

Droylsden Academy

Manor Road, Droylsden, Manchester M43 6QD

Inspection dates

14–15 September 2017

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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils achieve well because leaders at all levels have high expectations and lead by example. The school's core values of politeness, hard work and honesty are in abundance.
- Pupils and parents appreciate the headteacher's warm and approachable presence. He cares about the pupils. He and his team are held in high esteem.
- The quality of teaching is good. Typically, pupils are interested in their learning because teachers have excellent subject knowledge and plan carefully. Inspectors observed pupils making rapid progress in some subjects.
- Pupils make good progress across a range of subjects including English, mathematics, humanities and modern foreign languages. Pupils make stronger progress in key stage 3, where improvements are acutely evident.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils are supported well socially, emotionally and academically through the work of the school's support centre, called 'On board'.
- Pupils behave well. They are proud of their school and take on leadership roles readily. The school is clean and presented smartly because pupils respect it and take care of it. There are now simple and effective systems to manage behaviour and bullying. Bullying is rare.
- Governors offer robust support and challenge to do their best for the pupils they serve. They have invested in long-term, sustainable improvements to good effect.
- Achievement in science dipped last year. Leadership of this subject has now been strengthened but the quality of teaching and outcomes are not consistently good.
- Historical weaknesses in the leadership and management of special educational needs have been addressed. The quality of teaching and outcomes for this group of pupils are improving, but they are not consistently good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching for pupils who have special educational needs and/ or disabilities by:
 - checking that all teachers use the helpful strategies provided by the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) when they plan pupils' learning.
- Continue to improve the quality of teaching and outcomes in science by:
 - ensuring that work is consistently well-matched to pupils' abilities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Staff, pupils and parents are fulsome in their praise of the good quality education the school provides.
- A typical comment from parents is that, 'Droylsden Academy is an excellent school that goes above and beyond to ensure my child reaches his full potential. My child has made significant progress at school and has exceeded our expectations as his parents.'
- Since the previous inspection, the executive headteacher, the headteacher and the senior team have successfully improved teaching, outcomes and behaviour. The executive headteacher's strategic vision combined with the support he has brokered for leadership at all levels has provided the platform for rapid improvement.
- Senior leaders have an accurate and in-depth understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Target-setting is aspirational and there is well-organised and thorough tracking of pupils' achievements due to highly effective leadership.
- The leadership and management of teaching and learning is strong. Performance management has been used stringently to identify the best practice and tackle weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. Newly qualified teachers are well supported.
- Pupil premium funding is having a positive impact because differences in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and their peers are diminishing, most rapidly in key stage 3. Year 7 catch-up funding is used well to help pupils read better. This good work is continued throughout the school as pupils are regularly given opportunities to read in classrooms.
- Middle leaders are strong practitioners and lead by example. They effectively monitor the day-to-day quality of teaching in their departments and continually build upon improvements.
- A track record of improvements, accurate self-evaluation and a well-focused improvement plan show that there is good capacity for further improvement.
- There is an appropriately academically-focused curriculum. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is promoted well, particularly at lunchtimes, when pupils happily complete work independently, play pool, snooker, table tennis, volleyball, football, chess and more alongside their teachers. There are regular visits to the theatre and art galleries. Pupils regularly compete in spelling and mathematical challenges.
- There is strong promotion of British values evident in the way pupils move around school, holding doors for adults and each other, not using language that may cause offence and debating a multitude of religious viewpoints on worship, who should be worshipped, and the significance of God.
- Weaknesses in the leadership and management of special educational needs and the use of funding in this area have been addressed. There is now strong leadership and plenty of evidence of improvements. Funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well.
- Careers information, advice and guidance has been developed since the previous

inspection and the proportion of pupils who leave the school without going on to further education, employment or training is well below average.

- Information about pupils' interests and career preferences in key stage 3 is not fully exploited to inform their options choices. In the recent past, pupils have not achieved well at vocational courses offered by local providers. There are now no pupils out of school on alternative provision. Leaders and managers have a clear plan to improve the quality and breadth of the vocational curriculum in school.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has changed significantly since the previous inspection. Governors regularly visit school and know first-hand the impact of improvements.
- Governors are passionate about ensuring that all pupils succeed. They verify the progress that leaders say pupils are making by looking at examples of work, meeting with staff and pupils and mentoring pupils at risk of exclusion.
- Governors have invested heavily in building leadership capacity to good effect. There is a large senior leadership team. All senior leaders, including the headteacher, have teaching commitments so not only do they monitor the quality of provision but they make a significant contribution to teaching themselves. This gives them great credibility; it provides high levels of accountability and robust succession planning.
- Governors regularly review and update school policies. Governors are aware that the anti-bullying and behaviour policy have not been updated to reflect current practice.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The single central record meets requirements. There is a strong culture of safeguarding. All staff and governors are appropriately trained; staff benefit from regular safeguarding updates. They are vigilant and regularly report any niggles or serious concerns. Robust procedures are in place for child protection and risk assessments are used well. There is strong multi-agency working. Leaders and managers enlist the support of external agencies to help support pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Almost all parents who expressed their views through parent view or who spoke to an inspector feel that their children are safe in school and that bullying is dealt with effectively.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is typically interesting, engaging and suitably challenging for the range of abilities. The most able pupils are challenged well in their learning. They relish the opportunities of a bespoke 'excel' curriculum that allows them to make rapid gains in learning.
- Inspectors saw an excellent climate for learning in Spanish, a calm and purposeful atmosphere, and much of the learning carried out in Spanish. Pupils showed that they were confident speakers and unafraid to make mistakes. They behaved respectfully to

