

Dawlish Community College

Elm Grove Road, Dawlish, Devon EX7 0BY

Inspection dates

7–8 December 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils currently in the school do not make consistently strong progress in all year groups and in a wide range of subjects.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are not good because teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' work are too low.
- Pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science varies significantly with the class they are in.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The progress made by disadvantaged pupils varies too much across subjects and between classes in the same subject.
- Pupils do not consistently show positive attitudes to their learning and too much work is poorly presented.
- Pupils who have special educational needs are treated in some classes as having behavioural problems rather than their specific needs being addressed.
- Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of what needs to be done, but the actions they have taken have not improved the quality of teaching sufficiently to secure sustained improvements in pupils' achievement.
- Governors do not use a sharp evaluation of the impact of actions on the outcomes for pupils to challenge senior leaders robustly.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils are safe, well looked after and cared for, enjoy coming to school and attend regularly.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils achieve well in creative and practical subjects and in Spanish because teaching in these subjects is highly effective.
- The progress of those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving because of strong leadership.
- The curriculum is matched well to the needs of pupils and linked effectively with good careers guidance. All pupils progress to post-16 courses, training or apprenticeships that meet their needs and aspirations.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Senior leaders must insist that all teachers:
 - have high expectations of the level and quality of pupils' work, including for all groups of pupils, based on an accurate understanding of what pupils already can do, know and understand to raise their achievement
 - make sure that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work
 - help pupils, especially the most able, produce work that accurately shows the depth of their skills, knowledge and understanding
 - are adept in recognising when pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are not performing to their potential and do something about it
 - help pupils develop their writing skills
 - help pupils to take more pride in their work and show more positive attitudes to their learning
 - support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Senior and subject leaders must check closely that these improvements in teaching are consistent across the school and that they can be seen clearly in the improved quality of pupils' work.
- Governors must focus sharply on the impact of the actions taken by senior and subject leaders on raising pupils' achievement so that they can ask them challenging questions to hold them to account.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how well this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The school was judged to be good in 2012. The performance of the school declined soon after this, as seen in the poor examination results in 2014 and 2015. While overall attainment rose in 2016, the progress made by many pupils over the time they were in the school was not good enough.
- Senior leaders and governors have been successful in establishing a positive culture that supports pupils' all-round personal development and their physical and emotional well-being. They have been much less successful in making sure that all pupils achieve as well as they should in all subjects.
- Recent key changes to the team of senior leaders provide a good balance of complementary skills. Despite this and the resulting improvements in some key areas, there is still too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching across and within subjects and too much is not good enough. As a result, too many pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Senior leaders, led by an acting principal at the time of this inspection, have an accurate understanding of what needs to improve. They understand the reasons behind the school's recent poor performance and decline since the previous inspection. They know precisely the elements of teaching that are not consistently good enough. They are also clear about where there is good teaching and how to build on this. However, although actions have been taken and are making a difference, they have not had time to become fully effective.
- Senior leaders are mostly supported well by subject leaders. The quality of this team has also been enhanced by recent appointments. There is a shared understanding of the need for rapid improvements in the quality of teaching, although progress has been slower than expected.
- The precision of leaders' understanding means that the arrangements for managing the performance of teachers and for their professional development are matched well to those elements that need most improvement. However, this has not yet had the intended impact and too much teaching still requires improvement.
- Leaders have introduced new systems for setting targets for pupils and tracking their progress. These have not yet been fully effective in raising achievement, although those for pupils in Years 7 and 8 have been more effective than those for pupils in Year 11. However, not all subject leaders check closely enough to see that teachers' assessments are consistent with the quality and level of pupils' work.
- In 2014 and 2015, disadvantaged pupils had been making stronger progress and were catching up with other pupils. In 2016, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils fell when compared with that of other pupils nationally. The use of pupil premium funding was not effective. Current leaders have a much better understanding of the need to focus the allocation of this funding on a secure understanding of pupils' potential barriers to their learning. As a result, the achievement of current disadvantaged pupils is improving.

