

Marshalls Park School

Pettits Lane, Romford, Essex RM1 4EH

Inspection dates

15–16 March 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Areas of responsibility are poorly defined for the senior leaders and, consequently, there has been a lack of accountability and improvement since the last inspection.
- Teaching is not good enough in some subject areas and so pupils do not have the opportunity to achieve highly in all areas of their education.
- Assessments and the use of information have lacked rigour and accuracy, at an individual pupil level and in the analysis of groups. As a result, not all pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- The curriculum lacks oversight and planning, both in the examination courses offered and the development of broader knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Leaders have not collected and interrogated information about the progress of disadvantaged pupils to guide their use of additional pupil premium funding. Therefore, spending has been very general and there has not been sufficient analysis of its impact.
- Opportunities for teachers to develop their skills and experience have been limited by a lack of training and reflection.
- The governing body has not held leaders to account sufficiently well. They have not challenged inaccuracies in tracking and predicting pupil outcomes. This has contributed to the poor progress since the last inspection.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher understands the school's weaknesses and has a clear strategy for improvement.
- Changes to the structure of the governing body mean that it is now well placed to support the headteacher with bringing about rapid change.
- The quality of careers information, advice and guidance is good. All pupils move on to sixth form, colleges or training with the support of the school.
- Middle leaders are keen to move the school forward. They have begun to share good practice and introduce changes to tackle poor rates of progress.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful to each other and adults. They are proud to be part of the school. In corridors and at break and lunchtimes they work as an orderly, collegiate community.
- Pupils feel safe at school. Adults listen to their views and take them into account.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that senior leaders are given clear lines of responsibility and understand how they will be held to account
 - establishing the thorough use of information to provide accurate forecasts for examination results
 - tackling long-standing poor performance in some subject areas swiftly, particularly in modern foreign languages and science
 - acting urgently on the recommendations of the September 2015 review of the governing body so that governors hold leaders to account and provide an appropriate level of challenge.
- Achieve consistency in teaching and learning by:
 - building in professional development opportunities which enable the best practice to be shared across the school
 - making sure that teachers use questioning effectively to extend and challenge the learning of all pupils in order to improve their progress
 - ensuring that information and data collected on the progress of pupils is accurate and used for timely interventions with poorly achieving groups of pupils: girls, the most able, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability.
- Review the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of all groups of pupils and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The senior leadership team does not have clear job descriptions or clear lines of accountability. As a result, there has been a failure to move the school forward in key areas since the last inspection, specifically in improving the quality of teaching and learning and use of information.
- When the leaders have evaluated the school's performance, there has been a culture of overgenerous assessment. Therefore, necessary changes have not been made because issues and priorities were not identified accurately.
- External sources of support have not been sought out by the school. As a consequence, the school has functioned in relative isolation without tapping into ideas that might lead to better results for pupils. This is now being remedied by the headteacher and there is an explicit focus on looking outside the school for ideas and development.
- Target setting has lacked ambition and school-generated information has been largely unreliable. This has led to missed opportunities for effective intervention work that would increase rates of progress for underperforming pupils and groups.
- The most-able pupils have not had the opportunity to thrive because there is no leadership in this area to monitor progress and create strategies to ensure development and high attainment.
- The headteacher has only been in post since January 2016. However, he has already made an accurate assessment of the key areas which need to be changed in order to establish 'a culture of excellence and ambition'. The vast majority of staff, governors and parents are positive about the changes taking place already under his leadership.
- The curriculum does not serve all pupils well. There have been poor decisions: for example, about which science GCSE course pupils should follow. Pupils lack a good understanding about the wider issues that affect the society in which they live.
- The school has a good programme of extra-curricular activities that support pupils' development including sports fixtures, competitions and trips, for example to the Globe Theatre.
- Leaders have not used information sufficiently well to understand which disadvantaged pupils, who should benefit from the government's additional funding known as the pupil premium, are making less progress. As a result, interventions are not as effective as they should be.
- The middle leaders are keen to see the school develop and have begun to make changes already: for example, by using ideas from a weekly department-led staff briefing that focuses on ideas to improve teaching.
- There is evidence of middle leaders working together to develop assessment strategies at key stage 3. This work is being led by mathematics and English leaders. It illustrates the new culture of change and development in the school.
- Subject leaders spoke positively about the sense of direction and purpose the school has now, describing the focused and targeted approach of the new headteacher as 'liberating'.
- There are areas of excellence in the school's curriculum: provision in English is strong and in both performing arts and sports the extra-curricular activities enhance the learning and enjoyment of the pupils.
- Leadership of special educational needs is developing. Planned changes to the tracking of progress, use of interventions and a review of the curriculum are part of the strategy to improve the historic poor performance of pupils who have special educational needs or disability.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have been too quick to accept the school's account of what was happening and hence failed to tackle some key issues such as poor progress in some departments.
 - There have been significant changes to the make-up of the governing body, its constitution and terms of office since the last inspection. It has conducted a review of expertise and new governors have been recruited to fill gaps in the collective skill set. This group, now, has a strong understanding about its role in supporting and challenging the school in a strategic way.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff have received child protection training and the systems for recruiting and recording staff who work at the school are appropriate.

