

The Dawnay School

Griffin Way, Great Bookham, Leatherhead, Surrey KT23 4JJ

Inspection dates

27–28 February 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school has begun to improve only very recently, with the appointment of an executive leader and the head of school. Leaders over time have not reacted quickly enough to tackle declining academic standards.
- Teaching is not yet good. Although there have been improvements in some classes, there continue to be weaknesses and inconsistencies where teaching does not challenge pupils' learning appropriately.
- Teachers do not always use information about what pupils already know and understand to plan tasks and activities to meet pupils' differing needs. As a result, pupils are not making as much progress as they should.
- Progress is improving in some classes, but not enough pupils are making accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result the progress pupils are making is well below that achieved nationally.
- New leaders, supported by governors, are taking appropriate action to drive rapid improvement. However, this work is in the early stages.
- Middle leaders have not been held fully to account for the learning in their area of responsibility or subject. They have not ensured that teaching teams provide consistently good opportunities for pupils to learn.
- Teachers do not check consistently on pupils' learning during lessons. As a result, misconceptions in pupils' learning are not corrected swiftly.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough. As a result, pupils do not make the progress they could in some lessons.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have swiftly identified what improvements need to be made. They have high expectations of teachers and pupils, together with the drive and ambition to get the very best for pupils.
- Pupils' personal development and behaviour is good. They have very good attitudes to learning and are polite and welcoming.
- Children in early years achieve well in a happy and safe learning environment. They make a strong start to their time at the school, as a result of good teaching.
- Safeguarding practice is robust. It is underpinned by strong relationships and a whole-school ethos of nurture and care.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - embedding recently introduced leadership initiatives so that improvements continue
 - holding middle leaders fully to account for their area of responsibility.
- Improve teaching so that it is good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - ensuring that teachers make the best use of all available information about pupils' performance to plan tasks and activities that build on what pupils already know and understand
 - providing effective challenge for all pupils in their learning and acting swiftly to correct misconceptions, so that pupils make as much progress as possible.
- Improve the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of key stage 2 so that:
 - pupils who have fallen behind make strong progress to catch up
 - the percentage of pupils who are working at the expected level for their age in reading, writing and mathematics is at least in line with the national average and more most-able pupils achieve the higher standard.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Despite governors' best efforts to secure effective leadership, the school has experienced a number of leadership issues. During this period of turbulence, leaders did not drive the required improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes quickly enough. However, during this time, the strong emphasis on pupils' personal development, care and welfare was maintained and continues to be strong. The appointment of an executive leader and Head of School in January this year is already leading to improved teaching and learning. With the support of the governors, effective structures and lines of accountability are now in place to increase the pace of change, but these are in their infancy and there is much more to do.
- New leaders share the drive and ambition for all pupils to succeed. They are rightly targeting improvements in teaching. As a result, pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics are improving.
- The school's values of positive attitudes, respect, independence, diversity and excellence (PRIDE) are embedded in the school community. Leaders and staff are committed to supporting pupils. This is strongly appreciated by parents and carers, one of whom said: 'When your child comes to this school, you know that they will be well cared for from the start.'
- In the past, leadership of teaching and learning was not as rigorous as it should have been. As a result, pupils' achievement has not been good enough. Senior leaders now check and evaluate teaching effectively, accurately identifying what specific actions teachers need to do to improve their practice. As a result, teaching is improving and pupils are making better progress. However, although improvements can be seen, there are still inconsistencies across the school.
- Middle leaders have not been held fully to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in their area of responsibility. As a result, teaching within phases is inconsistent, and pupils' progress has been limited in some subjects. Senior leaders' work to develop the skills and knowledge of middle leaders is helping them to be more effective, but there is more to do.
- Recently introduced theme-based learning motivates pupils to learn. Pupils say they enjoy this type of learning, as it helps them with their writing. One boy was quick to tell inspectors about his description of Hercules: 'He was a giant of a man, strong as an ox and wasn't afraid of anyone.' There are obvious strengths within the curriculum in subjects such as art, music and physical education (PE) which are taught by subject specialists. There are many visits and activities to enhance the curriculum and develop pupils' love of learning.
- Funding to support disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is appropriately targeted. These pupils make similar progress to their peers. So, as with other pupils, they were not doing as well as they should, but their current progress is stronger. There are effective interventions to ensure that pupils who find learning more difficult develop the confidence and skills to catch up.

Leaders monitor the impact of the interventions to check that these pupils make good progress.

