

Inspection of a good school: Dagenham Park Church of England School

School Road, Dagenham, Essex RM10 9QH

Inspection dates:

21–22 January 2020

Outcome

Dagenham Park Church of England School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

'Believe Grow Succeed' is the school's motto and it runs through everything leaders, staff and pupils do. This is an inclusive school where leaders have high expectations for all pupils. Leaders want all pupils to be able to fulfil their potential. Leaders recently introduced new courses in the sixth form. This has meant that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can continue their sixth-form studies at Dagenham Park Church of England School.

Pupils are very happy at school. They are respectful to one another and to staff. Pupils are included in decision making through the school council. Pupils enjoy celebrating their differences and pupil equality ambassadors help make the school the inclusive place it is. For example, pupils successfully campaigned to include entertainment events at breaktimes during Black History Month.

The school is a safe place for pupils. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe physically and online. Pupil safety is a key part of personal development education, assemblies and tutor time. Staff in the school work closely with outside agencies. Listening champions and anti-bullying ambassadors contribute to an environment where bullying rarely occurs. If it does occur, pupils know whom to tell and are confident it will be resolved quickly.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have reviewed what they want pupils to learn and when they want them to learn it in all subject areas. This means that learning is planned and sequenced so that pupils can remember more and develop their skills. Leaders' actions mean that pupils achieve well at this school. Teachers check that pupils can recall previous lessons through 'do now' activities. Teachers implement leaders' plans well. Pupils' books include good-quality work and show how the pupils are learning the planned subject content. Teachers and pupils assess the work in books and pupils correct their mistakes and misunderstandings.

Pupils start their GCSE courses in Year 9 and this means what they learn in key stage 3 is not as broad or ambitious as the national curriculum. Pupils do not have enough time to learn computing, and some subjects, for example history and art, are not studied in enough detail.

Students in the sixth form have a broad range of courses from which to choose. These courses are both academic and vocational and meet the needs of pupils in the school. The introduction of additional vocational courses has enabled pupils with SEND to progress to the sixth form. Students achieve results that are in line with those of sixth-form students nationally.

Leaders ensure that there is a wide variety of opportunities for pupils to get involved in beyond their studies. Staff arrange many trips and these trips support and enhance what pupils learn in school. Students in the sixth form have many opportunities to lead, represent the school and speak publicly. They lead charity events and make a positive contribution to their local community. Staff have developed links with organisations such as The National Theatre and The Royal Ballet to enhance pupils' cultural capital.

Pupils behave well in lessons, corridors, the playground and the dining hall. Low-level disruption rarely affects pupils' learning. Pupils listen carefully to the teacher and each other. They start lesson activities quickly and their work is of a good quality. On the few occasions where learning was disrupted, it was due to a lack of teacher experience or training. All but one of the newly qualified teachers trained at the school. They told us that good behaviour was one reason they chose to stay at the school.

Leaders have ensured that the needs of pupils with SEND are well met. The additionally resourced provision is in the centre of the school and these pupils are included in all school activities. They have a personalised programme to meet their needs. Other pupils with SEND access the same subjects as all other pupils.

A high proportion of pupils join or leave the school during the school year, but this is a feature of the local community. Families relocate and their children change school. Leaders welcome new pupils to the school and achieve good results with them. They achieve success with pupils who had been unhappy at their previous school.

Staff in the school are happy and have very good relationships with pupils. Leaders are supportive and listen to staff who appreciate the work leaders have done to reduce workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive effective safeguarding training via an online training package as well as face-to-face whole-school training. The online package tests staff's understanding of the course and records which staff have successfully completed it. Staff are aware of the risks to pupils in their local community, for example knife crime and gang culture.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe through the personal development education course. Leaders also have good links with outside agencies who come into school to deliver drama workshops and support pupils. The school employs a counsellor to support pupils' mental well-being.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not coherently planned and sequenced from Years 7 to 9 in some subjects. This means that not all pupils have access to a curriculum that is as broad and ambitious as the national curriculum for key stage 3. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken to plan next year's curriculum that they are in the process of bringing this about. Current Year 7 pupils will study a three-year key stage 3 and pupils in Years 8 and 9 will access additional activities to fill the gap of a narrowed curriculum in Year 9.
- We observed some low-level disruption in a small number of lessons. This means that pupils are not able to learn as they should. Leaders should ensure that staff, in particular non-subject specialists, receive appropriate support and training on behaviour management.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	136028
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10121560
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,394
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	164
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Eileen Keller and Keith Coffey (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	Chris Ash (Head of School)
Website	www.dagenhampark.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 May 2016

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher took up post in January 2018. The current head of school will become the substantive headteacher in September 2020.
- The school has additionally resourced provision for pupils with complex and moderate learning difficulties. There are currently 42 funded pupils in this provision.
- The school uses three alternative providers. These are Erkenwald Campus (Mayesbrook Park School), Seabrook Campus (Mayesbrook Park School) and North Star New School.
- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England School.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the executive headteacher, head of school and senior leaders. We met with the two co-chairs of the governing body, two other governors and a representative from the local authority.
- We did deep dives in the following subjects during this inspection: English, science, art and history. We visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with subject leaders and teachers.
- Through discussions with leaders, governors, pupils, staff and parents and carers, we considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. We also looked at records related to safeguarding, including records of pre-employment checks carried out before staff are appointed.
- We met with groups of pupils and spoke to pupils during lesson visits. We observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at playtimes. We spoke to staff about behaviour and about their workload in school. We looked at 91 staff responses and 21 parent responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

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