

Darrick Wood School

Lovibonds Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8ER

Inspection dates

15–16 January 2019

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

- Leaders are ambitious for all pupils and are committed to improving their life chances. Leaders communicate their high aspirations successfully to pupils, parents, carers and staff.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know what to do to make the school even better and have introduced effective improvement plans.
- Leaders work hard to ensure that staff are supported in their work and take staff well-being seriously. Staff enjoy working at the school.
- Governors are experienced and committed. They hold leaders to account for the work of the school.
- Pupils are well behaved and polite. They treat each other with respect and dignity. Staff ensure that pupils are safe in the school.
- Pupils demonstrate good attitudes towards their learning. They are rarely absent from school or late to lessons.
- Students in the sixth form receive high-quality advice and guidance. Leaders ensure that all students study appropriate courses.
- Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school. They value the leadership provided by the headteacher and his leadership team.
- Teaching is of good quality and teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge.
- Teachers do not use questioning routinely in lessons to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- In their planning, teachers do not consistently consider pupils' different starting points. This includes the needs of those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who do not have an education, health and care (EHC) plan, and the most able pupils.
- In 2018 pupils in Year 11 made average progress overall. Pupils currently in the school are making stronger progress in a range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science and modern foreign languages.
- Pupils who have an (EHC) plan and receive support from the hearing impairment unit make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils in Year 11 in 2018 made slower progress than other pupils. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are also making slower progress than their peers.
- Leaders have introduced systems to monitor how well pupils are doing. However, they do not use this information to ensure that all groups of pupils are doing as well as they should.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that assessment information is organised and analysed by leaders and teachers so that they can intervene appropriately when groups of pupils are not doing as well as they should
 - ensuring that the pupil premium funding is used effectively so that disadvantaged pupils make stronger progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that teachers routinely consider the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and the most able, when they plan
 - ensuring questioning is used effectively to challenge pupils so that they acquire a deeper knowledge and understanding of their work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders are ambitious and have high aspirations for all pupils. They have created a calm and orderly school environment where pupils behave well, take responsibility and treat each other with respect. Pupils enjoy coming to the school and are rightly proud of the school.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know what needs to be done to improve the school and have introduced improvement plans that are working.
- Staff are happy and enjoy positive relationships with each other and with pupils. They appreciate the work of leaders, particularly the way that leaders value them. Leaders work hard to ensure that staff are supported in their work and they take their well-being seriously.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum that meets pupils' needs. Pupils study a broad range of subjects. Additionally, leaders have recently introduced a range of whole-school numeracy and literacy strategies. Although they are not fully embedded, there are signs that they are beginning to work.
- Pupils receive guidance when it comes to making option choices. Some pupils who responded to the pupil questionnaire said that they would like even more information to help them at this important time.
- Leaders provide teachers with appropriate professional development to help them improve their teaching. Teachers who are new to the profession receive high-quality support and training. As a result, they are quickly developing their confidence and are not afraid to try out new ideas and activities.
- Leaders have created a safe and inclusive school community. Leaders promote equality and are quick to stamp out any derogatory language and behaviour. Pupils say they feel safe in the school.
- Additional funding for pupils with an EHC plan is used effectively. Leaders work collaboratively with staff in the hearing impairment provision and ensure that those receiving additional support are very well supported. The staff employed to support this group of pupils are well trained and deployed effectively. Pupils with SEND who do not receive additional funding are less well supported. They are not currently achieving as well as they could.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well across the school. Pupils benefit from opportunities to learn about a range of cultures. Some pupils told inspectors that they are looking forward to a trip to China later this year to learn about its culture and society.
- Leaders have systems for recording information about pupils' progress. However, this information is not used as efficiently as it could be to identify gaps in achievement and attendance. For example, leaders are aware that disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as their peers, or attend as regularly, but do not monitor the progress of this group closely enough to determine when and what interventions are required. While

the additional pupil premium funding is used by senior and middle leaders to support disadvantaged pupils in a range of ways, it is not currently used as effectively as it could be.

