Inspection of a good school: Mayfield School

Pedley Road, Dagenham, Essex RM8 1XE

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

Outcome

Mayfield School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a large and diverse school, where difference is valued. Pupils benefit from the carefully designed curriculum, which supports pupils in building their knowledge and understanding over time. As a result, most pupils achieve well in a range of subjects and are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils follow the same curriculum as their peers. Staff provide helpful support when it is needed.

Pupils feel happy and are kept safe here. They respond well to the opportunities provided to them and behave well in lessons. The school has established a calm and purposeful environment in which pupils can learn. Bullying is rare and pupils know how to report concerns when they need to. Pupils say they learn how to stay safe through assemblies and daily personal development lessons.

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, take on a range of responsibilities, such as prefects, year group captains and mental health ambassadors. There are a range of enrichment opportunities for pupils to develop their sporting and other talents and interests. For example, creative writing, crochet, chess and film club.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that is broad and ambitious, in line with what is expected nationally. Careful thought has been given to the curriculum content and the order in which it is taught. Leaders are clear about what they want pupils to know and remember. There are regular opportunities for pupils to revisit and consolidate what they have learned. This helps them to tackle more complex ideas later on. In English, for example, pupils in Year 7 are asked to identify different features used in poetry. They apply this knowledge in Years 8 and 9 when comparing poems and studying the methods poets use to present their ideas. This supports older pupils and students in the sixth form

to analyse a range of whole texts in depth, including novels, poetry and plays from different places and times.

Staff are well trained and supported to ensure that pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers, wherever possible. Pupils that need additional help with their reading are swiftly identified and receive the support they need. For example, leaders have put in place shared reading of specific novels, which takes place in daily personal development time in all year groups. There is a strong emphasis on developing a lifelong love for reading. Pupils benefit from the newly refurbished library. Sixth-form library ambassadors help support events, including talks and author visits.

The school provides high-quality professional development for staff. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use assessment well to amend their teaching and address gaps in pupils' learning. Leaders have correctly identified that pupils need support to develop and practise their spoken language. In some instances, staff do not maximise opportunities to engage pupils in discussion and debate. The school has put in place a new approach to oracy to address this.

Work in pupils' books is generally of a high standard. Most pupils take pride in their work. They are given regular opportunities to reflect upon and improve their written work. Occasionally, however, the activities pupils complete do not match the ambition of the intended curriculum. In these instances, pupils are not as well supported to develop the deep body of knowledge that they could.

Pupils recognise that behaviour has improved significantly in recent years. There is very little low-level disruption in lessons. This has a positive effect on their learning. At social times, pupils show respect to staff and to each other. They appreciate the new rewards system that is now in place. The school is taking steps to increase attendance by improving tracking and monitoring, and working with families that need additional support.

The comprehensive personal development programme has a strong emphasis on well-being and mental health awareness. There is a carefully planned careers curriculum, which includes a careers fair. This helps to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training. Pupils benefit from impartial, individualised career advice and guidance. In the sixth form, students have weekly enrichment sessions, which include input from visiting speakers from a wide range of industries.

Governors understand the school's strengths and areas for development. They have secure oversight of safeguarding and other statutory arrangements. Most staff, including early careers teachers, feel that their well-being and workload is carefully considered. They are enthusiastic about improvements in recent years.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?
(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the tasks pupils complete do not consistently match the ambition of the intended curriculum. This means that some pupils do not develop the depth of understanding they need to tackle future learning. The school should ensure that the curriculum is implemented with consistent ambition.
- There are missed opportunities to engage pupils in discussion and debate. In these instances, a small number of pupils are reluctant to talk about what they have learned. As a result, learning time is lost for these pupils. The school should ensure that teachers are trained to encourage and promote appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2018.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the definition of children in need of help and protection; pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's pupil premium

funding (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	102858
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10323341
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1896
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	374
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Backhouse MBE
Headteacher	Remo Iafrate
Website	http://www.mayfieldschool.net/
Dates of previous inspection	31 October and 1 November 2018 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school makes use of six registered alternative providers of education.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspection team completed deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history and art. To do this, they met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, had discussions with staff and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors held meetings with staff and with pupils. Behaviour was observed both in lessons and around the school. The views of pupils, parents and carers, and staff were considered through discussions and looking at information collected from Ofsted's surveys.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders about the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors held discussions with members of the governing body, as well as a representative of the local authority.

Inspection team

Robert Grice, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jo Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Jonathan Newby	Ofsted Inspector

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