- The progress of those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving because of the strong leadership of this provision.
- Leaders are fully aware that a disproportionately high number of those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are sent to the behaviour exclusion room. They know that, in some cases, these pupils are treated by teachers as having poor behaviour, rather than teachers dealing with the pupil's specific needs. Urgent and focused training for teachers is planned to deal with this.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and matched well to the needs of pupils. A small number of pupils, much reduced from previous years, follow a bespoke curriculum for part of their time to meet their particular needs. The school also makes effective use of local specialist providers and services to meet the specific needs of a small number of pupils. Leaders take great care to ensure that these pupils attend regularly, are well looked after and make progress.
- Good careers guidance is supported well by many events that are praised highly by older pupils. As a result, all pupils progress to post-16 courses, training or apprenticeships that meet their needs and aspirations well.
- An extensive personal, social and health education curriculum means that pupils are well informed about potential risks and how to deal with them. They show tolerance and respect for those from all backgrounds and for those with different beliefs and life choices. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which permeates the curriculum and is reinforced well through assemblies, tutorials and ethics lessons, prepares them well for life in modern Britain. They have a good understanding of fundamental British values.
- The school has a very good reputation as 'an inclusive school' and this is recognised by the local authority, such as when placing pupils who need a fresh start. The school's values and culture promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity well.

Governance of the school

- There have been significant changes in the membership of the governing body since the previous inspection. The current chair has been in post for less than a year. The current governing body has a good breadth of expertise and experience.
- While governors now have a secure understanding of the current performance of the school and what needs to improve, previously, governors did not arrest the school's decline since the previous inspection. Nor did the local authority.
- Governors agree with the senior leaders' evaluation of the school that recognises that, while there is good practice, much requires improvement. They recognise that the overall quality of teaching is not good enough to secure the necessary improvements in pupils' achievement.
- Governors do not focus sharply on the impact of actions taken by senior and subject leaders on raising pupils' achievement so that they can ask them challenging questions to hold them to account. However, they now understand this and are developing the skills to do it.

- When asked to explain how they ensured that additional funding, such as the pupil premium and funding for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is used well, governors do not automatically talk about the impact on pupils' achievement.
- Governors check the school website to make sure that it contains the information required and that it provides good access to essential and useful information for parents.
- Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective. The lead governor for safeguarding has regular formal meetings, and frequent, less formal discussions, with the school's designated safeguarding lead. There are regular reports to governors.
- The governing body is now better placed to provide the essential balance of support and challenge for senior and subject leaders. It is supported by the local authority. For this reason, an external review of governance is not required.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Pupils feel safe and are kept safe. They, and their parents, correctly believe that the school leaders do everything they need to do to keep pupils safe. Parents are kept up to date through the school website.
- The senior leader who is the designated safeguarding lead is well informed about all aspects of safeguarding and provides strong leadership. Relevant records are detailed and of good quality. An analysis of all relevant information, such as absence data and records of any incidents of poor behaviour, is undertaken by senior staff to identify any potential safeguarding or child protection concerns.
- Risk assessments are undertaken wherever and whenever necessary. However, the current assessment of the risks involved when pupils walk to the leisure centre for some physical education lessons has not been reviewed in the light of the much increased traffic on the road outside the school.
- Staff are well trained, including in understanding the 'Prevent' duty to ensure that they are alert to the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. Safeguarding is promoted frequently through staff briefings.
- Governors are well informed about all aspects of safeguarding. Regular reports are provided for the full governing body to ensure that the arrangements are up to date and effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across subjects and for different classes within subjects. As a consequence, pupils' progress is also widely variable. However, there is good practice that can be built on in a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics.

