

Moatbridge School

Eltham Palace Road, Eltham, London SE9 5LX

Inspection dates

10–11 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable to secure consistently good outcomes for all pupils.
- Pupils, given their starting points, do not make expected progress across all subjects. Disadvantaged pupils achieve below other pupils nationally.
- Pupils do not always know how to correct their mistakes or improve their work. Some teachers do not use the school's assessment policy to give pupils the high-quality feedback they need.
- Some teachers do not set engaging work pitched at the right level. In those classes, some pupils, including the most able, become disengaged because they are not challenged.
- Behaviour requires improvement. A significant minority of pupils cause low-level disruption in lessons to some classes. Some pupils become easily distracted from their learning and do not always complete the tasks set by their teachers.
- Overall attendance remains too low for all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. Some pupils do not attend school regularly and hence fall behind in their learning.
- The interim improvements since the previous inspection have not been sustained.

The school has the following strengths

- The newly formed leadership team are ambitious to cultivate a school where all pupils can learn and achieve. They have tackled well the shortcomings from the previous inspection. The attendance of some pupils, teaching and pupils' expected progress across a range of subjects is improving.
- Safeguarding is effective. Close links with professional agencies and therapists provide good support to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Governors have supported the school well through a period of challenge and change. They use their wide range of relevant experience to support school leaders in every aspect of school life.
- Personal development and welfare is good. The school's ethos of respect promotes all aspects of pupils' well-being and self-belief.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better by teachers:
 - using the school's assessment policy to plan and give pupils high-quality feedback on how they can improve their work
 - using opportunities to share their skills and expertise with each other so that pupils receive consistently high-quality teaching
- Improve outcomes for all pupils, particularly the most able, by providing them with more challenging work that will enable them to make at least good progress in all subjects.
- Improve the behaviour of pupils by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan interesting activities that motivate them to attend regularly, learn well and stay on task during lessons
 - raising further pupils' attendance, in line with the national average.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The dedicated headteacher, supported well by newly appointed senior leaders, is determined to create a school where the focus is on high-quality learning. Leaders have tackled swiftly the shortcomings from the previous inspection following the appointment of the new headteacher, chair and vice-chair of governors. They have secured improvements in teaching, pupils' outcomes in a range of subjects and the attendance of some pupils.
- Leaders have high expectations for teaching and pupils' outcomes. They are committed to the continuous improvement in teaching, learning and assessment and communicate this through the school's core values of respect. Leaders are ambitious for all teachers to be the best they can be and to change pupils' life chances. Teaching is starting to have a positive impact on pupils' expected progress across most subjects, but this has not been sustained.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders have a detailed understanding of the weaknesses in teaching, outcomes and pupils' behaviour. These are linked to rigorous systems of monitoring and interventions, which in a short time are securing improvements for some pupils. For example, teachers encourage pupils to read often.
- Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are robust. Teachers' targets reflect the school's priorities and are linked to improving pupils' progress. Regular checks and work scrutiny are helping to secure some improvements in teaching, for example ensuring that all pupils receive information at the start of every lesson on what they will be learning, and how this will be measured, but this is not consistent.
- The broad and balanced curriculum is closely matched to pupils' needs. The range of accredited courses pupils are studying is improving. Pupils across all year groups achieve recognised qualifications in a range of subjects, including entry-level qualifications in English, mathematics, science and art. Key stage 4 pupils have the opportunity to experience work-related learning. They study a combination of subjects for GCSEs, such as English, mathematics, science, geography and art. Pupils study for GCSEs in physical education, food technology and information and communication technology as well.
- The school strongly promotes the fundamental British values of respect and equality. The 'Moatbridge mindset' underpins the school's core values that everyone is to respect themselves, others, their learning and the environment. Members of the school council are included in the review of behaviour policies and procedures.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well by the social skills curriculum and enrichment activities. Pupils' social, emotional and mental health understanding is being developed through the close work of a range of therapists.
- Leaders use additional funding effectively. They target and evaluate pupil premium and special educational needs funding rigorously to support pupils' social and academic needs. For example, additional funding enabled a group of pupils to perform at a local authority music gala.

