils in all subjects
  - leaders continue to seek ways to improve pupils' attendance, so that pupils benefit more from the education provided by the school.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders have clear ambition for the school and the pupils. Keys Child Care is investing in a complete refurbishment of the current school. Leaders have been involved in designing changes so that the school better meets the needs of the pupils.
- The proprietor and headteacher ensure that the independent school standards are met.
- The headteacher is committed to improving the life chances of pupils and preparing them to be successful in their future lives. This aspiration is shared by all staff. This results in a nurturing environment where staff support pupils' emotional needs and encourage pupils to achieve a range of qualifications to access the next phase of their lives.
- The headteacher and senior leaders, with the support of the proprietor, have ensured that the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been addressed. In addition, the appointment of a new leader has brought about improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the curriculum.
- The rationale for the curriculum is well thought out and based on research, so that it inspires pupils to want to come to school and enjoy learning. The new leader, who is working across three schools, has coached and supported staff in producing detailed curriculum plans. Practical activities in lessons, through a themed approach, are matched to pupils' needs and interests. Qualifications offer options for pupils to gain entry level and GCSE accreditation and to pursue vocational subjects.
- Extra-curricular activities enrich and bring to life work taking place in the classroom. For example, a topic based on local history created opportunities to visit the local mining museum, the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the rhubarb triangle and The Hepworth Wakefield.
- Teachers and tutors value the effective support and training that they are provided with to improve their classroom practice. The arrangements for performance management have improved since the previous inspection, with clearer expectations and opportunities for professional development.
- The school's work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is effective. Pupils have an appreciation of the events that are celebrated by world religions, such as the Chinese New Year, Eid and Hanukkah. Pupils understand the circumstances of others and they raise money for a variety of organisations, for example Macmillan Cancer Support, BBC Children in Need and the British Heart Foundation, through their healthy challenge.
- The school marks different events, such as a Romanian culture day, to sharpen pupils' appreciation of the wider world.
- Visits to other organisations, for example, to a mock court room, enable pupils to understand the rule of law and their rights and responsibilities in modern Britain.
- Parents and carers spoken with are overwhelmingly positive about the school and say that their children are safe, happy and making good progress. One parent commented, 'I cannot speak highly enough about the school.'

- Although leaders have improved pupils' attendance, there is still work to be done to improve it further.
- Because the curriculum has only recently been introduced, leaders do not yet have enough information about the progress that pupils make across all subjects, over time.

## **Governance**

- Effective arrangements are in place for governance.
- The proprietor, who is also the chair of the governing body, offers a good level of support and challenge to school leaders through a regional manager and a school improvement partner.
- The headteacher provides frequent reports to the proprietor and the governing body, covering the company's key performance indicators. This level of accountability ensures that the proprietor and the governing body are well informed about how the school is performing. Any issues are swiftly addressed.
- The proprietor ensures that the health, safety and welfare of pupils are paramount, through the detailed and well-documented policies and checking of practice that takes place.
- As a result of the systems that are in place, the proprietor has an accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school publishes a safeguarding policy on its website, which meets the latest statutory requirements.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive training through professional development days at the beginning of the year and receive refreshers and new information through regular online training modules. Staff can explain the signs to look for that indicate that a pupil may be at risk of harm and they know how to report concerns.
- Staff have a good understanding of the possible risks to pupils in the wider world. External organisations work with pupils to minimise these risks. For example, a workshop on the issues associated with child sexual exploitation took place during the inspection. Leaders work closely with other agencies to anticipate, assess and minimise potential risks.
- Arrangements for checking that the health and safety requirements of the school buildings are met are regular and well documented. Leaders ensure that alarms, lighting and firefighting equipment meet requirements.
- Effective risk assessments are in place for individual pupils and for activities out of school.
- Safer recruitment accreditation is held by all governors and leaders conducting interviews. Appropriate checks are made to ensure that new staff are suitable to work with children.
- The off-site alternative education provided four days a week, for a very small number of pupils, is monitored regularly. Leaders reassure themselves that it is safe through tracking

pupils' attendance and progress, regular telephone calls and visits to the organisation providing this education.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teaching is being supported to improve further through the guidance and professional development provided to staff. High expectations are evident for how teachers support pupils' learning. The leaders' monitoring of lessons provides valued feedback to teachers, to help them to reflect and improve.
- Staff support pupils well, and this leads to strong and trusting relationships. Pupils who come to the school with poor attitudes to learning quickly improve because of the nurturing environment.
- Behaviour is managed well. Pupils who struggle to control their emotions are coached to talk through strategies that will help them. Teachers are quick to challenge any inappropriate language and they make clear the acceptable boundaries in the classroom.
- Staff have a thorough understanding of the needs of each pupil and their flexible approach in lessons is instrumental in keeping pupils on task.
- Most teachers demonstrate effective approaches to questioning and checking whether new concepts have been understood.
- The school's new curriculum motivates pupils to come to school and to want to learn. Lessons are planned to incorporate activities and content that interest them. However, sometimes teachers are not clear enough about what specific knowledge or skill individual pupils are working towards in lessons. Pupils' targets are not evident consistently in lessons and they are not precise enough to measure small steps of progress.
- The school is developing an innovative approach to the assessment of all subjects, which informs the progress that pupils are making through the new curriculum. This will enable pupils to know what they are achieving and understand their next steps. As this is a new system, leaders are not yet able to gain a fully accurate understanding of the progress of individuals and groups over time.
- Pupils' workbooks show that they are making good progress. In lessons, pupils are gaining in knowledge and understanding new concepts. In science, for example, pupils know what the difference is between communicable and non-communicable diseases and they can explain the conditions in which fungi grow. In mathematics, pupils understand equivalent fractions. In art, pupils take great pride in producing graffiti art and collage and achieve accreditation at level 1. However, teachers do not routinely help pupils to improve the work that they have completed.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff are skilled at supporting and promoting pupils' self-confidence and self-awareness. Staff model high expectations of behaviour for pupils. Central to pupils' success is their

