

Sedgehill School

Sedgehill Road, London SE6 3QW

Inspection dates

21–22 March 2018

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
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school is not yet consistently good. Consequently, some pupils are still not making the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils in key stage 4 have gaps in their learning and need to make accelerated progress in order to catch up with pupils nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities do not routinely make good progress. This is also the case for disadvantaged pupils.
- The sixth form requires significant development in order for it to be good. Students' outcomes in the sixth form are still too low.
- While attendance overall has improved, the attendance of some groups of pupils is still too low.
- Pupils' conduct around the school has improved. However, it still relies too heavily on staff supervision, direction and procedures.
- Pupils' outcomes over time have remained stubbornly below national averages.

The school has the following strengths

- The new executive headteacher and headteacher have made rapid improvements that have had a significant impact on the quality of education provided.
- There have been substantial improvements in the ethos and culture of the school. Staff consistently enforce rewards, sanctions and procedures that ensure 'disruption-free learning' (DFL). As a result, the school is now a calmer and more productive learning environment.
- Senior leaders and governors have an astute and realistic understanding of what needs to be done, to sustain recent improvements.
- The interim executive board (IEB) provides robust challenge and support to school leaders.
- Leaders have instigated an effective, systematic approach to teaching and learning.
- Staff share senior leaders' vision for the school and their morale is high.
- Actions to address weaknesses in the sixth form have been swift. Leaders are clear about what still needs to be done.
- Safeguarding is effective.
- Leaders have rightly prioritised improving pupils' literacy skills.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that teachers have appropriate subject expertise and experience, particularly in subjects such as science
 - ensuring that the policy on feedback and assessment is consistently followed by all teachers
 - continuing to build on the strong teaching practice seen in some areas of the curriculum, which is beginning to have an impact on pupils' progress
 - further developing the capacity of middle leaders to check regularly on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Ensure that all pupils make good progress from their starting points by:
 - improving the attendance of identified pupils and groups of pupils still further
 - supporting pupils to understand how to behave appropriately in class and around the school site, without the need for constant staff supervision and reminders
 - continuing to focus on improving pupils' literacy across the school
 - building on the current intervention programme so that identified pupils receive swift and appropriate support
 - regularly reviewing recent literacy initiatives to ensure that they are having the desired impact.
- Improve the quality of 16 to 19 study programmes by:
 - ensuring effective and stable leadership
 - implementing the revised curriculum offer
 - supporting teachers to deliver consistently high-quality lessons
 - ensuring that all students understand the school's increased expectations of attire, conduct, attendance and attitudes to learning
 - supporting students to manage their own time and learning
 - using assessment data to provide appropriate support and challenge
 - enhancing the provision of advice and guidance so that pupils in Year 11 choose appropriate courses that meet their academic needs and aspirations.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher and headteacher have very high aspirations for the school. Since their arrival in September 2017, they have instigated a number of actions to address identified school improvement priorities. In a very short time, these have significantly improved the quality of teaching, pupils' attitudes to their learning, and behaviour across the school. As a result, current pupils are beginning to make better progress from their starting points across key stages 3 and 4.
- Senior leaders and the IEB have developed a detailed, strategic school improvement plan, based on accurate evaluation and actions that are realistic and achievable. Current priorities include further professional development for staff, improving pupils' literacy skills and attitudes to learning, plus developing the sixth-form provision.
- Middle leaders form a cohesive and enthusiastic group. They share senior leaders' high expectations and vision for the school. They benefit from the leadership opportunities available through United Learning and are keen to develop their skills further. Senior leaders are currently working with them to extend their capacity still further.
- To bring about rapid improvement in teaching and learning, leaders have instigated a systematic approach to teaching across all subject areas, so that all teachers, including those who are new or temporary, will use it to plan appropriate activities that engage pupils and support their learning. They have introduced a clear feedback policy, which details expectations for staff on how they will respond to pupils' work so that they can make better progress. Work in pupils' books showed that most teachers are generally adhering to this policy.
- Senior leaders have undertaken a detailed review of the school's curriculum in their aim to 'build bright futures'. In key stage 3, the current priority is a whole-school focus on ensuring that all pupils in Years 7 and 8 are able to read at an age-appropriate level so that they can access the demands of the whole curriculum in preparation for GCSE courses. Leaders have used Year 7 catch-up funding effectively for this purpose.
- A full, enriching programme promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and enhances the academic curriculum. Leaders are committed to the 'Sedgehill Pledge', which promotes equality of opportunity. All pupils in Years 7 learn a musical instrument through the Music in Secondary Schools Trust (MiSST). Themed assemblies celebrate special events such as Black History Month and LGBT History Month. British values are nurtured explicitly through a multitude of visits, trips and activities. The school takes pride in the recent election of a pupil as a London Young Major as well as pupils' successes in sport, music, drama and art. Pupils can participate in a wide range of clubs and activities, including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- Leaders have taken effective action to provide better independent careers advice and guidance for pupils in Years 9 and 11, and students in Year 12.
- The local authority works closely with school leaders to ensure that support is timely and effective. Lewisham 'challenge consultants' complement the work undertaken by United Learning consultants. Together, they support improvements in teaching and learning across the school. Staff are complimentary about the professional