- Since the previous inspection, the local authority has provided timely and effective support. They recognise that leadership is now effective and more needs to be done to improve overall attendance and outcomes further. The school's information and scrutiny of pupils' work confirms that there is an upward trend in pupils' expected progress.

Governance of the school

- Governance is making a strong contribution to the development of the school. They have a wide range of skills including expertise in special needs education, leadership and data management. Following the recent appointment of the chair and vice-chair in May 2016, they routinely challenge school leaders to account for all areas of school life.
- Governors have a sharp and realistic view of the school. They work closely with the school leaders and receive regular updates about school improvements. Governors are not over reliant on information received from leaders and they make regular visits to the school and gather information for themselves. Teachers are invited to attend governors meetings to share aspects of the subjects on offer at the school. Nothing is left to chance. In a short period, improvements in teaching, reading ages and individual pupils' attendance are evident.
- Governors share the school leader's vision to raise standards and they set ambitious targets in order to drive further improvements. They facilitate the monitoring of whole school improvements to be linked to pupils' outcomes and the school's core values. For example, teachers' targets, pay and the use of additional funding are evaluated in terms of pupils' expected progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The culture of safeguarding is underpinned by the idea that the protection of pupils is everyone's responsibility. Leaders maintain a safe environment in which children can learn and develop. Pupils say that they feel safe because there are adults in the school they can approach if they are worried.
- Leaders have established rigorous checks to ensure that staff and visitors are equipped to work with children. Key personnel are trained in safer recruitment and involved in interviews. Staff training is up to date and fit for purpose. Staff are kept aware of child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, forced marriages and to identify and report signs of a child at risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- Effective engagement with parents and external agencies help to make sure safeguarding matters are dealt with quickly and effectively. The system to check pupils' absences is rigorous. Written records are timely and carefully maintained to monitor the help that pupils receive.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Too much variability exists in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Leaders have galvanised some teaching through precise coaching and regular monitoring. Teaching still requires improvements in some areas.

- Some teachers fail to plan learning opportunities that enable pupils to enjoy their learning and to become effective learners. Similarly, some teachers set repetitive activities so that learning for some pupils, including the most able, slows down. Pupils lose interest and do not complete tasks set by the teacher.
- Some pupils do not know how to improve their work. These pupils are not encouraged to correct their mistakes before moving on to the next steps of their learning. Some teachers fail to use the school's assessment policy to give pupils the precise guidance they need.
- Teachers have responded well to recent training to develop learning. Most teaching assistants are effective in helping pupils to learn because they use skilful questioning to support learning. Pupils are given information as to what they will be learning during their lessons. Inspectors observed this information in most pupils' books but this was not consistent across all subjects.
- Teachers and support staff use a range of strategies to develop pupils' phonics and literacy skills. The levels of literacy are improving. Pupils' reading ages are accelerating and pupils' achievements in entry-level qualifications confirm this.
- In some learning activities teachers' good subject knowledge allows pupils to learn well. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' abilities and special educational needs and use this to plan effective learning over time, for example in social skills education. Similarly, in a Year 8 food technology lesson, pupils were able to extend their learning by independently experimenting with different spices to flavour vegetable crisps.

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 taught how to manage their social, emotional and mental health needs to become confident young adults through the 'Moatbridge mindset'.
- Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop their self-confidence and self-awareness. Pupils reflect on their strengths, weaknesses and how others perceive them during their social skills education. For example, Year 9 pupils learn about image, character and being responsible for their own thoughts and actions. Pupils told inspectors that this helped them to think before they react to a situation.
- Pupils are learning to become successful learners. Pupils are taught and assessed on how well they use the 'Moatbridge mindset' to develop their skills. Inspectors witnessed good relationships between adults and pupils and between peer groups. Pupils showed pride in their work when explaining how they made wooden-framed mirrors in a design technology lesson.
- Pupils participate in various enrichment activities which support well-being. These include music, yoga, counselling and social skills education. Comprehensive education, health and care plans are in place and are reviewed regularly. Comprehensive risk assessments are undertaken for normal school routines and other activities such as school trips and visits.

