

Inspection of Dorothy Barley Junior Academy

Ivinghoe Road, Dagenham, Essex RM8 2NB

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 March 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a caring school where pupils are taught to include everyone. For example, buddies make sure that everyone has someone to play with at break time. Leaders regularly ask pupils about what could make school a better place for everyone. One pupil, reflecting the views of many, said, 'I feel like I matter in this school. The school makes lots of changes based on what we say to make us more comfortable'.

Leaders have high aspirations for the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have recently made the curriculum more ambitious to help all pupils achieve more highly.

Pupils are happy and well cared for. They know the school's 'golden rules' and enjoy earning points for positive behaviour. They are regularly rewarded with certificates and prizes. Classrooms and corridors are typically calm, orderly places. Pupils concentrate on their work. They get along well together in the playground.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences beyond the classroom, including regular visits to local museums. They regularly help others. For example, pupils contribute to the school's community foodbank fridge.

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

Leaders recognised that previously, some areas of the curriculum were not ambitious enough. They made recent improvements to curriculum thinking in several subjects, including phonics. These changes have not been reflected in pupil outcomes for 2022, but pupils are catching up quickly.

Leaders identify the important knowledge that pupils must know at each stage in the revised curriculum. For example, practising multiplication tables early ensures that pupils build rapid and accurate multiplication skills that they use to solve complex mathematical tasks higher up the school. Teachers prioritise ambitious vocabulary. As a result, pupils talk about their learning using precise terminology. For example, pupils in music in Year 6 compared Mazurkas by Chopin and Delibes in detail by identifying the texture, key, rhythm and tone that each composer uses.

Teachers' secure subject knowledge helps them to break information down into manageable chunks for pupils. Teachers present new information clearly and in different ways to help pupils to understand it. Where the curriculum is more recently introduced, teachers sometimes give pupils work which does not focus carefully on the essential knowledge and content set out in the curriculum. As a result, in some cases, pupils do not learn precisely what leaders intend.

Assessment provides leaders with information about how well pupils learn the curriculum over time. Teachers often check pupils' knowledge and address any gaps. However, this does not happen routinely. As a result, some pupils retain

misconceptions which are not identified and corrected swiftly. Other pupils do not move on to more complex tasks when they are ready. As a result, work does not build precisely on pupils' prior knowledge.

Teachers skilfully adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with SEND, including those accessing the specially resourced provision. Leaders ensure that there is tailored provision for their social and emotional development. Pupils with SEND grow in confidence and learn the curriculum well. They are well supported in all areas of school life.

Leaders' focus on reading is helping to encourage pupils to read regularly and to develop a love of reading. Daily, all pupils are taught reading strategies for their particular stage. Well-trained staff support weaker readers to catch up quickly where needed. Pupils enjoy reading and their regular visits to the school library.

Pupils' personal development is at the heart of the school's work. Leaders have thought carefully about how to best encourage pupils to be healthy, responsible and keep themselves safe from harm. Pupils are taught about mental health and well-being. Older pupils are well prepared for their next steps.

There are well-established routines which help pupils to behave well. Staff deal fairly with any occasions of poor behaviour. Leaders check the attendance rates of pupils and have put in place new systems to improve pupils' attendance where needed, which are beginning to make a difference.

The trust provides staff with training and support. Staff said they enjoy working at the school. They typically said that leaders take their workload into account, and many appreciate leaders' efforts to prioritise their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils' welfare is taken seriously by all staff. All staff are well trained to identify the signs that may suggest a pupil is at risk of harm. They promptly report their concerns in line with the school's established procedures.

Leaders provide strong pastoral support for pupils, including counselling and emotional-literacy sessions. Pupils can express their concerns using worry boxes. Pupils typically said that they would speak to their teachers if any issues were to arise, and that staff would take them seriously.

Procedures for pre-employment checks are extremely robust. Pupils are routinely taught to stay safe online, within relationships and in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some cases, activities chosen do not focus sharply enough on the knowledge set out in the curriculum. As a result, in some areas of the curriculum, pupils' knowledge develops less sharply and securely than leaders intend. Leaders should check carefully that work given to pupils is routinely well matched to the aims of the curriculum.
- In some cases, teachers do not check how well pupils have understood new content during their lessons. As a result, some pupils have misconceptions which are not identified and corrected swiftly. In other cases, pupils do not move on to more complex tasks when they are ready to, and spend time completing work that does not build on their prior knowledge. Leaders should ensure that all teachers make effective use of formative assessment to decide when to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of their pupils.
- Some pupils have had high levels of absence from school. As a result, they have not had the full benefit of the education offered by the school. Leaders should follow through with planned new procedures to address pupils' absence, to further improve attendance rates of pupils who are frequently absent from school.

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	140687
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10241916
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	342
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gavin Robert
Headteacher	Cathy Leicester
Website	www.dorothybarleyjunioracademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 and 11 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the REAch2 Academy Trust.
- The school makes use of the following registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils: The Campbell Primary Centre at James Campbell Primary School and The Acorns at Ripple Primary School.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, design technology and history. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, looked at pupils' work, spoke to teachers, and spoke to some pupils about their learning.

- Inspectors also looked at curriculum information in other subjects.
- Inspectors reviewed the school’s policies and procedures for safeguarding and supporting pupils’ health and safety, as well as their welfare and well-being. This included looking at case studies and reviewing the school’s record of pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors also met with leaders with responsibility for SEND, behaviour and pupils’ personal development.
- Inspectors met with members of the local governing body and a trust representative.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted’s online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Rebecca Iles-Smith, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Ellie Whilby	Ofsted Inspector
Lando Du Plooy	Ofsted Inspector

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