

Drapers' Brookside Junior School

Dagnam Park Drive, Harold Hill, Romford, Essex RM3 9DJ

Inspection dates

11–12 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
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

- The headteacher, leaders and governors are ambitious for pupils and staff and have a compelling vision for the education they want to provide. They have secured substantial improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes across the school.
- Directors of the multi-academy trust and the local governing body check carefully on all aspects of the school's work. Through robust challenge and support, they make a strong contribution to the school's ongoing improvements.
- Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics from below-average starting points. As a result, there has been a sharp rise in standards in the current academic year across all year groups.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Staff value and benefit from the effective training and support organised by school leaders.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching, supported by well-targeted and timely interventions. As a result, differences with other pupils nationally have been diminishing at a fast pace.
- Well-planned activities enrich pupils' learning and stimulate their interest. Pupils' personal development and welfare is good. They leave the school well prepared for the next stages of their lives.
- Pupils behave well and are eager to learn. There is a strong sense of harmony and respect in this close-knit community.
- Pupils feel safe. They know that adults in the school care for them and will help them readily, should they have any concerns.
- The most able pupils are not challenged consistently well in reading and writing. Teachers do not always move these pupils on to harder tasks when they are ready.
- Teaching is not consistently effective in probing the understanding of some boys. Although they made big strides this year, their rate of progress remains slower than that of girls.
- Pupils have fewer opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge in some subjects, other than English and mathematics.
- Although attendance shows improvement, it remains below the national average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' outcomes in reading and writing by:
 - making sure that pupils, especially the most able, who find work easy get on with more difficult work without unnecessary delay
 - ensuring that teachers question boys in greater depth more regularly so that they develop a deeper understanding of what they are learning.
- Improve the breadth and depth of teaching in subjects across the wider curriculum so that pupils develop more secure skills and knowledge, beyond English and mathematics.
- Build on the partnership with parents to improve attendance and reduce the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders are relentless in their efforts to keep improving outcomes for all groups of pupils. Their vision and ambition have put the pupils at the centre of the school's work. As a result, teaching has improved and outcomes are good in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher, ably supported by her senior leaders, strives to make sure that all pupils, many of whom have circumstances that make them vulnerable, have plentiful opportunities to thrive academically and socially. As a result, pupils become confident learners who want to embrace all the opportunities offered by the school.
- Leaders are effective in managing the performance of teachers to improve teaching, learning and outcomes for pupils. Teachers are awarded pay increases when they have demonstrated good performance and pupils in their class have made rapid progress in their learning. Targets for teachers are as ambitious as they are for pupils, recognising the importance of high teaching to ensure that pupils learn well.
- Both senior and middle leaders have actively and successfully tackled the issues identified from their self-evaluation. For example, the lower attainment in writing, although still below average, has been raised through a range of targeted strategies. This includes, for instance, introducing more stimulating texts for pupils, focusing on extending reading skills and providing greater opportunities for extended writing. Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths of the school and a detailed action plan for further improvements.
- The curriculum is designed to promote enjoyment as well as pupils' achievement. Topics make sensible connections between different subjects and are chosen to engage the pupils' interest. Trips and visitors to the school ensure that learning has context and develops pupils' understanding further. However, leaders have not yet developed the quality of teaching in all other subjects to match that seen in English and mathematics. As a consequence, the learning of some pupils across the wider curriculum is less secure.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide a range of initiatives that support disadvantaged pupils. These include providing extra support through increased staffing and small-group intervention. This is monitored closely by leaders and reviewed on a regular basis. As a result, disadvantaged pupils have excelled this year and differences in progress with other pupils nationally are diminishing rapidly.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. Members of staff foster this, for instance through assemblies, visitors and a good range of extra-curricular activities. These include visits to the theatre and to museums, and after-school clubs such as drama, music, cricket and tag rugby.
- Special educational needs funding is used well to support pupils who have significant learning needs. It has been used to raise staff understanding of different needs and bring in the expertise of outside agencies to support pupils well.
- The school's own values largely mirror those of national British values of respect and tolerance to everybody, regardless of background. The school is proud of being inclusive and values all pupils. Consequently, all pupils are treated equally and discrimination on any grounds is not tolerated.

- The school uses its physical education and sport funding well. External experts train teachers and there has been an increase in the range of sports on offer, with increasing pupil uptake. Pupils now take part in a range of sporting tournaments. These increased opportunities make a strong contribution to pupils' physical well-being and understanding of how to live healthily.