development opportunities available and the positive impact on their practice. They appreciate the chance to visit other schools and work with different teachers. Staff share senior leaders' vision for the school and morale is high.

- Leaders carefully track the progress, attendance and behaviour of the small number of pupils who attend alternative provision, to ensure that they are receiving an appropriate standard of education.
- Leaders have used allocated pupil premium funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils in a range of ways. Some funding is used to provide bespoke academic support. Some is used to ensure that these pupils have access to the full range of opportunities made available by the school and that they attend regularly. Leaders regularly check that these actions are having a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- Similarly, funding is used well to help pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. A specialist team of staff works effectively with small groups and individuals, to support their learning and progress.
- Many parents described the positive changes that have occurred at the school under the new leadership. As one parent typically said: 'My child is very proud to be a pupil at Sedgehill School; she wants to make great progress and is inspired and encouraged to do so'.
- While leaders have made a significant impact on the quality of education provided, they are realistic about the extent of areas still requiring further improvement, in particular that the quality of teaching is of a consistently high quality and leads to accelerated progress for all pupils and sixth form students.

Governance of the school

- The IEB provides effective governance, with membership representing both the local authority and United Learning. The governors are acutely aware of what leaders must do to ensure that the school provides all pupils with a consistently good standard of education. They are knowledgeable about the school's identified weaknesses and of recent actions taken to address them. They have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, which enable them to focus directly on the areas needing attention.
- The IEB challenges school leaders robustly to ensure that initiatives and strategies are having a positive impact and that funding is spent appropriately. While very proud of the achievements to date, they are keen to sustain recent improvements by regularly holding leaders to account should any actions begin to stall.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Policies and procedures to ensure that pupils are kept safe are detailed and record keeping is efficient. Checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school are comprehensive and well organised. Staff regularly receive up-to-date safeguarding training and are well aware of their statutory responsibilities to keep pupils safe. All staff are aware of issues in the wider community that could put pupils at risk, such as gang affiliation, child sexual exploitation, drugs,

knife crime and deprivation. Consequently, staff are highly vigilant and understand the procedures for making a referral.