- The school has developed a robust policy to meet the government's focus on combating radicalisation and extremism and all staff have received training to be aware of the signs of this.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **requires improvement**

- Where teaching is most effective, there is evidence of challenge, pupils' engagement and strong progress. For example, in English, religious studies, and information and communication technology lessons, pupils were able to move forward within the lessons seen because of careful planning and high-quality feedback from teachers.
- Some teachers use effective questioning to develop the pupils' ideas and to challenge them to think further. At its best, there was evidence of teachers not just accepting an easy answer but pushing pupils to say and do more.
- Where teachers demand more, the pupils are able to rise to the challenge and produce high-quality extended writing and use subject-specific vocabulary.
- In subjects such as dance and design technology, where pupils are routinely given greater responsibility for their learning, they flourish.
- There is far too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching and learning. There is no internal system for monitoring the typical standard of what goes on in the classroom or in the pupils' books. There is tremendous variety in what the pupils produce across subject areas and even within departments.
- There is a gifted and talented list which identifies pupils for additional activities. This is particularly strong in drama where the most able are involved in a National Theatre project and can take the subject at AS level in Year 11. However, most lessons do not provide opportunities for the extension of the most-able pupils consistently.
- Provision in modern foreign languages is particularly poor. There was very little evidence of the target language being used and results in this area are consistently low.
- Evidence from books indicates that pupils complete a diet of very similar activities in some lessons. This does not take account of pupils' different learning styles and consequently some groups are less engaged in their learning.
- Assessment systems are evolving, but the pace of work in this area is not rapid enough to enable leaders to track progress and use interventions to help underperforming pupils effectively.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote the personal development and welfare of pupils is good. Pupils feel safe at the school and spoke positively about teachers supporting them, for example by being at the busy road crossing near the school at the end of the day.
- The school council felt that any incidents of bullying are taken very seriously. It was evident in the playgrounds, including a separate Year 7 playground and a quiet area, that the school has planned carefully for the welfare of pupils at break and lunchtime.
- Enrichment days are used effectively to provide education on important issues such as domestic violence.
- The food offered for sale in the pupils' canteen does not support the development of healthy lifestyles.
- Achievement is celebrated at the school and pupils commented on how much they like to receive the praise and achievement postcards from staff.
- Pupils are able to show respect for each other's ideas and can present points and listen to others well during discussions. However, the school's incident log shows that some pupils have failed to show an acceptable level of tolerance and understanding by using discriminatory language. The school has responded appropriately to deal with this in line with its behaviour policy.
- There is more work to be done on preparing pupils for life in multicultural Britain through developing their understanding of issues such as female genital mutilation or the different groups who challenge British values of democracy and tolerance.
- The school works with the local authority to ensure that procedures for taking pupils off roll are appropriate and support good safeguarding.