- Too much teaching sets low expectations for the quality of pupils' work and the progress they are expected to make. Pupils are not consistently challenged to produce their best work, particularly the most able.
- Some teaching in English, mathematics and science, as well as in other subjects, does not build well on what pupils already can do, know and understand. Teachers do not have an accurate understanding of pupils' capabilities, including those who are disadvantaged.
- Pupils often are not given a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work. Where they are, they are not given time to make these improvements routinely. There are examples of high-quality feedback to pupils about their learning, but these are the exception rather than the norm.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' ongoing progress are not consistently sharp enough to detect when pupils are at risk of falling behind. Support for these pupils is therefore not rapid enough to pick them up before they fall too far. Poorly presented or incomplete work is not dealt with effectively, allowing some pupils to fall even further behind.
- Mistakes in pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar are either not picked up consistently by teachers, including in some English classes, or, if they are, teachers' highlighting of pupils' mistakes does not lead to any improvement. This inhibits pupils' progress.
- Pupils are capable of so much more. When teachers set high expectations, such as in art, music, and hospitality and catering, pupils have high expectations of their work, work well together, give each other helpful feedback on their work, enjoy their learning and make very strong progress. This strong progress can also be seen in pupils' work in design and technology, as well as in Spanish.
- Pupils who need additional help mostly are given support that is targeted well on their particular needs. This has led to, for example, those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities making strong progress in many subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are safe and well cared for. A comprehensive personal development programme covers all aspects of pupils' well-being. This is reinforced through assemblies. Pupils show a good understanding of, for example, the dangers of extremism and radicalisation, how to avoid sexual exploitation, the risks involved in using the internet and social networking sites, and other risks to their physical, emotional and mental well-being.
- Pupils, and their parents, mainly report that the school looks after them well. Bullying is rare. Pupils know whom to go to if they need to discuss any concerns and are confident that these will be dealt with sensitively and effectively. A very small minority say that they are less confident.

- Pupils enjoy discussing controversial and topical issues. They enjoyed the discussions arising from a mock referendum on membership of the European Union and also the recent increased number of racist incidents reported nationally. Pupils' work in ethics shows that they can debate sensibly and balance seemingly contradictory or opposing viewpoints when drawing conclusions and making decisions.
- A good programme of careers guidance and events throughout all years means that pupils are well informed about the options available to them when they leave the school at age 16. All of the Year 11 pupils spoken to had clear, well-articulated and sensible plans for next year. They explained how teachers and others had given them the impartial and well-informed guidance they needed to make these choices. As far as can be established, almost all, if not all, of the pupils who left the school last year are still on course. School leaders work hard to track former pupils' future success.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They behave safely and sensibly, showing respect for each other and for adults. Learning is rarely disrupted in lessons.
- Pupils do not always take pride in their work. The work of boys in particular is too often untidy, not presented well and contains gaps. This is not always dealt with effectively by teachers and inhibits pupils' progress.
- A significant proportion of pupils do not know, or do not show that they know, how to be successful learners. When they are presented with good feedback by their teacher, too many pupils do not make use of this routinely to improve their work.
- Leaders check carefully the use of the internal exclusion room. There are few 'repeat offenders' and clear evidence that the actions taken are effective in improving the behaviour of the small number of pupils who spend time there. Leaders know that too many pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are sent to the room and are dealing with this.
- Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average for all groups of pupils. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is also in line with the average and declining as a result of effective actions by leaders and support staff.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' standards of achievement have fallen since the previous inspection in 2012. In 2016, the proportion achieving five GCSEs at grades A*–C, including in English and mathematics, rose to be in line with the national average, but too many pupils, particularly the disadvantaged, did not make the progress of which they were capable over the time they were in the school.
- Pupils enter the school with attainment that is well below average. Two thirds of pupils currently in Year 7 were 'not secondary ready'.

- Current pupils do not make strong progress in all year groups across a wide range of subjects. Overall, current pupils make more progress than indicated by the previous three years' examination results, particularly those in the younger years, but this is not consistent for all year groups and in all subjects.
- The quality of pupils' work, particularly in the older years, does not match fully the school's and subject leaders' evaluation of their current progress. There is a better match, for example, in Year 8. However, in too many classes, the quality of pupils' work is below that expected when compared with their target based on their previous level of achievement.
- Pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science is very much dependent on the class in which they are placed.
- In English, the quality of pupils' written work often does not build well on what they have previously achieved. Many repeat the same errors made in earlier work.
- While pupils can successfully follow the methods they are shown in mathematics, many lack the reasoning skills to solve mathematical problems.
- Pupils do not demonstrate a suitable depth of understanding in science. While they can complete the tasks they are set, they do not link this with their prior understanding of key scientific concepts and are not encouraged to develop their scientific reasoning skills.
- The quality of pupils' work and their progress are much stronger in subjects such as art, drama, music, design and technology, hospitality and catering, and Spanish. Much of the work seen in art and in hospitality and catering was highly impressive. Pupils are challenged to learn at a good pace in Spanish; they rise to this well and make strong progress.
- The quality of work is below where it should be in some classes in all year groups in geography, history and French, and in GCSE groups in business studies.
- Many of the most able pupils, including the small number who are disadvantaged, do not make the progress of which they are capable in a range of subjects. They are not challenged by teachers to do as well as they can. They are not encouraged to think deeply, provide explanations that show the full extent of their knowledge or apply their understanding to develop greater depth or breadth.
- Current disadvantaged pupils are mostly making more progress than is shown in the assessment information for previous years. However, this varies across subjects and depends very much on the class they are in, in the same way as it varies for other pupils. In some cases, the quality of pupils' work and conversations with them about it show that they are capable of making more progress than their current targets indicate. Many teachers are not adept at identifying this to help these pupils work at a higher level.
- Those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well and mostly make strong progress, many from previously low levels of skills in reading, writing and mathematics when they join the school. However, as for other pupils, this does vary across the full range of subjects and for different teachers within the same subject. The progress of pupils currently in Years 7 and 8 is tracked more carefully and is stronger as a result.

