

New Woodlands School

Shroffold Road, Downham, Bromley, Kent BR1 5PD

Inspection dates

8–9 May 2019

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| 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 | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Over the past two years, leaders and governors have overseen a period of significant change. They have tenaciously addressed the areas for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection. The school now provides a good education.
- Leaders expect pupils to do their best. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress from when they enter the school. Leaders ensure that pupils' educational, social and emotional needs are identified at the earliest stage and that they are then supported to achieve well.
- Teachers share leaders' ambition. They plan effectively to meet the needs of each pupil in their class. They praise where praise is due. They challenge pupils to do better when their work is not their best.
- Teachers do not always give pupils enough time to deepen their knowledge and refine their skills. Not all teachers expect the same high standard of presentation in books.
- Leaders provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Subject specialists ensure that planning is of good quality. They work together to strengthen links between subjects to enrich and deepen pupils' understanding.
- Leaders' work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils benefit from many trips, events and social activities.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders, staff and governors are clear about their safeguarding responsibilities. They are acutely aware of the risks that pupils face. They work effectively with pupils to build their resilience and understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons. They are proud of and keen to talk about their work. In unstructured or unfamiliar situations, pupils' behaviour is not so good. On occasions, some pupils are disrespectful and unkind in their choice of language. There is some inconsistency in how adults respond to incidences of poor behaviour.
- Attendance is improving and the number of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing. Leaders make every effort to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - lessons enable pupils to reflect more deeply on and consolidate their knowledge and skills
 - all teachers expect pupils to produce neat and tidy work.
- Improve pupils' behaviour in unstructured and unfamiliar situations by ensuring that:
 - the behaviour strategy is finalised and implemented at the earliest possible opportunity
 - leaders and staff are consistent in their approach to behaviour management.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and her leadership team lead with determination and ambition for pupils to succeed. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are making good progress in achieving their aim for every pupil to leave 'literate, numerate and with a personal dream of what they want to achieve in life'.
- Since the last inspection, the headteacher has led the school community through a period of considerable turbulence. This included a significant turnover of staff and governors. Despite this, leaders and governors have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at that time. As a result, the quality of education is now good. Pupils are making strong progress from their starting points.
- When many pupils start school, their earlier experience of education has been neither positive nor successful. To remedy this, leaders quickly identify barriers to learning and ensure that provision addresses educational, social and emotional needs in equal measure.
- The curriculum is a significant strength. It is broad, balanced and relevant to the learning needs of each pupil. Curriculum leaders bring experience and expertise to their respective subjects. They work effectively as a team, positively influencing the quality of planning and assessment. They ensure that, wherever possible, links between and across subjects enhance pupils' learning. Leaders' regular feedback to teachers and strong external partnerships also contribute effectively to improved pupils' outcomes.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is embedded in the curriculum. Pupils enjoy memorable visits to places of religious, cultural and historical interest. They appreciate visits such as those to a local activity centre, where they can simply chill and have fun together. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain, developing a growing understanding of the need for rules and the principle of democracy.
- Leaders make prudent use of additional funding for pupils who are disadvantaged. They identify the main barriers to learning and fund interventions that they know work well. Disadvantaged pupils make the same strong progress as their peers.
- Leaders give sport a high priority and pupils benefit from this. The sports premium is wisely invested and is contributing to strong outcomes in physical education (PE). Pupils participate in sporting events in a local, well-known sports stadium and enjoy regular opportunities for learning outside the classroom.
- Leaders use the school website to keep parents and carers informed about the curriculum and about forthcoming activities and events. Increased attendance at annual reviews is further strengthening the partnership between home and school. One parent said, '...staff are caring and patient, the school keeps me well informed.'