the teacher and to each other. Skilful prompting enabled middle-ability and the most able pupils to make good progress.

- Teaching and learning were also highly effective in religious education. Pupils thought deeply about the question: 'Do you think all religions should worship their prophets or should they only worship God?' Pupils of many different religions and those with no faith gave extremely mature and well-thought-out arguments for and against this statement. Pupils respectfully considered a range of beliefs and values.
- In some subjects, for example science, pupils do not make consistently strong progress because for some pupils the work is too easy and for others it is too hard. Some teachers do not use effective strategies to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils did not make consistently good progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. There is a big emphasis on sport to aid physical and emotional well-being.
- Teachers quickly set the tone for learning which helps pupils focus and be successful learners. 'Welcome philosophers!' is a typical greeting to pupils at the start of a religious education lesson.
- All pupils spoken to by inspectors, parents who responded to parent view or who spoke to an inspector, all agree that there are very few issues with bullying; if bullying was to occur, it would be dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Careers information, advice and guidance has improved since the previous inspection. There is now a careers library and disadvantaged pupils are given priority in careers interviews.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are typically polite, well-mannered and considerate towards others. Inspectors did not hear any derogatory language and pupils say that they do not hear derogatory language either. Records show that any instances of offensive behaviour are carefully logged and dealt with.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, they show respect to teachers and to each other. In a Year 10 geography lesson, pupils respectfully waited for the teacher to finish, even though the lesson had overrun and it was their breaktime. Most pupils are eager to learn and readily volunteer their thoughts and ideas. Where teaching is less effective, pupils switch off or quietly have their own conversations.
- A purposeful and effective internal seclusion unit has been developed as an alternative to exclusion and to support the raised expectations of behaviour. Most referrals to this unit are for pupils who have missed a detention. This reinforces leaders' central focus of academic progress for all pupils.
- Attendance for last academic year was broadly average in Years 7, 8 and 9. It was

slightly below the national average in key stage 4 because a small number of pupils had very poor attendance at alternative provision. These pupils also accounted for a significant proportion of fixed-term exclusions. Overall attendance is now broadly average and improving. Persistent absence has reduced significantly, particularly in key stage 3. Last year, significantly fewer days were lost to exclusion.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- From starting points which are below average, pupils make good progress and leave with attainment at least in line with national averages across a range of subjects including English and mathematics. New pupils join the school in different year groups, so starting points for last year's Year 11 pupils were lower than those in published data. Evidence from lesson observations and current tracking data show that pupils' progress continues to improve.
- The school's use of pupil premium funding is leading to better progress for disadvantaged pupils. For example, in food technology, technicians effectively support pupils who need help with reading and writing. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are improving towards national averages. Their progress is accelerated in mathematics, in English and in key stage 3. The most able disadvantaged pupils were observed making good progress, particularly in the 'excel' stream, a top class for the most able pupils.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved significantly but it is still not consistently good. Inspectors observed this group of pupils making good progress in the 'On board' centre and across a range of lessons. However, not all teachers use the helpful strategies provided by the SENCO to inform learning. This continues to restrict the progress of these pupils.
- Progress in science dipped last year. Evidence showed that while there are some improvements in the quality of teaching, pupils are not making consistently strong progress in this subject.

School details

Unique reference number	135864
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10036774

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	865
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Leon Dowd
Headteacher	Philip Wilson
Executive Headteacher	Drew Duncan
Telephone number	0161 301 7600
Website	www.droylsdenacademy.com
Email address	pwilson@droylsdenacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	1–2 October 2015

Information about this school

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.
- At the time of this inspection, no pupils attended alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching across the school and scrutinised pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with a wide range of pupils and parents.
- Inspectors scrutinised school policies and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour, self-evaluation information and a range of other documentation.
- There were 40 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- There were 51 responses to parent view to be considered and 46 freetext responses.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body and the academy sponsor. Inspectors spoke to a representative from the local authority. Meetings were also held with senior and middle leaders.

Inspection team

Sally Kenyon, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Lomas	Ofsted Inspector
David Hampson	Ofsted Inspector
Kath Harris	Ofsted Inspector

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