

Mossbourne Victoria Park Academy

Victoria Park Road, Hackney, London E9 7HD

Inspection dates

6–7 October 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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders and governors have created this new community school based on the foundations of the Mossbourne Academy ethos. They have high aspirations for this growing school as it establishes itself in the wider community. Leaders are rightly proud of their achievements to date.
- Pupils work hard in this disciplined and structured environment and make good progress in their learning.
- Expectations around pupils' conduct and work ethic are high. Pupils are proud of their new school, their uniform and their achievements. Attendance is higher than the national average.
- Teachers plan interesting activities that engage pupils in their learning. They give insightful feedback so that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Pupils make good progress across key stage 3.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and appropriately challenge leaders in relation to areas requiring further development.
- Pupils are increasingly confident and articulate because of the school's focus on speaking and listening skills.
- A range of activities, trips and school productions enhance the curriculum. Pupils are keen to participate. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not achieve as well as their peers.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to demonstrate that they are self-disciplined and can take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour.
- Some pupils and parents do not feel that they can share their concerns with school staff.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- School leaders must ensure that:
 - groups of pupils identified by the school, including those who are disadvantaged, make more substantial progress from their starting points so that they can catch up with their peers
 - pupils are supported to return more quickly to mainstream classes following an exclusion from school, so that disruption to their learning is minimised
 - they develop a culture of trust where pupils and parents can share any concerns they might have openly and where pupils begin to take more responsibility for their own conduct and behaviour.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders and the governing body have successfully created a new school that serves the needs of the local community. They have forged strong links within the locality, particularly with parents. Consequently, the school is already oversubscribed. They have high aspirations of what the school will be when it has a full intake of pupils and work closely with the other federation secondary school, Mossbourne Community Academy. The Mossbourne principles of 'no excuses', and high expectations of staff and pupils, underpin the vision that senior leaders and the governing body have for this new school.
- Senior leaders know the school's strengths. They also understand that developing a new and expanding school presents some challenges. They realise that to maintain a good standard of education they need to address some of these challenges head-on. Leaders are clear that new staff must adhere to the Mossbourne ethos, particularly when it comes to managing behaviour and the discipline system. They regularly check that all staff understand and comply with the academy's policies and procedures and intervene should this not be the case.
- Middle leaders are experienced, many having worked at Mossbourne Community Academy. They believe fervently in the Mossbourne vision and ensure that all principles and procedures are followed. They check systematically on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in their subject areas, using the 'PAM' (Progress Analysis @ Mossbourne) system. This enables them to give timely feedback to teachers, address any issues quickly and provide them with professional development opportunities. This system is used to manage the performance of teachers effectively.
- The federation provides strong support. Working collaboratively with the other schools provides staff with opportunities to share best practice and ensure that assessment systems are accurate.
- Newly qualified teachers feel well supported by middle and senior leaders. The discipline system, pupils' consistently good behaviour and their belief that 'children want to learn' means that they can focus on the quality of their teaching and assessment. They are given regular opportunities to learn from each other and observe experienced teachers across the federation.
- The leader in charge of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities monitors the impact of support offered to them effectively. Support staff plan suitable activities with teachers and are monitored in line with the whole-school performance management process. Pupils' progress is checked closely by heads of department. Information provided by school leaders indicates that they make similar progress to other pupils at the school.
- Pupils in Year 8 receive appropriate guidance in order to choose their GCSE courses, begun in Year 9. There is flexibility built into the timetable, so that should they wish to change courses, they are able to do so up to the end of the first term.
- The key stage 3 curriculum covers a range of subjects, with an emphasis on the development of pupils' speaking and listening and reading skills. 'Prep' time is also built

into the school day. Pupils complete homework and correct their work in a silent, supervised environment. A small number of pupils follow a slightly different curriculum that includes COPE (certificate of personal effectiveness). A wide range of activities are available each week to complement the timetabled curriculum, including sport, music, drama and trips out of school. This ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and pupils are suitably prepared for life in modern Britain.

- Members of the 'Student Parliament' are elected following a competitive process. They meet bi-weekly with a middle leader and termly with senior leaders to discuss their views. Pupils have made notable changes in school, for instance acquiring further picnic tables for the playground. They organise events such as raising money for a local hospice.
- Generally, parents who responded to the online survey, 'Parent View', were positive about the standard of education provided for their children. They believe that the school works hard to keep them safe. However, some were concerned by a perceived disproportionate amount of punishment administered for minor misdemeanours. Some parents commented on a lack of transparency and poor communication, leaving them unable to raise concerns with school leaders. Information on the school's website is not easily accessible for parents.
- School leaders are aware that some groups of pupils, especially those that are disadvantaged, need further support to catch up with their peers. Leaders accurately prioritise specific groups of disadvantaged pupils and the small number that arrive at school with low attainment. Leaders are confident that these groups will achieve similar results to their peers by the time they finish Year 11. They were able, by the end of the inspection, to provide inspectors with a plan detailing how government funding for this group would be spent and the impact of school initiatives thus far. However, this strategy does not address specific barriers these pupils might face or the school's response to ensuring that they receive targeted individual support.

