

Greatfields School

St Marys, Barking, Essex IG11 7TD

Inspection dates

4–5 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
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 have established a school where outstanding behaviour and good-quality teaching are the norm. Consequently, pupils make good progress.
- Lessons take place in a purposeful and respectful atmosphere. This sense of 'respect' permeates the school and contributes to the very good relationships between staff, pupils and senior leaders.
- Teachers use their strong subject knowledge and draw on expertise from across the trust to devise and deliver lessons which enable pupils to make good progress over time.
- Leaders have a very accurate understanding of the quality of teaching at the school. Leaders know that, very occasionally, teachers do not identify quickly enough the pupils who have not understood the concept being taught.
- Strategies to promote reading across the school are very effective and results in pupils who join the school with lower than expected reading ages making rapid progress.
- The school's high ambition for its pupils is reflected by the high proportion of pupils who have chosen courses which will lead to the English Baccalaureate in key stage 4.
- Limitations in the school's buildings and staffing have limited pupils' experiences in design and technology, computing and music. Leaders have ambitions and clear plans in place to improve provision in these curriculum areas.
- Trustees and governors provide effective oversight of the school's work. They are astute in holding leaders to account for the quality of education that pupils receive.
- Pupils' understanding of fundamental British values is good. Pupils show strong levels of respect those with different faiths and beliefs. Their knowledge of Britain's parliamentary system and of current affairs is less well developed.
- The school is highly inclusive and takes every step to avoid excluding pupils, including through use of an isolation room. Teaching in the isolation room is not consistently as effective as in the rest of the school.
- The school's arrangements to keep pupils safe are highly effective. Leaders are tenacious in finding out where pupils who leave the school during the academic year have gone. They work well with the local authority to identify any pupils at risk of going missing from education.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school and the quality of education it provides.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen further the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and of the curriculum, by:
 - ensuring that teachers’ practice in checking pupils’ understanding during lessons is consistently strong
 - ensuring that teaching in the isolation room is as effective as in the rest of the school
 - ensuring that planned improvements to provision in design and technology, computing and music are brought about as quickly as possible
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to learn about current affairs and Britain’s parliamentary system.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher, ably supported by other senior and middle leaders, has established a school where high expectations of behaviour are matched by an unrelenting drive for high quality of teaching.
- Staff are highly ambitious for pupils. Their work is underpinned by their strong sense of moral purpose and determination to improve the life chances of all pupils, including the most disadvantaged.
- The headteacher is, rightly, highly respected by staff, pupils and parents. He has cultivated an exceptionally positive learning environment where a sense of 'respect for all' permeates the school. This results in strong and productive relationships between staff, pupils and senior leaders.
- Teachers are happy to be observed teaching regularly because they know that leaders will use the findings of these observations to help them improve teaching. They place high value on the quality of feedback they receive, taking steps to improve the aspects of their practice which require further work. The school's well-conceived approach to performance management makes a very positive contribution to teachers' professional development and their teaching practice.
- Middle leaders have grown in effectiveness as they have gained experience. They are skilled in bringing about improvements within their areas of responsibility, for example in mathematics.
- Leaders ensure that additional funding provided to support disadvantaged pupils and those who need help in Year 7 to catch up is used well. They ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as others in the school and, in some cases, more highly.
- Leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. The leaders responsible have a very secure understanding of how well this group of pupils are achieving and provide good-quality training for staff to boost their skills in meeting individual needs. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) regularly visits lessons to ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are well met and to provide further advice to staff.
- Leaders also provide teachers with good support to aid aspects of their teaching to support pupils at the earlier stages of speaking English. For example, specialist staff translate resources and help teachers plan lessons to meet the needs of pupils who are newly arrived in the United Kingdom.
- Leaders' ambition is reflected in the high proportion of pupils who have opted for key stage 4 courses which will enable them to achieve the English Baccalaureate. They ensure that the curriculum is flexible enough, however, to meet the needs of pupils with the lowest prior attainment. For example, these pupils receive more teaching in English and mathematics than their peers. The school has designed a bespoke curriculum with a local further education college which will enable these pupils to pursue vocational qualifications during key stage 4.

- Building work and limited staffing mean that current pupils have not received discrete teaching in design and technology, music or computing. Plans are in place to offer computing, and design and technology, from September 2019. Aspects of music are currently offered through the performing arts programme, through the instrumental tuition programme and through extra-curricular activities such as the school choir. Leaders have rightly prioritised music as a curriculum area for further development.
- Pupils benefit from the wide range of extra-curricular activities which includes the arts, science and sports. These make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum ensures that pupils' understanding of fundamental British values is good, particularly with regard to tolerance and respect for those of other faiths and beliefs. Not all pupils have secure knowledge of Britain's parliamentary system or current affairs, however.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school. Of the 60 parents who completed the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, 95% said that they would recommend the school to other parents.