self-awareness of how to control their emotions. Staff play a substantial role in helping them to understand their emotions and how to respond more appropriately.

- To improve their self-confidence, pupils are offered one-to-one personal training sessions and the opportunity to participate in an activity in the community. The personal, health and social education curriculum teaches pupils about body image, morality and opinion, tolerance and respect, gender identity and how to live a healthy life.
- Pupils learn how to take responsibility for their actions when they make decisions as representatives of the student council. The school has introduced fresh fruit at breaktimes in response to a request from the student council.
- Pupils take a pride in their work and they are proud of their school.
- Pupils are generally polite, and they are respectful to each other and to adults.
- Pupils spoken with say that they feel safe in school, 'because of supportive staff' and they are clear about what the school has taught them about staying safe online, smoking, drugs, cyber bullying and stranger danger. The comments from parents spoken with about their child's safety were very positive.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour begin to improve as soon as they join the school. This is because of the very positive relationships they have with the staff and the staff's expertise in helping pupils to control their emotions.
- The school's behaviour reward system is contributing to improving behaviour. Pupils say that the collection of points, which can be exchanged for money and a supervised shopping trip, motivates them to stay on task.
- Pupils say that if bullying occurs, the staff deal with it swiftly.
- Pupils' average attendance has improved by more than 20 percentage points since the previous inspection. Some pupils have made substantial improvements in their attendance when compared with that at their previous placements. The changes to the curriculum and improvements in teaching and learning have encouraged pupils to attend more regularly. Leaders have recently appointed an attendance officer, as they know there is more work to be done to improve attendance further.
- The personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils attending the alternative education provided are monitored closely and this shows that the pupils' attendance and behaviour are improving.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Many pupils start school with gaps in their knowledge and understanding because they have not attended school regularly, due to their social and emotional needs. However, generally high expectations, support and positive relationships lead to pupils achieving well across a range of subjects and making good progress.
- Last year, most pupils made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The majority of pupils in Year 11 achieved a mathematics and English qualification at entry

level or GCSE and others achieved a level 1 or level 2 qualification in home-cooking skills and a level 1 art award.

- At the previous inspection, a key area for improvement was for pupils to make progress in literacy and numeracy in all curriculum areas. Pupils' work in books confirms that this has been addressed. Pupils, for example, were seen to write well about surviving on a tropical island in topic work and to calculate accurately density equations in science. Pupils' workbooks also show that they progress well in their writing, as seen, for example, in their extended piece of writing on temples, tombs and treasures.
- The school prepares pupils well for their transition to the next stage in their lives after leaving school, through identifying an appropriate pathway in Year 9. Careers services provide advice and guidance about future destinations and pupils attend college open days. The school works with a company providing work experience placements, which culminates in pupils gaining a BTEC qualification. At the end of 2017/18, all pupils leaving the school went on to college or work placements.

## School details

Unique reference number	131136
DfE registration number	384/6120
Inspection number	10061253

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	34
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Nicola Kelly
Chair	Nicola Kelly
Headteacher	Jennie Allport
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,805
Telephone number	01924 830096
Website	<a href="http://www.keyschildcare.co.uk">www.keyschildcare.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:jennieallport@keyschildcare.co.uk">jennieallport@keyschildcare.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	8–10 March 2016

## Information about this school

- Denby Grange is situated in a semi-rural setting, between Wakefield and Huddersfield, and is a small day school for pupils aged from 11 to 18 years who have severe social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school opened in 2000 and its last standard inspection was in March 2016. It is registered for up to 36 pupils and there are currently 34 pupils aged 11 to 17 years on roll; 27 are boys and seven are girls.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan. Seven are looked after in care placements.



- Pupils are placed at the school by their local authority. Most have been excluded from previous schools or have persistently failed to attend and may have had long periods without any education.
- The school is part of the Keys Child Care company, which was previously known as the Keys Group.
- The school's aim is for pupils to be well prepared to live successfully in the community when they leave school.
- The school uses one organisation to provide alternative education for its pupils, A2 Change, in Featherstone.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out over two and a half days.
- A scrutiny of pupils' work was carried out alongside senior leaders, over a range of subjects.
- The inspector observed learning in a variety lessons accompanied by the headteacher.
- During the inspection, meetings were held with senior leaders, school staff, the proprietor and pupils.
- The inspector took into account the views expressed by four parents spoken to by telephone, as well as 17 staff who completed the Ofsted questionnaire.
- School documentation was examined, including admission and attendance registers, a wide range of policies, including those for behaviour, safeguarding, welfare, health and safety, and all documents required as part of the independent school standards.

## Inspection team

Suzette Garland-Grimes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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