Governance of the school

- Governors are experienced and show a strong commitment to the school. They are united in their ambition for the school to provide the best possible education for its pupils.
- Governors take their role in keeping children safe seriously. Governors receive two-yearly safeguarding reports from the designated safeguarding governor.
- Governors hold leaders to account for their areas of work effectively. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They recognise that the strategies in place to support disadvantaged pupils have not yet made the intended impact.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders make appropriate checks when staff are appointed and ensure that all staff employed in the school are suitable to work with children. Leaders maintain their own knowledge and understanding of safeguarding through appropriate training. They also make sure that all staff receive up-to-date safeguarding training.
- Systems for keeping pupils safe in school are effective. Leaders maintain comprehensive records and work well with other agencies. Staff are vigilant and know the warning signs that may suggest a pupil is at risk from harm. Staff are clear about what to do if they are concerned about a pupil and they refer concerns quickly and appropriately. Leaders are tenacious in following these up.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others safe. They are taught how to stay safe online and demonstrate a good understanding of the potential dangers of inappropriate use of social media.
- The pupils who spoke to inspectors and those who responded to the pupil survey said that they feel safe in the school. Pupils told inspectors that there are staff who they can go to when they are concerned, and they know the staff will listen to them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is strong in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to help them to plan and to provide clear explanations and activities.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards their work. In a range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of what they need to do to extend their learning. They want to do well and are keen to learn.
- Teachers plan in a structured way that ensures pupils remain busy throughout their lessons. There is very little disruption of any kind and, when it does occur, teachers are

quick to respond to it.

- Pupils who have an EHC plan receive good support from the teaching assistants working with them in lessons. Teachers plan with this group of pupils in mind, but do not routinely consider the needs of pupils with SEND who do not have an EHC plan.
- Work in pupils' books is typically well presented. However, some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, do not always complete their work.
- Homework is used well to consolidate pupils' understanding and extend their knowledge of what they have learned in lessons. Pupils understand the value of homework and record it accurately in their planners
- Across the curriculum, pupils value the guidance provided by teachers. In a range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science, appropriate time is allocated for pupils to reflect on and improve their work.
- Teachers use questioning to check pupils' understanding. However, they do not routinely use questioning to challenge pupils and deepen their knowledge.
- Teachers do not routinely consider pupils' different abilities in their planning. Typically, teachers plan the same activity for all pupils, particularly for those in middle and lower sets. As a result, lower-attaining pupils are not given the support they need and, in some subjects, the most able are not appropriately challenged.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Leaders promote personal development and positive well-being across the school community. All staff and pupils receive very strong support in this area.
- Leaders have put in place a range of strategies to support pupils' mental health, including through mentoring and counselling. There is a culture of openness and honesty in the school. Pupils talk freely about their own personal struggles. For example, a group of sixth-form students took an assembly recently, explaining how they had overcome issues to do with their own mental well-being.
- Leaders are aware of the potential dangers pupils face outside school and when online. They are committed to ensuring that all pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils who spoke to inspectors and those who responded to the pupil questionnaire said that they feel safe; this view is echoed by parents.
- Pupils understand what it means to live in a democracy. They are given opportunities to share their views and develop their leadership skills through a high-profile school council. Pupils have a good understanding of world faiths and they recognise the differences that exist within society. Pupils demonstrate tolerance and promote equality through their positive attitudes and relationships.
- Pupils' talents are celebrated. Pupils are given the opportunity to showcase their work. For example, those studying art have opportunities to present their work in 'mini art galleries'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have established very high expectations. Pupils are immaculately dressed and wear their school uniform with pride.
- There is a calm and orderly atmosphere in and around the school. Pupils walk between lessons sensibly and give way to let others past when corridors become congested.
- Relationships between pupils and their teachers are strong. Pupils show a high level of respect towards each other and towards their teachers. Pupils listen respectfully to each other's ideas and opinions.
- Pupils attend school regularly and are punctual. Very few are persistently absent from school. Attendance is consistently above the national figure for all year groups, including the sixth form. Disadvantaged pupils, however, do not attend school as regularly as their peers and this slows their progress.
- There is very little derogatory behaviour, and bullying is rare. Pupils told inspectors that, when relationships do break down, teachers are quick to help restore them.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2018, the progress of pupils in Year 11 fell in a range of subjects, particularly mathematics. Overall, pupils' progress was average, and thus below that in previous years. It was below average in some subjects, including mathematics and modern foreign languages.
- In 2018, low prior-attaining pupils in Year 11 made strong progress in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Leaders have responded quickly to the dip in outcomes in 2018. Current information has been carefully checked by leaders and indicates an improving picture. The attainment and progress of pupils currently in the school are good.
- Inspectors noted that pupils in key stage 4 are making good progress in a range of subjects. Effective teaching is enabling pupils to make stronger progress in English, mathematics and science. During the inspection, inspectors saw evidence of pupils acquiring strong literacy and numeracy skills. Across subjects, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of what they need to do to develop their knowledge and understanding further. Work in books indicates pupils are making good progress over time and that they are well prepared for their GCSE examinations.
- Leaders have taken effective action to resolve the issues that led to some pupils underachieving in modern foreign languages in 2018. The quality of teaching in languages has improved. Inspectors noticed teaching that challenged pupils through well-designed and sequenced activities. Pupils were able to relay what they had learned and demonstrated a strong acquisition of the target language. Pupils in key stage 4 are now making stronger progress in modern foreign languages.
- The most able pupils in key stage 4 are making good progress in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics, but weaker progress in others. In some subjects,

