

Inspection of a good school: Mayesbrook Park School

75-77 Arden Crescent, Dagenham, Essex RM9 6TJ

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 April 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to attend Mayesbrook Park School and they feel safe. They like the smaller class sizes and the extra time and support that they get to learn and remember the content of lessons. Pupils at the school are very vulnerable. They often join the school after a period of disruption to their education, and the school helps them to settle as quickly as possible and to help them believe that they can succeed.

The school expects all pupils to work hard and to behave well. Pupils who are placed at the school sometimes need help to do this on their own. The school supports pupils to learn how to manage their emotions and behaviour independently, so that they can get ready for their future lives as adults. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps.

The school is a calm place. Sometimes, emotions bubble over, but staff respond quickly and calmly and help pupils to get back on with their lessons as soon as possible.

Pupils say that bullying isn't a problem at the school. If it did happen, they know that the adults would sort it out quickly. The relationships between staff and pupils are warm and positive.

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

The school curriculum is ambitious and well thought out. It is designed to meet the very wide range of needs of the pupils who attend the school, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Teachers have strong subject knowledge, and they are expert in adapting their teaching to make learning accessible for pupils. For example, in mathematics, some aspects of the curriculum are linked to practical architecture projects that are carried out in collaboration

with external organisations like the Royal Institute of British Architects. In personal, social and health education (PSHE), the curriculum is often linked to high-quality literature, such as 'To Kill a Mockingbird', so that pupils can explore themes such as racism and injustice through the eyes of a character. This helps pupils to develop their social and emotional skills at the same time as learning academic content. Teachers carefully assess pupils' journey through the curriculum and check that they have understood before moving on. The curriculum also develops pupils' social and emotional skills. Some of this area of the curriculum is not as clearly laid out as the more established parts of the curriculum. The curriculum would be even stronger if there was some fine tuning of the plans to strengthen pupils' resilience and well-being.

Teachers and other adults who work at the school have a clear understanding of the particular needs of the pupils. They are alert to the signs that a pupil might be getting anxious or upset, and they take timely and sensitive steps to help pupils return to learning. Pupils feel supported. They have trusted adults that they can talk to if they have any worries.

The school prioritises attendance. The school takes all reasonable steps to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. This includes offering courses that pupils want to study, removing any barriers to attendance at school and working closely with pupils and their families.

Pupils may have fallen behind in their reading when they join the school. This may be because they have missed these important stages of their education, or because they have found it difficult to keep up. When this happens, the school has a sharp focus on helping pupils to catch up quickly. Pupils soon gain confidence in reading and this helps them to access the rest of the curriculum.

Important life skills are taught through the PSHE curriculum. Pupils learn about a wide range of topics, including what to do if someone is trying to pressurise you to do something you don't want to, how to keep safe from gangs and crime, and about tolerance and respect for different groups of people in society. Pupils learn about positive and healthy relationships and about the dangers of the internet.

The school's curriculum goes well beyond the academic. There is a very rich offer of vibrant trips and visits including staying at residential centres to take part in outdoor adventures, sailing holidays, local outdoor centres, and rowing activities and competitions. There are many visits to museums, galleries, sports centres and stadiums. Pupils learn a wide range of physical education skills through the curriculum, including developing their skills at traditional sports and sports that might be new to them, like archery and table tennis.

Pupils learn about different careers and are supported to make plans for their future. They have high-quality advice and support to research and apply for colleges and apprenticeships. Pupils are very well prepared for their next steps in the world.

Staff like working at the school. They feel that leaders go to significant lengths to look after their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the elements of the curriculum that relate to developing pupils' social and emotional skills and knowledge are not as clearly laid out as other, more established parts of the curriculum. This means that some pupils may not make as rapid progress in these areas. Leaders should continue to refine the curriculum so that these steps are very clear and pupils are even better prepared for the next steps of their education and future life.

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. 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	132816
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10296719
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	161
Appropriate authority	Governing Body
Chair of governing body	Robert Turner
Headteacher	Cathy Stygal
Website	www.mayesbrookparkschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The number of pupils who attend the school has grown significantly since the last inspection due to a high demand for places.
- The school also has two other sites: Seabrook Campus, 22 Shipton Close, Dagenham, Essex RM8 3QR, and Erkenwald Campus, Marlborough Road, Dagenham RM8 2HU. These sites have changed address since the last inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is a pupil referral unit and provides education to pupils who are very vulnerable because of their social and emotional needs. Some pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior and middle leaders. Inspectors met with the chair of governors and other governors.
- Inspectors met with senior colleagues from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, PSHE and creative arts. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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 considered the 24 responses to Ofsted's confidential staff survey. They also considered the response to Ofsted's confidential survey for parents. There were no responses to Ofsted's confidential survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Gary Pocock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Diane Rochford

Ofsted Inspector

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