- Assemblies and class discussions provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, cultural and spiritual understanding. Subjects such as 'home is...' allow pupils to discuss the meaning of concepts for different types of people and cultures. An example of the strength of spirituality which is developed among the whole school community is the annual Christingle service. This was mentioned by parents, pupils and staff as one of the most significant community events, where all come together as a family in a faith experience. One pupil put it like this: 'It's fantastic, a time when we can all come together regardless of belief and believe in one another.'
- The PE and sport premium is used effectively to encourage pupils to try out and participate in a wide range of sports. External recognition of these opportunities has been provided by four consecutive Surrey games gold awards. Coaches work effectively alongside teachers to improve their skills, ensuring a long-term legacy that will benefit the school in the future.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well and are acutely aware of the school's areas of strength and where improvements need to take place. Their hard work to secure strong leadership over a very challenging period has now paid off, so the school is well placed to make rapid improvements.
- Governors' work to support senior leaders has ensured there is now a clear action plan in place, focusing on developing teaching and improving pupils' learning and progress. They have worked effectively with the local authority to secure funds to support these improvements.
- Governors' systems to hold leaders and teachers to account are now implemented more robustly. They are very well informed when making decisions about salary increases and do so with diligence and competence.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff and governors understand their responsibility to keep pupils safe. The annual child protection and safeguarding training ensures that adults have the relevant knowledge and understanding to fulfil their responsibilities to a high standard. Record-keeping and procedures to follow up concerns that arise are meticulous. Governors and leaders regularly monitor and review all aspects of safeguarding to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Vetting procedures for new staff are stringently applied before they work with pupils. The single central record, which records these checks, is regularly monitored and reports made to governors each term.
- Senior leaders and the inclusion lead work effectively with outside agencies to ensure that families and pupils get the support they need to make the best of their time at The Dawnay School.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching over time has not been good enough. As a result, pupils have made less progress than they should and have not achieved the standards in reading, writing and mathematics of which they are capable.
- Teaching is improving but it is too variable across classes and year groups. Some teachers plan lessons that do not take account of what pupils already know and understand. Progress is inconsistent, because pupils are either not sufficiently challenged and do not move on with their learning, or they are confused by the complexity of what they are being asked to do.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is consistently good across the school. Despite weaknesses in meeting pupils' learning needs, teachers' clarity of understanding, use of vocabulary and development of sequences of ideas and concepts were apparent in the majority of lessons. This provides a strong basis from which to move forward rapidly.
- Teachers do not routinely check on how well pupils understand the work they have been set. As a result, they do not tackle pupils' misconceptions quickly enough, or move them on in their learning if they can already do what has been set. This limits pupils' progress.
- Mathematics teaching is improving, as evidenced in the work seen in books. Number is mostly well taught, and pupils' ability to add, subtract, divide and multiply numbers shows consistent improvement. However, although the opportunities for pupils to apply their number skills are improving, tasks are not routinely set at the right level of challenge to maximise progress. An example of this was when pupils in one class were given the same simple algebra activity. The less able pupils could not do the task, the middle-ability pupils struggled but completed it, and the most able completed it quickly and were ready to move on.
- Writing has been a focus in the school over time. Evidence gathered from books shows that writing is improving overall. However, pupils are still given too many tasks which do not help them build on what they can already do. In some cases, less-able pupils are exposed to vocabulary they do not yet understand, while the most able pupils do not have opportunities to extend their vocabulary.
- Reading is a relative strength in the school. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their reading, which they enjoy. A very recent refocus on early phonics, instigated by senior leaders, shows that pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are making good progress. Younger pupils are taught to break down word sounds to help them decipher words, and older pupils are given rich texts to develop their vocabulary and comprehension skills.
- In most subjects across the curriculum, setting the correct challenge for pupils of all abilities is improving but it is still inconsistent. The new approach to the curriculum is allowing pupils to develop their learning in areas such as science and history. These opportunities are allowing pupils to use their literacy skills to support learning in other subjects. Commenting on this, one parent said: 'My son never writes but he comes home and tells me what he has written about his work in topic and how much he enjoys it.'

- In lessons, most learning support assistants offer effective support with a good balance of support and challenge for those pupils who need extra help. However, there are times when they have to give pupils too much help if a task is too difficult for the pupil.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' personal development is a high priority for school leaders. Pupils have many opportunities to undertake leadership roles and responsibilities in the school. For example, pupils can be part of the school council, a prefect, a buddy to younger pupils or part of the sports crew. Pupils are encouraged to think and speak independently, which is one of the school's values. When asked about whether they receive information about how to lead a healthy life style, one Year 6 pupil stated: 'We do but the teachers don't lecture you. You are given the information and encouraged to make the right choice. It's up to you!'
- Pupils learn how to develop resilience. When they are confronted by a problem, they try to work it out for themselves or with their friends before asking a teacher for help. There is a strong sense of support for one another, described by the pupils as 'sticking up for one another'.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for, and parents and staff strongly agree. Pupils appreciate learning in a tolerant environment, free from discrimination. They benefit from sessions the school provides through the NSPCC and know what to do if they feel in danger. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe while using the internet and say they have regular lessons to help them do so. This training is also available for their parents. Pupils know how to stay fit and healthy by eating a balanced diet and taking regular exercise.
- Pupils say instances of bullying are rare and, if they do happen, they are acted upon quickly and effectively. Most parents agree that this is the case.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to their work and enjoy coming to the school. This is reflected in their improved attendance since the previous inspection, which is now similar to national figures.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils, parents and staff strongly agree that this is the case. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils have excellent manners, for example giving way to adults and younger pupils at doorways. They are very welcoming, are proud to be part of The Dawnay School and enjoy sharing their learning with adults. They particularly like the opportunities at the beginning of lessons when they discuss what they are going to learn.
- Pupils focus on their learning well and concentrate in lessons. They try to help one another find a solution before asking the teacher for help. Occasionally, when teaching is less effective, some pupils become distracted, and when this happens learning slows.