Governance of the school

- Governors bring a significant degree of specialism and experience to the role. This enables them to fulfil their duties effectively. Governors are supportive of the direction

that leaders are taking the school. At the same time, they challenge regularly and appropriately on matters relating to the quality of provision and pupils' outcomes. Governors are proactive about school improvement. They encourage leaders to be outward-looking and to learn about best practice from outstanding provisions. Through regular governor days, they learn at first hand about the impact of leaders' work on school improvement.

- Governors are clear about their responsibilities towards keeping pupils safe. They are committed to finding means of further improving attendance and reducing fixed-term exclusions. They are acutely aware of the risks faced by pupils living in the area. They value the strong partnership with the community police as one that supports them and leaders in their safeguarding duties.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders successfully instil a strong ethos of safeguarding. Staff and governors are well trained on the most recent statutory guidance. Induction for new staff includes a comprehensive safeguarding element. Staff are clear that safeguarding is 'everybody's responsibility'. Staff use social and recreation times effectively as opportunities for building positive relationships and trust with pupils. This practice adds further strength to the school's safeguarding culture.
- Leaders include lessons and messages about keeping safe, including e-safety, across the curriculum. Pupils who spoke to inspectors could explain what they would do if they saw something on the computer that they should not see. Trips and visits are carefully assessed for risks. The school site is secure and tightly managed. Staff are vigilant in their monitoring of behaviour and attitudes, especially at the beginning and end of the school day.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good. Teachers care about their pupils' progress educationally, socially and emotionally. They want pupils to do their best.
- Teachers set a calm and purposeful tone in lessons. This has a positive effect on pupils' concentration and effort. Classrooms are tidy and organised, with inviting displays of pupils' work. Resources are plentiful and in good order. Pupils can easily find the equipment and books they need to complete their work. Teachers' good organisation maximises learning time and reduces the risk of pupils becoming disengaged. Warm and trusting relationships between adults and pupils further support progress.
- Teachers plan their lessons well. They consider each pupil's learning and behavioural needs. In a science lesson, pupils explained carefully how to use Bunsen burners safely. They confidently recalled their knowledge of the different coloured flames produced by heating different chemicals. In an art lesson, pupils calmly and purposefully worked together to plan a joint piece of work. In PE, pupils worked together, practising and improving their fielding, batting and bowling skills through a game of indoor cricket.

- Teachers do not always allow enough time in lessons for pupils to remember and consolidate key knowledge and skills. Pupils then struggle to recall facts, even when they have been taught them. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and record their work regularly. However, they do not always expect pupils to write neatly and tidily.
- The recently introduced assessment system is proving effective in supporting good teaching and learning. Teachers give regular and clear feedback to pupils. They use 'wow' and 'now' statements to praise effort and improvement and to explain the next steps for learning. Pupils take note of this feedback and use it to help them to improve their written work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together, encouraging pupils to stay focused and skilfully diffusing potentially difficult situations.
- Teaching in the nurture class is effective in enabling pupils to make progress. Pupils benefit from a balanced and personalised curriculum. They learn new skills, gain knowledge and appreciate times for free choice games and activities. Pupils keep focused during learning time and enjoy and appreciate one another's company during recreation.
- Reading is taught effectively, particularly for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. Younger pupils learn phonics and use this knowledge to help them read new and unfamiliar words. Older pupils enjoy guided reading sessions. They learn about different genres and authors, expressing preferences in their choice of books. Pupils who read to inspectors were keen to read aloud. They read with expression and with good awareness of their audience.
- Teachers plan for pupils to write in different genres. They provide useful examples of writing to help pupils improve their own work. Younger pupils enjoy writing and are proud of the work they produce. Older pupils show understanding of the features of different genres such as persuasive and narrative writing. Not all writing is neat and well presented.
- The teaching of mathematics is a strength. Teachers are confident in teaching number, shape, space and measure. Pupils make good progress as a result. One pupil explained with clarity how to calculate the perimeter of an irregular shape. Another pupil confidently and accurately described the relationship between division and multiplication.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) but without an education, health and care plan are well supported. This is because teachers know their learning needs and plan lessons with these in mind.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders and staff successfully create a positive and nurturing ethos where all pupils can succeed. Pupils in key stages 3 and 4 benefit from a strong partnership with a local charity. Through this association, pupils access a range of interesting vocational and

accredited courses. This adds further value to their education, preparing them well for the next stage.