Governance of the school

- The school's local governing body is effective. Strong partnership work between leaders, directors and governors has contributed very effectively to improvements at the school. They have been on a journey together and there is purpose and clarity of ambition and vision for the school.
- Directors are effective in using a wide range of networks and expertise available from across the multi-academy trust and Queen Mary University. For example, the science expertise of the university has been used to improve the quality of the practical curriculum in science.
- Considerable support, both financial and moral, was provided by the trust and governors after the adjacent infants school suffered from flooding last year. The governing body has a good track record of managing turbulence and supporting leaders.
- Governors ask probing questions of leaders to hold them to account for their work. They have been trained well and understand the performance of different groups of pupils in the school. Governors visit the school regularly and talk to pupils about their learning. They also undertake learning walks and talk to teachers about their pupils' learning.
- Governors are very clear about how additional government funding, such as the pupil premium, is spent and where it is benefiting disadvantaged pupils. They recognise that the achievement of disadvantaged boys remains a focus for further improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's records are of good quality and staff recruitment checks are carried out diligently. Leaders rigorously pursue safeguarding concerns with the local authority. They are tenacious in ensuring that support and intervention are provided for pupils and families who need help.
- Staff receive effective and regular training, coupled with additional briefings to keep safeguarding issues as the highest priority for all who work in the school. Staff are fully aware of the school's internal procedures should they need to raise a concern about a pupil. Similarly, staff have been trained to protect their pupils from dangers such as radicalisation and exploitation.
- Members of staff are alert to any changes in pupils' behaviours and to other signs that raise concerns. They report to leaders, who respond quickly to any allegations. Leaders keep clear and robust records of their work with parents and agencies to make sure that pupils are safe.