- Leaders engage sensitively with external agencies to provide support for the most vulnerable pupils. There are effective arrangements in place to provide social care, speech and language therapy support, including an in-house counsellor. Additionally, a home-school liaison coordinator is employed by the school to provide family support and parental advice.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. This was confirmed by discussions with pupils. Inspectors saw a display board with pupils' work describing how to stay safe when using the internet. Pupils reported that bullying and teasing around homophobia does exist, but as soon as teachers hear about it, they deal with it swiftly.
- Pupils have the opportunity to develop healthy lifestyles. During a food technology lesson, Year 8 pupils offered the inspectors tasty vegetable snacks that they had made during their lesson. Healthy and appetising meals are served at lunch and at breakfast club.
- The personal development and welfare of pupils is strong. The school's value system of respect is allowing some pupils to believe in themselves and in what they can achieve, but not all.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Some pupils display poor attitudes to learning. They are unable to listen and respond promptly to requests from their teachers and teaching assistants.
- In some lessons, teaching was ineffective in managing learning behaviours, resulting in low-level disruption. Consequently, pupils were easily distracted from their learning and unable to complete tasks set by the teacher.
- Overall attendance for all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils is low. A few pupils are persistently absent and this has an adverse effect on their achievements. Higher proportions of pupils are attending school more regularly when compared with their attendance at their former school.
- A few pupils have started attending the alternative provision this term. Their attendance is insufficient to be able to report on their personal development, behaviour and welfare.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes are low. A small minority of pupils attain below the national average in a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science and geography. In 2015 and 2016 pupils' progress was low across a number subjects.
- Some pupils, from their individual starting points, are beginning to make expected progress. The work in current pupils' books shows some progress but this is not consistent across all subjects. Slightly better progress can be seen in maths and science rather than in other subjects.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average for other pupils. The most able disadvantaged pupils are not making sufficient progress. The school's information shows that the current progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving.

- Pupils have the opportunity to gain skills and qualifications in preparation for the next stage of their education, training or employment. Current pupils in Years 8 to 11 have achieved entry level 3 qualifications in English, mathematics and art. A work-related programme enables key stage 4 pupils and the few pupils at the alternative provider to acquire practical experience and skills. These include electrical wiring, wall tiling, decorating and painting.
- All pupils' reading ages are improving because of the development of phonics in each year group. The school's information for all pupils confirm this and inspectors saw pupils reading calmly during breakfast club. One parent reported that her son did not read at his previous school but now he reads all the time.
- School leaders target pupil premium funding meticulously and this is starting to make a difference. Disadvantaged pupils' reading ages, personal development and well-being are improving.

School details

Unique reference number	100204
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	10019647

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Yvonne Geddis
Headteacher	Rich Buerckner
Telephone number	020 8850 8081
Website	www.moatbridge.greenwich.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@moatbridge.greenwich.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 September – 1 October 2014

Information about this school

- Moatbridge School is a small special school for boys who have social, emotional or mental health difficulties. There are 37 pupils currently on roll.
- All pupils have either a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. In addition to their primary need, many of the pupils have additional needs such as autistic spectrum conditions.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is higher than the national average. This group represents nearly half of the pupils in the school. The school is not in receipt of Year 7 catch-up funding.
- The school runs a breakfast club each day.
- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2015, after being deputy headteacher at the school. Since the previous inspection a new deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher were appointed in September 2016. In May 2016, a new chair and vice-

chair of governors joined the governing body.

- The school uses one alternative provider, The Archway Project, which was not part of this inspection.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in seven part-lessons across all year groups. Three observations were jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also made visits to the breakfast club and intervention groups.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at the start and end of the school day, both in and out of lessons, including in the dining hall. Inspectors spoke to pupils and examined work in their books in a wide range of subject areas.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers, trainees and teaching assistants. Inspectors also met with three governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, governance, the school's plan for improvement, self-evaluation, attendance, behaviour and information about pupils' achievement.
- There were no responses to the online questionnaire Parent View, so inspectors considered the findings from a recent survey undertaken by the school.

Inspection team

Rosemarie McCarthy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Tania Perry	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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