- Pupils receive comprehensive information on how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, both in school and in the community. 'Drop-down' days highlight specific issues and give helpful information and advice. Staff, including the safer schools officer, work closely with pupils and their families to build trust. This ensures that early help from external agencies can be offered quickly and in an appropriate way, should it be required.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school is still not consistently good. Recruitment in some subject areas, such as science, has posed challenges for senior leaders. Some subjects still rely too heavily on temporary staff. A number of teachers require ongoing support and challenge in order to meet the high expectations now demanded by senior leaders. As a result, some of the initiatives introduced by school leaders are not consistently applied and some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The whole-school DFL approach is becoming increasingly sustained across the school. There are far fewer incidents of inappropriate behaviour, which prevent pupils from learning. Pupils say that the majority of staff consistently enforce the school's high expectations and they respect this. Consequently, the atmosphere in most classes is purposeful and many pupils are able to make appropriate progress.
- Leaders have implemented a consistent approach to teaching and supporting pupils' learning. They expect teachers across all subjects to set extended writing opportunities and 'challenge' tasks. Equally, teachers are meant to routinely give helpful advice on what pupils need to do to improve their work further, as well as to set 'personal improvement tasks' to extend their learning. Pupils understand the newly introduced feedback policy and are keen to edit their own work and peer assess other pupils' work. While leaders check that these approaches are being used systematically across the school, they know that the impact is variable as it is dependent on the quality of teaching.
- Leaders know that many pupils, particularly at key stage 4, have potential gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Teachers ensure that regular and accurate assessments quickly identify where pupils may need extra support or guidance, so that pupils' progress can be sustained. Parents receive regular updates on their children's progress so that they can provide appropriate support at home.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. While an increasing number of pupils show respect and tolerance towards each other and staff, some lack self-discipline. Incidences of bullying and aggressive behaviour, while decreasing rapidly, are still too frequent. Poor attendance

for some means that their whereabouts is not known and consequently their welfare is not always assured.

- Leaders have introduced an effective programme of personal, social, health and economic education. This programme has the flexibility to respond quickly to events in the local community. Consequently, pupils have opportunities to discuss issues as they arise and seek appropriate advice and guidance.
- Many pupils are complimentary about the changes that have happened since September 2017 and how much calmer the school now feels. They are clear about who they can talk to should they have any concerns. They say that they receive regular information on staying safe, online and in the community, and feel that teachers listen carefully to their worries. Pupils say that staff genuinely care about them and want them to do well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils rely too heavily on staff supervision, direction and recently introduced protocols in order to manage their behaviour. Pupils' resilience and attitudes to learning, while improving, are still too reliant on consistent and regular reminders from staff.
- The attendance of some pupils and groups of pupils is still too low. Leaders have worked hard to combat persistent absence and lateness. Positive rewards and consistently applied sanctions are beginning to have an impact. As a result, attendance overall has improved. However, for some groups of pupils, it is still stubbornly below the national average and hinders their academic and social progress.
- Since September, leaders have established high expectations of what constitutes appropriate behaviour. The school is now generally a much more orderly and calm place, where learning is encouraged and supported. Leaders have introduced a structured school day to support pupils to manage their behaviour better. Pupils are welcomed in through the front entrance to the school. At the start of registration, they quietly line up to meet their tutor and receive any notifications. Throughout the day, similar routines ensure that pupils move quickly to lessons and are prepared appropriately for their learning.
- Many pupils have embraced the new systems and structures and spoke of the positive impact that new leaders have had on the school. Some said that they now feel safer on site and that their learning is less disrupted. They appreciate the rewards and sanctions system, which pupils say is generally consistently applied.
- Leaders rightly acknowledge, however, that pupils need to learn to take more responsibility for their own behaviour and attitudes to learning.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes over time, including in 2017, have remained significantly below the national average across all subjects, including English and mathematics. Groups of pupils, including pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, have consistently not made the progress from their starting points of which

they are capable.