teaching does not challenge them to think as deeply and achieve as well as they should. This is because not all teachers consider pupils' prior attainment information when planning lessons.

- In 2018, disadvantaged pupils in Year 11 made slower progress than their peers in all subjects. Leaders have introduced additional support for this group. However, because they do not monitor their progress closely, leaders do not have an accurate picture of how well they are doing. Work in pupils' books and teachers' assessment information indicate a similar picture this year to last year.
- Pupils with SEND do not make the same progress from their starting points as their peers in all subjects. Pupils who have an EHC plan and benefit from additional one-to-one support make stronger progress.
- Pupils in key stage 3, including the most able, make good progress across the curriculum. The consistently good quality of teaching enables pupils to acquire knowledge and skills quickly. This is particularly notable in science, where pupils receive a high level of challenge. Moreover, the pupils who spoke to inspectors were confident that they are making good progress.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. The proportion of pupils entering sustained education, employment or training at the end of Year 11 is above the national average.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leaders have established a sixth form that provides a good quality of education.
- The sixth form is inclusive and welcoming. Students are proud to be part of the sixth form. They value their education and want to do well. Attendance in the sixth form is high. Students are rarely absent and rarely late.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum that is diverse and appropriate. They go to great effort to ensure that it meets the needs of all students. Leaders provide high-quality advice to those joining the sixth form. They ensure that all students choose appropriate courses which are closely matched to their future plans. Most students who completed their courses in 2018 progressed to higher education, employment, training or apprenticeships.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the sixth form is good. One reason for this is that teachers are keen to improve their teaching skills. Teachers talk to each other about improving their work and share good practice. Consequently, students achieve well across a range of subjects.
- Lessons are typically well planned and purposeful. Teachers check how well students are doing and modify their planning and teaching appropriately. As a result, students develop the skills and content that they need to make good progress.
- Students feel well supported in the sixth form. This is because leaders take their well-being seriously and have consistently high aspirations for every one of them. Students know who to go to if they need help and are confident that they will receive the support they need.

- Students benefit from the range of activities provided to broaden their study programmes. Students undertake work experience in Year 12 and have the option of completing the Duke of Edinburgh Award. These aspects of the curriculum meet the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes and make a strong contribution to students' wider development.
- A number of students who resit GCSE English and/or mathematics do well. The proportion who improve their grade in these subjects is similar to the national average.

School details

Unique reference number	136355
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10086811

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	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1698
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Wilcox
Headteacher	Dr Martin Airey
Telephone number	01689850271
Website	www.darrickwood.bromley.sch.uk
Email address	office@darrickwood.bromley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Darrick Wood School is a larger-than-average secondary academy which opened in December 2010.
- There is a hearing impairment resource provision within the school. This is managed by the local authority. All pupils who receive support from the provision are fully integrated into the school.
- The majority of pupils are from a white British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is significantly below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average and in the lowest 20% of all schools nationally.

- The proportion of pupils who have an EHC plan is above that of other schools.
- There are no pupils attending alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons to observe teaching and learning across a range of subjects. Most of these observations were undertaken jointly with school leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' learning over time through scrutiny of pupils' books during visits to classrooms. Inspectors also spoke with pupils in key stage 3 and key stage 4 and students in the sixth form about their experiences at the school.
- Meetings were held with leaders to discuss their evaluation of the school's effectiveness and the impact of their work. Discussions were held with members of staff, including middle leaders and those at the early stages of their teaching career.
- Inspectors discussed aspects of the school's work with governors.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of documentation, including information about pupils' progress and attainment, the curriculum, teaching and learning, safeguarding records and procedures, behaviour records and attendance information.
- Inspectors took account of 240 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, 450 responses to the pupil survey and 102 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Niall Gallagher, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Avnee Morjaria	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Bec Allott	Ofsted Inspector
Gloria Lowe	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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Manchester
M1 2WD

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