Governance of the school

- The experienced governing body are proud of the school's achievements to date. As part of a federation, the school shares the same values and principles as the 'sister school'. Some governors sit on both the central and local board and have an overview of both. Regular 'school on a page' headline information gives governors an understanding of the progress that school leaders are making towards targets. Governors regularly and effectively challenge this information and are clear which groups of pupils are at risk of not achieving as highly as their peers. They check that the progress of these groups is at least in line with that of other pupils at the school.
- Governors understand their statutory responsibilities around safeguarding and feel that the school provides a safe environment for pupils. Checks around staff's suitability to work are robust and governors ensure that the record-keeping is done in line with national guidance. They believe that the meticulous code of conduct for pupils means that any slight variation in mood, behaviour or appearance can be picked up as a sign of potential concern and dealt with efficiently.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Senior leaders and the governing body ensure that staff are well trained and understand their responsibilities to keep children safe. Procedures and checks in relation to staff recruitment are in line with current statutory guidance and record-keeping is robust. Leaders ensure that staff are clear about the risks faced by pupils in the wider community. These include gang affiliation, child sexual exploitation linked to gangs and issues to do with female genital mutilation. They work closely with external agencies to ensure that any pupil referrals are timely and that actions are swift and outcomes appropriate. Staff are suitably trained in the 'Prevent' duty and are vigilant when looking for signs of radicalisation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching and learning across key stage 3 are good. Pupils are quick to attempt tasks and to complete their work. They are keen to do well and work hard both in lessons and 'prep' time. They take pride in the presentation of their work.
- The assessment system is used across both schools in the foundation. Robust systems underpin accurate assessments. Pupils take regular tests which determine their ability groupings, and their progress is carefully tracked. This allows senior leaders to identify those that start to fall behind and put in place interventions if necessary.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan interesting activities that engage pupils in their learning. Some skilful questioning ensures that pupils deepen their understanding of complex ideas and are able to consolidate their prior learning. The most able pupils, in particular, are highly articulate and keen to participate in class or group discussions.
- In many lessons, teachers give helpful feedback to pupils about how they can improve their work. Pupils are encouraged to check their own work carefully and ensure that it is of a high standard. The most able pupils do this particularly well, developing self-critical skills and engaging in insightful dialogue with their teachers about their work.
- Occasionally, teachers do not give enough opportunities for pupils to improve their work following feedback or check that extension tasks have been completed appropriately. Equally, teachers do not always routinely check that pupils understand the subject matter or concepts being discussed. Consequently, pupils are sometimes not always clear about what they are doing and teachers are not able to correct misconceptions. This slows down the progress pupils are making as the activities lose meaning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The personal, social, health and economic (PHSE) education programme includes three 'drop down' days per year. This ensures that a range of issues, for instance road safety and peer pressure, are explored. A range of outside agencies is employed to deliver

workshops and encourage pupil discussion. Assemblies are used as another opportunity for pupils to consider current events and fundamental British values such as the value of democracy and upholding the law. Pupils reflect on the focus of each week's assembly during registration time.

- The school aims to provide a safe learning environment, where expectations in relation to pupils' conduct are very high. Leaders have instigated rules of 'no touching', 'no talking on transition between lessons' and 'no being in a group of more than six', throughout the school. Hence, pupils report that peer-to-peer bullying within school is not a concern. Any incidents of bullying are treated very seriously by leaders, usually with a fixed-term exclusion from school for the perpetrator, followed by a programme of reintegration. However, some pupils feel that these rules prevent them from fully socialising with their peers and mixing with pupils across the year groups.
- The use of electronic devices, including mobile phones, is banned on the school site. Pupils therefore have no opportunities in school to use social media in an inappropriate way. They are given appropriate advice and guidance on how they might protect themselves from cyber bullying and the school has appropriate filtering restrictions on website access.
- The 'Brilliant Club' provides opportunities for pupils to visit universities, debate topical issues and raise their aspirations regarding their future. This complements the advice they have received on choosing GCSE courses.
- There is pressure on pupils to achieve consistently highly. Some pupils believe that their emotional well-being is not given high enough priority by school leaders. These pupils are concerned that the amount of homework does not allow them time to pursue other activities out of school. Others say that they do not have opportunities to share their concerns in a nurturing and responsive way. Pupils' opinions about 'prep time' for instance, are mixed. Some believe it helps them organise their time effectively. Others say they would like more help from staff during this time, or more purposeful activities.
- Leaders have created a school that is safe from hazards and orderly. However, the consistent application of the discipline system means that some pupils and parents feel that the culture in the school is not nurturing. Some pupils spoke of the issues they faced in the wider community and their lack of confidence in sharing this information with school staff. Other pupils felt that staff were only concerned with their academic progress rather than their emotional well-being and therefore they are reluctant to share any concerns.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- All staff consistently and rigorously apply the discipline system. Pupils understand the rules around their conduct and what happens should they be broken. Line-up procedures at the start of the day and following break and lunch are carried out in silence. Pupils are clear about leaders' expectations for their conduct at these times and consistently comply. Expectations around movement between lessons are also adhered to. Pupils walk quickly and silently in rows. The atmosphere around the school site is, consequently, extremely quiet and orderly throughout the day.
- Pupils' behaviour at break and lunch is also quiet and calm. They play table tennis and basketball with their friends. Outside benches provide places for them to sit and talk

quietly. The lunch hall is tightly managed by supervising staff and queues move quickly and efficiently.