- The very large majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are confident that their children are well looked after and safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Typically, teachers have good subject knowledge and plan activities that help all groups of pupils to make good progress. They give pupils clear explanations and guidance on how to approach and improve their work. Pupils, therefore, become successful learners.
- Teachers and other adults create a learning environment that gives pupils the confidence to answer questions without fear of getting things wrong. Equally, pupils readily ask adults or peers for help if they do not understand something.
- Pupils value both the verbal and written feedback teachers provide. There is a high level of consistency across the school in how teachers provide feedback to pupils in their mathematics and English books. Pupils, including the disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, thrive on the guidance received and make strong progress as a result.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective, including for the most able pupils who are challenged to attempt complex problem-solving and investigations. For example, some pupils applied their knowledge of percentage increase to decide which of four banks would give the best return for investing a sum of £45,000.
- Teaching of reading has improved considerably. Teachers provide a variety of interesting activities that develop pupils' comprehension skills, their inference skills and their ability to make judgements about what they have read. There are good links between reading and writing, and teachers use texts to support pupils' learning in both subjects. As a result, the majority of pupils make rapid progress in both reading and writing.
- Occasionally, however, work set for some pupils is not challenging enough to make them think more deeply, in particular for the most able pupils in English. In a few instances, this results in these pupils marking time, doing work that is too easy, before they start the more difficult tasks. This slows pupils, especially the most able, from making rapid progress to reach higher standards.
- Vocabulary specific to particular subjects is reinforced by teachers to extend pupils' learning still further. The use of 'power words', for example, on the working wall stimulates pupils' thinking and encourages them to build these into their writing.
- Teachers make sure that pupils write for a variety of purposes and have more opportunities to apply their writing skills in different subjects. However, occasionally some pupils, in particular boys, struggle to write at greater length and with deeper sophistication.
- Staff do not consistently target their questioning carefully to boys, whose achievement in reading and writing has historically been much lower than girls'. This means that boys are sometimes not given enough opportunities to think hard about, or explain, their answers. As a result, on these occasions, some boys do not make the maximum progress in English.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are happy and they enjoy school. They are proud of their school and this is shown in the way they show respect towards each other and adults. They are caring and sensitive towards the needs of others and wear their school uniform with a sense of pride.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. As pupils progress through the school, they grow in self-confidence. As a result of the nurturing nature of the school, pupils feel valued and aspire to do well. The views of the school council make an important contribution to the life of the school.
- Pupils are keen to take part in sports activities to keep fit and healthy. The 'Funtrition' programme in Year 4 consolidates these pupils' understanding of the importance of healthy living. Good provision includes support for pupils' emotional and mental health through assemblies on resilience, for instance.
- Pupils have a sound understanding of modern Britain's parliamentary democracy and rule of law, and of the range of faiths in the United Kingdom. Leaders deepen pupils' understanding of these aspects through providing them with relevant additional enrichment activities, for example through the annual 'Day of Commemoration'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in class and when moving around the school. Playtimes are happy occasions when pupils from all backgrounds play together and enjoy each other's company.
- Pupils listen well to teachers' instructions and are focused on their learning. Transitions during lessons are smooth because pupils respond swiftly to teachers' signals, for example when teachers stand in one part of the room with their hand held up, all the pupils pay attention.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare. They know about different forms of bullying, including that related to modern technology. Pupils say that adults deal promptly with any incidents and that they take pupils' concerns seriously. Pupils spoken to made reference to 'The Power of One', and one pupil remarked that 'the bystander is just as guilty as the bully.'
- The school's records relating to poor behaviour show few incidents and detail all the steps taken to resolve the problem. There have been few exclusions in recent years. Most parents agree or strongly agree that behaviour is managed well by school leaders.
- School leaders and staff responsible for attendance have worked tirelessly to improve attendance. This year, they have started sending family liaison workers into homes to talk to parents about the importance of children not missing school. However, although there is a noticeable improvement in attendance for all groups of pupils currently in the school, it remains below average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress across all year groups. Pupils' progress has improved since the school joined the multi-academy trust three years ago. Consequently, attainment is rising so that more pupils are working at standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils join the school with consistently well-below-average standards in their reading, writing and numeracy skills. In 2016, by the end of Year 6, standards were below average in English and close to the national average in mathematics. Leaders have worked hard to embed a culture of high aspirations, underpinned by self-belief and confidence. As a result, improvements in attainment and progress have been quite rapid this year.
- Several factors have been responsible for the increase in pupils' outcomes, in particular more systematic monitoring of progress by staff and leaders, coupled with the earlier identification of those pupils who would benefit from additional support. This includes pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, standards in English and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 were much closer to the national average in 2017.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons and they make good progress in this subject. They have a sound grasp of basic computation skills that they confidently apply to solve real-life problems. Pupils explain their answers to questions clearly, using correct mathematical language. Teachers provide challenging activities, which prompt pupils to reason and so deepen their understanding.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar strong progress to their classmates, and sometimes better, because leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to support their learning. A range of effective interventions are in place to support the rapid progress of many pupils, for example White British disadvantaged boys, which is a special focus group for the school. These are checked by leaders to ensure that additional help is improving outcomes.
- Pupils' topic books show that they make reasonable progress in a range of other subjects, for example science, history and religious education. However, pupils do not get enough opportunities to engage with the key ideas in these subjects at a deeper level. Consequently, their rates of progress are not as strong as they are in English and mathematics.
- Reading standards have improved and many pupils read with increasing confidence, expression and accuracy. Although they are catching up fast, the progress of boys in general is not as rapid as that of girls. This is partly because questioning in greater depth is not happening with the frequency needed to develop a deeper understanding of what they are learning.
- The most able pupils are making good progress in the key subjects. They do not make the same rates of progress in subjects other than English and mathematics, because the tasks which teachers set in those foundation subjects are not always challenging enough.

School details

Unique reference number	140818
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	10031690

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	234
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Stephen Foakes
Headteacher	Angela Winch
Telephone number	01708 343074
Website	www.drapersbrookside.com/
Email address	admin@drapersbrookside.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is average in size.
- The school became an academy in July 2014 and is part of a multi-academy trust with six other schools. It is co-sponsored by the Drapers' Company and Queen Mary University.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above that found nationally.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, but the proportion of pupils from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds is rising.
- The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is below average and few are at an early stage of learning English.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The current headteacher has led the school since September 2014, in the first two years as part of a service level agreement, and as a substantive headteacher since September 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons, year groups and subjects. They also looked at pupils' work in books and other information about pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with groups of pupils. Inspectors also talked informally with pupils around the school and in the playground.
- Inspectors considered the 28 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the seven responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.
- Meetings were held with four governors, including the chair of the local governing body. Meetings were also held with leaders responsible for mathematics, English, science, assessment and tracking, and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority as well as the chairperson of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's reviews of its own performance, checks on the quality of teaching and improvement plans. Inspectors also examined safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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