- There is a good programme for careers information, advice and guidance. It is embedded in the curriculum. Work experience, sessions on careers-related topics involving external companies, involvement in 'Skills London' and college taster days have all contributed to the school having no pupils who are not in education, employment or training.
- The school uses alternative provision for a small number of pupils. These courses offer a range of highly practical activities which could not be delivered in school. Attendance and progress of these pupils is monitored on a weekly basis and the school visits them in their placement. Historically, pupils have responded well to this provision and shown improvement in their attendance and achievement.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are well behaved, polite and respectful to each other and adults in the vast majority of classes and around the school.
- Pupils feel that behaviour has improved and that the new headteacher has brought higher expectations and aspirations.
- Lateness is not a problem at the school and, in spite of a sprawling site, pupils are purposeful in moving around the building and rarely arrive late to lessons.
- The school has achieved greater awareness of the importance of good attendance and the link with attainment. Pupils know that the school is working towards a target of more than 95% for the year. Attendance for the autumn term 2015 exceeded this target.
- The leadership team now evaluates attendance and has made changes to how it tackles the persistent absence of certain pupils.
- The attendance of some groups, for example girls, remains a priority area for the school.
- The number of fixed-term exclusions is reducing over time and is low relative to national figures.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- The school has maintained a steady headline figure for the proportion of pupils achieving five or more good GCSE grades including English and mathematics, and this has been broadly in line with national averages.
- Attainment in some subject areas at GCSE is strong, including English, religious studies, statistics and drama. In other subjects, there has been poor attainment, including humanities, languages and science.
- In the most recent examinations, pupils made expected progress and more than expected progress above national rates in English. Pupils' progress was not as strong in mathematics.
- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils have been below national averages over time and information provided by the school indicates that the gaps between this group and the others have not closed, except at key stage 3.
- In contrast to the general school trend, disadvantaged pupils at the school are performing well in English, and the school has effectively narrowed the gap between these pupils and others.
- Although least-able disadvantaged pupils did well in mathematics, there was a significant gap between the performance of other disadvantaged pupils in this subject.
- The number of pupils achieving in all of the English Baccalaureate subjects (including a humanity, science and language) was significantly below that of other pupils nationally.
- Girls are not achieving highly enough. They perform significantly less well than girls nationally at GCSE.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability achieve very poorly compared with other pupils.
- According to the school's information, current pupils in Years 10 and 11 are largely on track to make at least expected progress, except in languages. However, the school acknowledges that it has work to do on ensuring that data is accurate, for example by moderating work and encouraging staff to become examiners.
- The school's current information for its most-able pupils indicates that they will underperform compared with national figures.

School details

Unique reference number	102345
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	10001993

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	845
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Burr
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Neil Frost
Telephone number	01708 724134
Website	www.marshallspark.havering.sch.uk
Email address	contact@marshallspark.havering.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 October 2013

Information about this school

- Marshalls Park School is a smaller than average 11–16 co-educational comprehensive.
- The proportion of pupils supported with additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is below the national average. This funding is provided for those known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average. The predominant group, over 80%, is White British.
- The proportion of pupils who receive special educational needs support is similar to the national average. However, the proportion of those with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is almost twice the national average.
- Pupils enter Year 7 with attainment that is broadly in line with the national average.
- This is a stable school population.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A small number of pupils are educated by off-site alternative providers: Motorvations, Goldtrowel, Lambourne End and Havering College.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 49 lessons or parts of lessons across all departments, some paired with the headteacher and senior leaders. Books were scrutinised as part of these lesson observations. Inspectors also observed behaviour in the corridors and play spaces at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, the local authority's senior inspector, middle leaders and newly qualified teachers.
- Formal meetings were held with a range of pupil groups: the most able, pupils who have special educational needs or disability, and school prefects. Informal conversations were held with pupils in lessons and around the school.
- A large number of documents were scrutinised including external reviews of the governing body and core subjects, the school's information on current progress, behaviour logs, governing body minutes, attendance information, and policies and procedures including for pupil premium spending, behaviour and safeguarding.
- The single central record and safer recruitment procedures were checked.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the staff survey, Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and parents' text responses.
- There were insufficient responses to the pupil survey for the inspectors to consider.

Inspection team

Victoria Linsley, lead inspector	Seconded Inspector
Helen Matthews	Her Majesty's Inspector
Maureen Okoye	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Black	Ofsted Inspector

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