- The transition day before pupils start in Year 7 ensures that all are clear about the school's expectations around attendance, punctuality, dress, conduct, work ethic and adhering to the school's rules.
- Pupils are extremely articulate, polite and friendly. When spoken to, they were keen to share their views with inspectors. They are proud of their school and attend regularly in their smart uniform.
- Attendance is above the national average. Pupils receive regular rewards and prizes for coming to school regularly, with some aspiring to gain 100% attendance in order to qualify for a trip to a theme park. Sanctions for those with unauthorised absence are systematically applied.
- The school employs three learning mentors to work with some pupils whose behaviour does not meet the expected high standards. However, fixed-term exclusions are still very high. This is particularly true for pupils of Black Caribbean heritage and disadvantaged pupils.
- The 'behaviour support unit' is used for those pupils who have not adhered to the behaviour policy. These pupils are regularly sent to the 'BSU'. Some pupils spend lengthy periods of time there, including those pupils who have returned from being excluded from school. Pupils work silently and there are limited opportunities for them to reflect on their behaviour or be supported in their learning.
- While the majority of the pupils are articulate and well behaved, the school's discipline system does not allow pupils to demonstrate that they are self-disciplined. Plans are in place to diminish the amount of staff control required as pupils enter key stage 4.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The majority of pupils arrive having previously achieved at least nationally expected levels, with many having achieved more highly. Across Years 7 to 9, most pupils make good progress from their starting points, across a range of subjects.
- Senior leaders believe that all teachers are 'teachers of literacy'. Time is devoted every day to pupils reading independently or undertaking directed reading tasks. Leaders have used Year 7 catch-up funding to invest in a range of online software that provides pupils with bespoke reading programmes. Guided reading sessions provide opportunities for pupils to manage challenging texts and discuss relevant concepts and ideas. Reading for pleasure is encouraged. The library is well used and valued highly by the pupils. Pupils' reading ability is systematically tracked and those who struggle to read at an age-appropriate level receive further support. Notably, 13 lower-attaining pupils made significant gains in their reading last year and achieved a reading age commensurate with their chronological age. Pupils heard reading during the inspection did so clearly and confidently.
- Pupils are proud of the 'oracy passports' that encourage them to participate in a range of activities including discussions, presentations, public speaking and the achievement of external awards. The school's tutor groups are named after public figures who were

known for their oracy skills, for example Churchill. Pupils are generally very articulate in their verbal responses to teachers and there is an expectation that they reply in full sentences.

- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, work very hard and make good progress. Grouped together through the setting arrangements, pupils are systematically challenged and expected to produce work of a high standard.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in line with other pupils at the school. Individualised support for these pupils ensures that both their academic and emotional needs are met. Teaching assistants work closely with identified pupils during lessons to ensure that they can access the prescribed activities.
- School leaders know that there are gaps in some pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills, especially for some disadvantaged pupils and the very small group of less able pupils. Information provided by the school indicates that these pupils are making similar progress to their peers. However, school leaders know that these pupils will have to make progress that is more significant if they are to achieve as highly as their peers at GCSE level.

School details

Unique reference number	140210
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10022223

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Don Hayes
Principal	Nicholas Rutherford
Telephone number	020 8510 4550
Website	www.mvpa.mossbourne.org
Email address	enquiries@mvpa.mossbourne.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Mossbourne Victoria Park Academy opened in September 2014 and is part of the Mossbourne Federation. Though currently only 425 are on roll, it has the capacity for 800 pupils.
- Initially, the school was given permission to open a sixth form. School leaders have since decided to keep the school as an 11–16 provision.
- Just over half of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, which is above the national average.
- There are currently no pupils attending alternative provision while still on the school roll.
- The proportion of pupils who receive special educational needs support is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need or an education, health and care plan is significantly above the national average.
- The majority of pupils enter Year 7 with attainment above the national average.

- The school complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish on their website.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching, learning and assessment across a range of year groups and subjects. Inspectors also visited registration time, literacy lessons, an assembly and prep.
- Discussions were held with the federation chief executive officer, members of the governing body, the principal, vice-principal, senior and middle leaders, a range of staff, including newly qualified teachers, and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the 98 responses to Parent View, a staff survey, a parent survey conducted by the school in July 2016, and the views of current pupils.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation including: records relating to pupil behaviour and attendance, minutes of meetings, information on the progress made by pupils, the school's self-evaluation and the school's assessment system.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, policies and procedures.

Inspection team

Helen Matthews, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Diane Khanna	Ofsted Inspector
Dr Anne Murray-Hudson	Ofsted Inspector

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