- Pupils currently in Year 8 who had additional support in developing their literacy skills through the Year 7 catch-up funding made very good progress and significantly improved their reading age. Many other pupils have also improved their reading skills. All of those pupils who were asked to read to inspectors did so well and could discuss and explain what they had read.

School details

Unique reference number	113518
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10024992

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	719
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jon Harries
Principal	John Simon
Telephone number	01626 862318
Website	www.dawlish.devon.sch.uk
Email address	office@dawlish.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 October 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Dawlish Community College is a local authority maintained school that is part of the Dawlish Learning Partnership with seven primary and two special schools. The partnership works closely with pre-school and post-16 providers. The school is also a cooperative trust school: part of the Exe Estuary Academic Cooperative Trust.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- At the time of the inspection, the principal was on long-term sick leave and the school was run by the senior assistant principal as acting principal.

- The school makes use of other providers and services to provide specialist support for a small number of pupils, currently for seven pupils in Years 8, 9, 10 and 11. These providers are: Oaklands SEN support; Chances in Dawlish; WESC Foundation; South West Intervention Support; and Dawlish Gardens Trust.
- The proportion of pupils in the school eligible for free school meals is below average.
- The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. However, the proportion with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is more than twice the national average. A sizeable group of pupils are eligible for both the pupil premium and funding for special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- A very small proportion of pupils are from other than White British backgrounds and few speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards.

Information about this inspection

- Two inspectors were on site for both days of the inspection and an additional three inspectors on the second day.
- Inspectors held meetings with the school’s senior leaders, other leaders and staff, the chair of the governing body, the governor leading on safeguarding and one other governor, and a representative from the local authority. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the school improvement partner.
- A formal meeting was held with a group of pupils. In addition, informal conversations were held with a large number of pupils around the school at break- and lunchtime, and during lesson changeovers.
- In lessons and during registration periods, inspectors looked at pupils’ work and discussed it with them and took opportunities to listen to them read. These pupils represented pupils in all year groups, across the full ability range, disadvantaged pupils and some who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspectors also looked at a wider sample of pupils’ work. Inspectors were accompanied by senior and/or subject leaders for almost all of the visits to lessons. Two inspectors separately visited lessons with the school’s special educational needs coordinator to look at the work of some other pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- One inspector met with and listened to the reading of a group of Year 8 pupils who had additional support in developing their literacy skills when they were in Year 7.
- Inspectors met the school’s designated safeguarding lead and looked at a wide range of documents and records about safeguarding, as well as checking that arrangements such as the maintenance of the single central record met all statutory requirements.
- Inspectors took account of the school leaders’ and governors’ self-evaluation and used this with senior leaders to establish inspection lines of enquiry on the first day of the inspection. They also looked at a wide range of other documents and information supplied by the school about the analysis of current pupils’ progress and achievement.
- Inspectors also took account of the 63 responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online survey, including 61 with additional comments. They also took account of the 49 responses to the online pupil survey and 33 responses to the online staff survey.

Inspection team

James Sage, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Neville Coles	Ofsted Inspector
Shelagh Pritchard	Ofsted Inspector
Martyn Groucutt	Ofsted Inspector
Katherine Powell	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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