- Current pupils are beginning to make better progress. However, there are still too many inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and subject expertise across the school to enable some pupils to make the progress necessary to catch up. Some subjects, such as science, are still too reliant on temporary teachers.
- Leaders quickly identified that some pupils in key stage 4 have significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding. They attribute this to poor teaching in the past and low attendance over time. Following accurate assessments, leaders have implemented a range of interventions, including booster sessions, mentoring and one-to-one support, to help these pupils make accelerated progress. Pupils say that they appreciate this intensive support.
- Leaders have also prioritised the need to improve pupils' literacy skills. In Years 7 and 8, pupils who are not reading at age-related expectations receive extra support so that they can catch up. This initiative has already proved successful for the first cohort of pupils. The school promotes reading throughout the curriculum. All subject teachers are expected to incorporate opportunities for pupils to read complex subject-specific texts. Reading for pleasure is encouraged across the school. The school library is a popular, bright, welcoming space, full of interesting texts. Pupils' writing is beginning to improve as a result of teachers' systematic checks for spelling and punctuation errors and the greater use of extended writing. Further developments are planned for the summer term to heighten the profile of literacy as a key skill for effective learning.
- The majority of the pupils interviewed showed pride in their academic achievements and were keen to share their work with inspectors. In class, pupils were confident to read aloud, explain the task they were completing and show revisions they had made to improve their work. A growing number of pupils now have positive working relationships with their teachers and benefit from an improved learning environment.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Outcomes in the sixth form in 2017 were weak. This was due to inconsistencies in the quality of leadership and teaching and variable attitudes on the part of students, including low attendance and some inappropriate conduct.
- Leaders have rightly identified that 16 to 19 study programmes require significant improvement. They have an accurate understanding of the prevalent issues and have already instigated a number of actions to address them. In particular, they have made changes to leadership responsibilities within the sixth form to ensure that changes continue to be swift and effective. A separate sixth-form development plan is in place, with appropriate actions to tackle identified issues.
- Recently, leaders have significantly raised expectations in the sixth-form provision. They know that the progress that current students make is still too variable. Consequently, work is under way to promote consistently effective teaching and learning. Leaders carefully track students' attendance, their conduct and attitudes to learning. They have introduced a new dress code and implemented new rules regarding the use of study areas. Students are generally complimentary about these changes. While there have been some immediate improvements, leaders are keen to

review the entire post-16 provision still further.

- Leaders have planned a new range of academic courses and extra-curricular activities starting in September 2018, in order to attract a higher number of current Year 11 pupils.
- The quality of impartial information, advice and guidance has grown steadily in the sixth form and now supports students effectively as they apply for higher education or apprenticeships. As a result, the majority of the small cohort of current Year 13 students have secured university or apprenticeship offers.

School details

Unique reference number	100743
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10043258

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	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,130
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	100
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Irene Cleaver
Headteacher	Clare Cassidy
Executive headteacher	Jan Shadick
Telephone number	020 8698 8911
Website	www.sedgehillschool.co.uk
Email address	headteacher@sedgehill.lewisham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 and 24–25 February 2016

Information about this school

- Sedgehill School is a larger than average-sized 11 to 18 secondary school.
- In September 2017, a formal partnership was created between United Learning Group and Lewisham local authority. The school remains a local authority maintained community school. However, the partnership arrangement means that the school benefits from both local authority and United Learning Group support.

- Just over half of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- Over two thirds of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is just above average.
- The proportion of students who receive special educational needs support is above the national average.
- The proportions of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan are above the national average.
- Pupils' attainment on entry into key stage 3 is significantly below the national average.
- In 2017, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A small cohort of pupils attend alternative provision at Lewisham Young Women's Resource Project and New Woodlands School.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- During a section 8 monitoring visit, the team converted it to a full section 5 inspection, as there was evidence to suggest that the school no longer required special measures.
- Inspectors observed teaching, learning and assessment across year groups and subjects. They watched assemblies and visited the school library and tutor time. They listened to pupils reading in lessons. They talked to pupils during lessons and at breaktimes. They spoke to groups of pupils and students in the sixth form.
- Inspectors spoke to the executive headteacher, the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and staff. They spoke to a representative from the local authority and the chair of the IEB.
- Inspectors took account of the 57 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View and 81 responses to the staff survey.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including: records related to pupils’ 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 also reviewed safeguarding records, policies and procedures, including referrals to external agencies.
- Inspectors, alongside school leaders, scrutinised a wide range of current pupils’ work.

Inspection team

Helen Matthews, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Amanda Carter-Fraser	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Rachel Clarke	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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