- Pupils understand the school's behaviour policy and how it is applied. They like the fact that they can receive rewards for good behaviour and achievements, like 'star of the week'. British values are taught very much alongside the school values of 'PRIDE'. Pupils experience values such as democracy when voting for their school councillors.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Attainment in July 2018, at the end of key stage 2, was below that achieved nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress scores were well below those achieved nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Current outcomes are improving in most classes, with all ability groups making better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, more pupils from all ability groups, including the most able pupils, need to make stronger progress to catch up, so that more pupils reach the expected and higher standards.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEND make the same progress as all other pupils in the school overall. A wide range of interventions, delivered by support staff, are helping these pupils catch up. As a result, some of these pupils are now making better progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the phonics screening check was below the national average. However, due to the swift and decisive actions taken by senior leaders, phonics teaching has improved across key stage 1. Work seen in books, supported by teaching seen when visiting lessons, confirmed that standards are rising quickly. Current Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are on track to achieve standards that are at least in line with those being achieved nationally.
- Outcomes in other subjects such as science, history and geography are similar to those being achieved in literacy. There are now more opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects. For example, to support their First World War topic, pupils wrote letters home to their families, describing what it was like living in the trenches.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. The consistently good teaching ensures that children build on these skills and make good progress in all areas of learning. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development is above the national average.
- Children settle well into the caring and nurturing learning environment. Reception staff are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about how young children best learn. As a result, they get to know the children well and very quickly understand their individual needs. Consistently applied routines help children to build confidence, making them feel secure and ready to learn. One parent's comment reflected that of many: 'My daughter feels confident and happy. She is always happy to go to school.'
- The Reception leader has high expectations of what the children can achieve. She works hard to ensure that she captures the interest of the children by introducing

topics with a clever and interesting 'hook'. For example, the children were having a 'topsy-turvy day' to start off their new topic, 'What happens when you are asleep?' Children were learning in their pyjamas, reading with torches in a darkened room and preparing a healthy breakfast that they could eat for dinner! Children were learning with excitement and could not wait to share all they knew about nocturnal animals. 'They sleep all day and come out at night to kill things, but we don't see them because we are in bed.'

- Reception staff understand the importance of developing children's early language. They use questions effectively to reinforce and develop vocabulary. While cutting up fruit, the teacher asked the children to describe the colour, texture and feel of the different fruits, some of which they had not come across before. While learning outside, children were challenged to describe what it was like taking a journey together on a bus.
- Leadership is strong. The Reception teacher has created a stimulating and inviting learning environment inside and out. Planning is detailed and learning is well sequenced, reinforced and revisited often. This good practice is being used effectively by senior leaders to develop the teaching throughout key stage 1.
- Assessment and performance information is used effectively to make sure that tasks and activities are well matched to the children's individual abilities. Planning is constantly being reviewed and updated to make sure these activities are appropriate and offer the right level of challenge. As a result, children who sometimes fall behind are quickly identified and individual help is given so that they can remain confident and achieve. The Reception teacher is exploring ways of providing the most able children with diverse challenges so that they can make as much progress as possible.
- All staff are suitably qualified and experienced, ensuring that children are safe and well cared for. Children learn in a safe and secure environment where all welfare requirements are met effectively.

School details

Unique reference number	130397
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10053215

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Annette Di Giovanna
Executive Leader	Alister Moses
Telephone number	01372 456774
Website	http://www.dawnay.surrey.sch.uk
Email address	info@dawnay.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 March 2015

Information about this school

- An executive leader and Head of School were appointed in January 2019 and had been in post for seven weeks at the time of the inspection.
- The school is an average-sized primary school. Classes in key stage 2 are mixed age. There are two Year 3 and 4 classes and two Year 5 and 6 classes.
- Children in early years are taught in one Reception class.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The next largest group is from the Traveller community.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have SEND is average.
- There are a small number of pupils who have an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons in all year groups, mostly accompanied by senior leaders, to observe pupils' learning.
- Discussions were held with governors, senior leaders, members of staff, pupils, a representative of the local authority and a group of parents.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour; school improvement planning; assessment information; monitoring of teaching; minutes of the governing body; local authority reports; and school policies.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally during the day and observed them during playtime, lunchtime and at breakfast club.
- Inspectors listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read. They met formally with a group of pupils to discuss their learning, behaviour and safety. They looked at pupils' books, displays of pupils' work and the school's assessments of the progress made by pupils.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through meeting a group of parents, together with considering 95 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View, two written responses and two telephone conversations.
- Staff views were taken into account by considering 26 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Bill James, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Timothy Rome	Ofsted Inspector
Ross Macdonald	Ofsted Inspector

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