Governance of the school

- Trustees exercise their responsibilities very effectively. Although they delegate considerable responsibility to the local governing body (LGB), they maintain strong oversight of the school's effectiveness. Trustees have established clear procedures to intervene if ever any concerns arise.
- The LGB is highly effective. Governors have wide-ranging expertise, including in education and safeguarding. This enables them to probe leaders' analysis of the school's effectiveness very effectively. The minutes from meetings show that they regularly challenge leaders about the quality of education provided by the school. They ensure that information they receive about pupils' performance is reliable.
- Governors visit the school regularly to talk to staff and pupils to satisfy themselves that the school is delivering a good quality of education. Governors and trustees also draw on findings from the many visits to the school from external partners to deepen their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All the necessary checks on staff are completed and recorded in line with current legislation. Staff receive regular good-quality training and are vigilant in identifying pupils who may be at risk of harm. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is adapted in response to issues of local and national concern, such as gang-related violence, and radicalisation and extremism.
- Leaders work extremely effectively with external agencies to support pupils who may be at risk. This includes pupils who leave the school roll unexpectedly. Leaders do not take any pupils off the school's roll until all steps have been taken to establish that they have enrolled at another school. They work closely with the local authority to identify pupils at risk of going missing from education.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching benefits from the strong relationships between staff and pupils and pupils' excellent behaviour. Teachers set out consistently and with clarity what is to be learned in each lesson and how this relates to pupils' previous learning.
- Teachers use their strong subject knowledge well to construct lessons which are well sequenced to build pupils' knowledge and understanding over time. The 'do it now' activities which feature at the start of all lessons are often used well to consolidate previous learning. Where this is done most effectively, teachers check carefully that the whole class have understood the work and adapt their teaching in response to any misconceptions.
- The effectiveness of assessment within lessons is good. In a minority of instances, however, teachers wrongly assume that because the sample of pupils they have picked demonstrate a secure understanding of the topic being learned, the rest of the class understand the work too.
- Leaders' strategies to improve the quality of questioning to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding are proving to be very effective. For example, in mathematics teachers give pupils time to think before responding to the teachers' questions. Teachers challenge pupils to explain their thinking and reasoning in considerable depth. As a result, pupils learn and make strong progress.
- The quality of work in pupils' books reflects the good quality of teaching they have received over time.
- Teachers make very good use of homework to consolidate and extend learning. Pupils' books show that most take considerable care in completing homework to a good standard, partly because they want to do well but also because they know that teachers and leaders take homework seriously.
- The use of assessment to evaluate how well pupils are achieving over time is strong. Leaders and teachers make very good use of tests and assessments to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge so they can be remedied.
- Good provision is in place to promote reading, including through whole-class reading in tutor time. Support for pupils whose reading is insecure is effective. Key staff have received training in teaching early reading and are using this well to improve the literacy skills of the pupils with low reading ages.
- While strategies are in place to improve the handwriting and spelling of pupils who need help with their writing, work in books shows that these have not yet benefited the low-prior-attaining pupils well enough.
- Teaching in the isolation room benefits from good-quality resources provided by subject leaders. Occasionally, however, the work completed by individual pupils is not challenging enough.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils take real pride in their work and are keen to do well. They exhibit maturity and dedication in lessons and are committed to improving their work where they can.
- Pupils collaborate well with each other in lessons but also work in silence without any fuss when asked to get on with work independently. Lessons take place in a very supportive atmosphere which builds pupils' confidence. Pupils are not afraid to share their answers with the whole class because they know that nobody will think badly of them or make fun if their answer is wrong.
- Pupils relish the rewards they get for attending well, behaving well and working hard. They take pride in the badges they wear in recognition of their achievements.
- Older pupils make an excellent contribution to supporting younger pupils, for example through the paired reading scheme in which more-able Year 9 pupils listen to younger pupils read.
- Pupils benefit from excellent provision for careers education. Pupils' understanding of the employment opportunities available to them is enhanced by regular visits to the school from outside speakers and trips to places such as the City of London. Leaders have ensured that the most disadvantaged pupils have had first choice in selecting the placement for work experience early in Year 10.
- Pupils' understanding of how to stay safe is strong. They are particularly well informed about the risks associated with gang-related crime and radicalisation and extremism.
- Pupils are very respectful of differences, and know that all people should be respected, including those with protected characteristics. While incidents of discriminatory language do occur from time to time, they are rare, reported by other pupils, and dealt with effectively by staff.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Leaders ensure that the very clear systems of behaviour management are well understood by pupils and consistently applied by staff. As a result, the overwhelming majority of pupils meet the school's high expectations of their behaviour all the time.
- From the start of the school day, where pupils line up in the playground in silence, and in lessons and at social times, almost all pupils conduct themselves impeccably.
- Pupils arrive punctually to lessons and to school and their attendance is consistently higher than average. This includes disadvantaged pupils.
- The school is highly inclusive and only rarely and very reluctantly excludes pupils. Leaders' policy is to ensure that, if at all possible, pupils with SEND are never excluded.
- Good arrangements are in place to support pupils who exhibit the most challenging behaviour, including through very effective mentoring and the opportunity for short-

