

Inspection of a good school: Droylsden Academy

Manor Road, Droylsden, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M43 6QD

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 September 2022

Outcome

Droylsden Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils said that they are proud to attend Droylsden Academy. They described how they model the school's values of politeness and hard work. Pupils are happy and accepting of each other's differences. They explained that the school is a place where they can be themselves.

Pupils said that they feel safe in school. They told inspectors that there is always someone that they can talk to if they have a problem. Pupils said that bullying is rare and that leaders deal with it quickly if it ever does happen.

Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and academic achievement are high. Most pupils rise to these high standards. Pupils behave well and work hard. Most achieve well. Pupils go on to appropriate further education, employment, or training when they leave school. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils are expected to develop their character and confidence. They enjoy becoming anti-bullying ambassadors or school prefects. Pupils are encouraged to engage with the local community through the school's leadership programme. Year 7 pupils choose additional classes, from sports, performing arts or outdoor education. All pupils benefit from an extensive range of extra-curricular clubs, for example the Combined Cadet Force and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

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

Leaders and governors have carefully designed the school's curriculum. Overall, they have ensured that it is broad, balanced and ambitious. Leaders and teachers have thought deeply about the knowledge that pupils must learn. They have placed subject content in a logical order. Governors successfully hold leaders to account for how well pupils learn the curriculum.

At key stage 4, pupils choose from a range of appropriate subjects to suit their needs and interests. Added to this, leaders are increasingly successful in encouraging pupils to take the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects.

For most pupils, the curriculum at key stage 3 is at least as broad and ambitious as the national curriculum. However, some adaptations are currently being made to the key stage 3 curriculum for a small group of pupils. This is to provide extra support in literacy and numeracy for those pupils who have fallen behind due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. While this is necessary, this does lead to a short-term reduced breadth in learning for these pupils. Leaders are taking the action required to get these pupils back to the full range of curriculum subjects as quickly as possible.

Leaders successfully prioritise subject leaders' and teachers' continuous training and development. Teachers take sufficient time to engage with professional organisations, as well as with staff in other schools, to explore how pupils learn. They are keen to share information and strategies to develop the quality of education for pupils. Teachers and leaders think deeply about their subject curriculums. Teachers are successful in helping pupils to deepen their understanding of ideas and concepts across the curriculum.

In subject areas, teachers think carefully about how to teach new subject content. This allows pupils to build upon the knowledge that they already know. Typically, teachers identify and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge quickly and with accuracy. They use this information well to adapt the next stages of the delivery of the curriculum. This effective support helps pupils to remember more over time.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have significantly improved the quality of information that teachers receive about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders accurately identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers use effective strategies to adapt learning for pupils with SEND.

Across subjects, and as part of the wider curriculum, leaders have ensured that teachers prioritise the development of pupils' subject-specific vocabulary. They also encourage a love of reading in many pupils. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to read aloud among their peers. This allows most pupils to develop confidence and fluency in their reading skills.

For those pupils who are behind in their reading knowledge, leaders provide some extra help and have plans to develop this further. However, the range and depth of this support is currently underdeveloped. This means that a few pupils do not catch up with their reading as quickly as they should. This prevents these pupils from experiencing all that the school curriculum has to offer. It also hinders their achievement.

An extensive programme of pastoral support and life lessons ensures that pupils learn about healthy relationships and the wider world. For example, they understand the importance of sexual consent and learn about how to keep themselves safe online.

Staff appreciate the consideration leaders give to their workload load and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A strong culture of safeguarding permeates this school. This is created through regular staff training, clear systems for reporting concerns, and positive relationships between adults and pupils. Staff regularly receive appropriate information about pupils who may be at risk of harm.

The leaders responsible for safeguarding are proactive in their approach. There are systems in place to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Leaders work closely with families and external agencies to support pupils. In addition, they also offer a range of first-line support on the school site, such as counselling and mental health support.

Wider personal development programmes provide advice and guidance for all pupils about how to keep themselves safe. Leaders offer enrichment activities to target specific safeguarding risks relevant to the local community. For example, leaders offer swimming lessons to enable pupils to keep safe near water.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not fully developed the range of support that is required to help a minority of pupils to catch up with their reading knowledge. This hinders how well some of these pupils learn. Leaders should continue to widen and develop the range of support that they offer to pupils who are struggling to read. This is so that they can catch up quickly with their peers.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good on 14 and 15 September 2017.

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.

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

Unique reference number	135864
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10240160
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	929
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Leon Dowd
Headteacher	Philip Wilson
Website	http://www.droylsdenacademy.com/
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 September 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Tame River Educational Trust.
- The school makes use of five registered alternative education providers for a small number of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school 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, the chief executive of the multi-academy trust, other senior leaders, subject leaders and a range of school staff. The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the trust board and the local governing body, including the chair of the trust.
- The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative from the local authority.

- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics and history. Inspectors met with subject leaders, visited some lessons, looked at pupils work and spoke with pupils and teachers.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from a range of year groups.
- Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, self-evaluation documents and attendance and behaviour records.
- Inspectors checked on leaders' arrangements for safeguarding, including the recruitment checks made on staff. Inspectors met with leaders, staff, pupils, governors and trustees to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding in school.

Inspection team

Amanda Downing, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kate Bowker

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022