

# Inspection of Deptford Green School

Edward Street, New Cross, London SE14 6AN

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Inspection dates: 26 and 27 April 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are safe and well cared for at this school. They value the strong professional relationships that they have with their teachers and other adults at the school. Pupils know that staff are there to support and guide them.

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They have worked with staff to help raise pupils' aspirations. The school's 'LORIC' system encourages pupils to develop skills such as initiative-taking and communication. Pupils like taking on leadership roles, including as library leaders and mental health ambassadors. They are motivated to work hard and do their best.

Staff have created a harmonious environment. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils said that disrespectful behaviour is simply not tolerated. They accept each other's differences and get on well with each other. Staff are quick to deal with any incidents of bullying.

Pupils have many opportunities to nurture their talents and interests, especially in the creative arts. They appreciate having the chance to learn a musical instrument in Years 7 to 9. Musical ensembles, including orchestra, jazz band and open-mic, sessions are popular. Many pupils also take part in the various music and drama productions that take place.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and rich curriculum that matches the ambition of the national curriculum. Pupils study a wide range of subjects up to the end of Year 9. Many pupils choose GCSE subjects in Year 10 that are part of the English Baccalaureate. A small number of pupils in Years 7 to 9 do not have the same opportunities to access the full curriculum as their peers. Pupils are withdrawn from lessons, in particular modern foreign languages, to have additional support in reading and writing. Pupils who speak English as an additional language have personalised support to build up their knowledge of the English language.

Leaders promote a love of reading across the school. They give pupils time to read widely, such as in form time and in lessons in the library. Staff work with pupils who need extra help with their reading. They give these pupils extra practice in reading to help them to read fluently and catch up quickly. Staff use their expertise to pinpoint and address weaknesses in pupils' phonics knowledge. Leaders have not managed to prioritise reading without narrowing the curriculum for pupils who are weak readers and need to catch up.

Leaders have given careful thought to the knowledge and skills pupils need in each subject area. Teachers are clear about why and when they teach subject content. They follow well-planned sequences of lessons, so that pupils successfully know more over time. This helps pupils to complete increasingly complex tasks. For example, pupils in Year 9 Spanish used their previous learning of the past tense to

help them understand a detailed Spanish text on the tomato-throwing La Tomatina festival.

Teachers plan regular opportunities to recap and reinforce pupils' learning. This helps pupils to embed essential subject content as they progress through the years. For instance, pupils in history have a secure knowledge of conflict and democracy. They study these concepts in different contexts as they move up through the school. Pupils in Year 11 showed their in-depth understanding of 'Romeo and Juliet'. They described themes that they have come across in other texts, such as patriarchal structure and chivalric code. Teachers use a range of different strategies to check what pupils have remembered and understood. They spot any pupils at risk of falling behind and put measures in place to help them keep up.

Leaders support staff well in developing their teaching and subject knowledge. In some subject areas, leaders have struggled to recruit and retain teaching staff. This has caused some inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is delivered.

Staff receive regular training to help them to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers adapt learning in line with pupils' identified needs. Pupils who attend the on-site resource base are fully involved in school life. Specialist support staff help teachers to ensure that these pupils' individual needs are met.

Pupils like being in this diverse school community. They celebrate events such as LGBTQ+ History Month and Autism Awareness Week. Pupils said that they feel confident to challenge stereotypes or discriminatory views. From Year 7 onwards, pupils benefit from extensive careers guidance and a well-planned careers programme. In lessons, pupils are attentive and settle quickly to their work. Staff manage any incidents of poor behaviour so that pupils' learning is not disrupted.

The school has been through considerable change since its previous inspection. Leaders have the support of staff, pupils, and parents and carers. Staff are proud to work here. While workload is an ongoing challenge, staff said that leaders are considerate and mindful of their well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are experienced and well trained. The safeguarding team is strengthened by the support of non-teaching pastoral staff. Together they are quick to identify and deal with any concerns. Staff understand the need for vigilance. They follow leaders' guidance and report any concerns, no matter how minor they may seem.

Pupils spoke positively about the range of services available at school to help them with their mental health and well-being. Leaders arrange visiting speakers and

workshops to promote pupils' awareness of issues such as sexual harassment and youth crime.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have had difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff in a few subject areas. This has led to pockets of variability in how well the curriculum is delivered, which sometimes affects pupils' learning. Leaders should continue their work to support all staff in implementing the curriculum consistently well.
- A small number of pupils in Years 7 to 9 do not have the same opportunity to study the full curriculum as their peers. For example, some have been withdrawn from modern foreign languages to have additional support in literacy. Leaders should ensure that reading is prioritised for all pupils without narrowing pupils' access to the broad curriculum on offer.

## **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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100740
<b>Local authority</b>	Lewisham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10202859
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	872
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sid Hughes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Thurston
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.deptfordgreen.lewisham.sch.uk">www.deptfordgreen.lewisham.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 and 10 October 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in September 2021.
- Leaders make use of two registered alternative providers and one unregistered alternative provider on a part-time or temporary basis.
- The school has a specialist resource unit on site for pupils diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. This is funded by the local authority and currently has 15 pupils on roll. Pupils who attend this provision also attend mainstream lessons.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team, the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, the leader with responsibility for safeguarding, the special educational needs coordinator and the specialist resource unit manager. The lead inspector also spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, modern foreign languages and music. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read and spoke to pupils about reading.
- Inspectors talked to pupils and staff about other subject areas and spoke to leaders about the curriculum in physical education, science, geography and design and technology. Inspectors visited lessons in a range of subjects, including drama, art and ethics.
- Inspectors considered the effectiveness of safeguarding through discussion with leaders, other staff and pupils. Inspectors reviewed records relating to safeguarding, including pre-employment recruitment checks and records of work with external agencies.
- Inspectors observed behaviour in lessons and at lunchtime. Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils from all year groups and had informal discussions with pupils around the school. Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about their views of pupils' behaviour, and about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey of parents' views, Parent View, and responses to the online staff and pupil surveys.

## Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Bob Hamlyn	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Hook	Ofsted Inspector
Umbar Sharif	Ofsted Inspector

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