- Adults are positive role models. As pupils arrive in the morning, adults greet them warmly. They make sure that there is a positive start to the day through organised playground games and a breakfast club. Throughout the day, adults' presence and vigilance contribute to pupils' sense of safety and well-being. Pupils know that they can speak to a trusted adult if they have worries or concerns.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in class. They are keen to listen and learn. They respond politely to adults' instructions and directions. They settle to work usually without a fuss and persevere to complete their tasks. They have a good understanding of their own behaviour targets and are aware of situations which unsettle them.
- During playtimes, pupils cooperate well with adults in games of football and table tennis. They share equipment, take turns and enjoy these social times.
- On occasion, pupils' behaviour towards one another is unkind and disrespectful. This is typically during unstructured times or in unfamiliar groups. Adults are not always consistent in their response to pupils' behaviour. Pupils perceive as unfair the way that rewards and sanctions are sometimes given.
- Leaders are assiduous in following up poor attendance and persistent absenteeism. Their efforts are proving successful. Since the last inspection, pupils' attendance has improved and is now above that for similar schools.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- From generally low starting points on entry to the school, all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress. Staff make effective use of assessment systems to identify what pupils need in order to overcome barriers to learning. As a result, pupils' educational, social and emotional needs are well planned for and lead to positive outcomes.
- In key stages 1 and 2, a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy supports pupils' progress in aspects of reading, writing and mathematics that they have missed earlier on in their education. In key stages 3 and 4, an equally strong focus on qualifications and pathways to future employment gives pupils interesting and varied work-related experiences as well as insight into the qualifications they will need to realise their ambitions. As a result, pupils are well prepared for transition to the next stage of their education.
- In reading, pupils make strong progress. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 have regular well-planned lessons in phonics and times for reading books of increasing complexity. Pupils in key stages 3 and 4 read a range of different types of books and have opportunities to practise reading aloud for comprehension and expression. Pupils' progress in writing is not as strong as in reading. Pupils' written work shows steady progress from their starting points. However, not all teachers expect pupils to produce

work that is presented well. Pupils make strong progress in mathematics. They benefit from teachers' expertise, they enjoy mathematics and they work hard to complete tasks they are set.

- Pupils' outcomes are strong and improving because of leaders' determination to provide education of consistently good quality. Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching, giving teachers helpful and constructive feedback. Teachers welcome this as a means to support their own professional development and improve practice. Leaders seek external advice and welcome scrutiny of their work.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 100763 |
| Local authority | Lewisham |
| Inspection number | 10103028 |

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

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| Type of school | Special |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 5 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 85 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Michelle Fenniche |
| Headteacher | Carlie Warner |
| Telephone number | 020 8695 2380 |
| Website | www.newwoodlands.lewisham.sch.uk |
| Email address | c.warner@newwoodlands.lewisham.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 27–28 June 2017 |

Information about this school

- This is a special school for pupils in key stages 1 to 4 whose prime learning need is social, emotional and mental health (SEMH).
- The majority of pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average.
- Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. On most observations, inspectors were accompanied by senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with school leaders and governors to discuss self-evaluation, areas of strength and improvement and safeguarding.
- Inspectors met with staff and took account of the 30 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors met with pupils from all year groups to discuss their views about the school and about how they were supported to keep safe. Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to them about their written work.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of pupils' written work to check on their progress.
- Inspectors also reviewed a range of school documents relating to safeguarding, leadership, governance and school improvement.
- Due to the very small number of responses to the online parental survey, Parent View, inspectors took account of school-based information about parental involvement and engagement.

Inspection team

Jane Moon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Fran Fitzgerald

Ofsted Inspector

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