term respite at other schools in the trust. This makes a clear and positive difference to these pupils' behaviour.

- Bullying is very rare but the school takes any reported incidents very seriously, including those which take place outside school hours.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Observations of teaching and scrutiny of the work in pupils' books provide clear evidence that pupils are making good progress from their often low starting points.
- Progress in English and mathematics is particularly strong and the work in pupils' books in these subjects is consistently of good quality. Teachers in these subjects and in most other subjects maintain very close oversight of pupils' work and set the highest expectations of how pupils should present their work.
- Pupils with low prior attainment are served well by the specialist teaching they receive across the curriculum in the nurture group and consequently make good progress. However, a few pupils in other classes continue to have difficulties in writing neatly and spelling new words correctly.
- In contrast, most pupils who join the school with low reading ages make rapid progress in reading because of the specialist teaching they receive. Pupils currently receiving additional support have made rapid progress in improving their reading ages. This includes pupils at the early stages of learning English.
- The most able pupils achieve particularly well, not least because of their teachers' high expectations. These pupils are being well prepared for the next stages of their education, for example through visits to universities where they are set challenges by university academics.
- In the main, pupils with SEND make good progress. Leaders ensure that teachers are well informed about pupils' particular needs and make regular checks to ensure that these pupils are making similar progress to their peers.
- The high proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as others in the school.
- Pupils' attainment across the full range of subjects is restricted by curriculum limitations in design and technology, music and computing.

School details

Unique reference number	142908
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10088859

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	354
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Daniel Singleton
Headteacher	Richard Paul
Telephone number	020 83946 5900
Website	http://greatfieldsschool.com/
Email address	office@greatfieldsschool.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Greatfields School opened in September 2016 in temporary accommodation on the site of a nearby primary school. The school transferred to its purpose-built permanent school site in January 2018. Phase one of the building works has been completed. Further facilities are currently under construction. Building work is scheduled to be completed by September 2020.
- The school, which initially provided education for pupils in Year 7, has grown in size each year since it opened and currently has pupils in Years 7 to 9. Eventually, the school will provide education for pupils from Year 7 to Year 13 with spaces for over 1,800 pupils.
- The school is part of the Partnership Learning Multi-academy Trust. Trustees are responsible for the school's performance. They delegate oversight of the school's day-to-day operations to an LGB. Some members of the LGB are also trustees.

- The school is an extremely diverse community and the large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Many of these pupils speak English as an additional language. Around 10% of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school serves an area of significant social deprivation and the proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is higher than average. The proportion of pupils with SEND who receive school support is above average. The proportion with an education, health and care plan is average.
- The proportion of mid-year admissions is much higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils who leave the school part-way through their education.
- The school makes use of alternative provision at The BEP Academy, Romford. This academy was judged by Ofsted to be good in November 2018.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning and scrutinised pupils' work across a range of classes and subjects. Each of these observations was carried out jointly with senior staff from the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with pupils in all year groups, including a group of pupils with SEND. They also spoke to pupils informally during the school day and listened to younger pupils read.
- They also held meetings with a wide range of staff, including the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, and staff.
- Inspectors met with the chief executive officer of the trust, trustees and members of the local governing body.
- They scrutinised a range of school policies and documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan and records regarding pupils' behaviour, safeguarding, attendance and safety.
- Inspectors scrutinised the records of pupils who previously have left the school, spoke by telephone with the attendance officer of the trust as well as senior staff from the local authority's Education Statutory Services Team.
- Inspectors considered the views of 60 parents who submitted responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the 20 staff who completed Ofsted questionnaires. They also scrutinised pupils' surveys collected by the school.
- The inspection took place during Eid. This meant that around half of the pupils were absent from school attending religious celebrations on the first day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Daniel Burton, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sunday Ellis	Ofsted Inspector
David Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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