

# David Livingstone Academy

Northwood Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR7 8HX

## Inspection dates

1–2 March 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not ensured that the good standard of education has been sustained since the previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent. As a result of significant staff and leadership changes since the last inspection, the progress that pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics across the school is variable.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are given the same work as other pupils and this limits the progress that they make. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities struggle when they are given the same work as other pupils.
- Leaders have not been rigorous in monitoring the records of checks made on staff who are recruited to work at the school.
- Leaders' actions to improve systems to check on pupils' progress have not yet had an impact on the accuracy of the information collected.
- While some parents are happy with the work of the school, some have concerns about the leadership of the school and the progress that their children make.
- The early years provision is improving, but areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection have not been addressed effectively.
- In 2016, the Year 6 pupils who left the school achieved standards that were below those seen nationally in reading and mathematics. As a result, they were not prepared well for secondary education.
- In the recent past, leaders have not been rigorous in their monitoring of the provision for pupils with medical conditions, dietary needs or special educational needs.

### The school has the following strengths

- The broad and balanced curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- The chair of the strategic governing body has an incisive understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- Pupils behave well. They are friendly, polite, confident young British citizens because their personal development is promoted effectively.
- Stronger teaching in Years 5 and 6 is leading to better progress for all pupils in these year groups.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that systems for the checking of pupils' attainment and progress are rigorous and accurate, and that they support teachers in planning tasks which meet the needs of learners and therefore improve outcomes across the school
  - ensuring that records relating to the recruitment of staff are thorough and monitored effectively by senior leaders
  - ensuring that provision for pupils who have medical conditions, dietary needs or special educational needs is organised swiftly following diagnosis and, subsequently, monitored closely by senior leaders
  - improving communication with the significant number of parents who are dissatisfied with the school's work.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - providing work for the most able pupils which challenges them and enables them to achieve as well as they should, particularly in mathematics
  - providing work for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities which takes account of their starting points and helps them to make good progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- School leaders have not sustained the good quality of education since the previous inspection. There have been significant changes to leadership, to the teaching staff and to the support staff since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is variable and is not ensuring that pupils across the school are making consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher has been in post since April 2016 and the deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2016. Three middle leaders, one of whom works at the school for two days a week, support them. Leaders' evaluation of the school's work is overgenerous. However, supported by the trust, leaders have put plans for improvement in place. Early impact of actions taken as a result of these plans can be seen in classrooms. For example, all teachers are working hard to ensure that effective speaking and listening underpins learning. They have introduced a 'buddy system', which helps pupils to work together and support each other's learning.
- Arrangements for monitoring and managing the performance of teachers are effective. However, the recent large turnover of staff has meant that it is still too early to see the impact of actions taken by leaders on teaching, over time. Teaching is inconsistent in quality and leads to variability in the progress that pupils make.
- Leaders have implemented a system for keeping a check on the progress pupils are making. They support teachers in making judgements about pupils' progress based on tests that they administer, alongside judgements made in relation to the work in pupils' books. Inspection activities showed that the system is unwieldy and the information produced is not reliable. Governors recognise that this is the case. They are asking the right questions to ensure that the system is reviewed so that it gives a more realistic picture of what pupils know and can do.
- During the inspection, some records regarding the safe recruitment of staff were incomplete. While all necessary checks have been undertaken by leaders, there were too many gaps in the recording of these checks. Leaders took swift action to fill these gaps and recognise that they must continue to monitor these records regularly and rigorously.
- Parents have mixed views of the school. While many parents are positive, the majority of parents who completed the online questionnaire would not recommend the school to another parent. Parents who spoke to inspectors during the inspection were unhappy with communication systems and with the leadership of the school. Some parents whose children have specific academic, medical or dietary needs state that actions taken to help their children are too slow and that they need to 'fight' to get the help that they need. Leaders, governors and trustees recognise that actions taken to improve relationships with parents are yet to have the necessary impact on parents' views. The school's own questionnaire collated by leaders during the parents' evening, which took place during the inspection, presented a more positive view.
- There has been a recent re-structuring of staff which has had an impact on the way the funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been allocated. Some teaching assistants have been made redundant and, as a result of this,

a number of interventions that were previously on offer to support pupils, have now ceased. Some pupils receive excellent support in lessons. Some pupils occasionally struggle because they do not receive the support they need. A new leader has been appointed to manage this aspect of the school's work.

- Leaders and governors monitor the impact of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively. Disadvantaged pupils who are currently in the school make similar progress to their classmates. Where teaching is at its strongest, in Years 5 and 6, they make better progress than where teaching is weaker in the other year groups.
- The mathematics and literacy subject leaders are accurate in their evaluation of the pupils' work seen in books and recognise the variability in progress, which exists across the school.
- Teachers who are new to the profession say that they are well supported by leaders and by the academy trust to improve their skills. They are familiar with school policies and are quick to pick up on any issues regarding safeguarding, in line with school policy.
- The broad and interesting curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils enjoy growing plants and crops in the garden and taking home the produce that they grow. Displays around the school show how the British values of tolerance and respect are promoted and pupils benefit from their involvement in the Pupil Parliament.
- The sports premium is used to train teachers and to employ specialist sports teachers. Pupils also benefit from after-school sports clubs, which gives them access to a wider range of sports.

### **Governance of the school**

- The strategic local governing body is led by a highly skilled chair who has an incisive knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have supported the work of the new leadership team and recognise the challenges that they face. However, they are committed to holding leaders to account and they know the right questions to ask. For example, they have asked leaders for further clarity on how the assessment system works and how accurate it is. They hold leaders to account for spending to make sure that it is having an impact on pupils' progress.
- Members of the board of the multi-academy trust offer significant support to the leaders of the school. However, this support has not led to the school maintaining the good quality of education seen at the last inspection, over time. The school maintains good relationships with the local authority and benefits from termly advisory visits.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- During the inspection, leaders made sure that any gaps in the records relating to checks on the suitability of staff were filled.

- Teachers and leaders respond swiftly to the first sign of any concerns about the safety or well-being of pupils. The deputy headteacher, who is the senior designated lead for safeguarding, has a thorough knowledge of the vulnerable pupils within the school. He strives to ensure that systems and records regarding safeguarding are thorough, and he is reflective in seeking ways to improve them further.
- Pupils feel safe at school and are kept safe. However, some parents show little confidence in the school's work to keep children safe and feel well cared for.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- There have been significant staff changes since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good.
- Teachers set tasks at the same level of difficulty (generally at age-related expectations) for all pupils, regardless of their different starting points. However, this often means that the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are not sufficiently challenged to achieve what they are capable of. The lower attaining pupils often struggle to understand the task set, without support. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are sometimes supported well by adults to access the task, but occasionally struggle on their own and make very little progress. In a mathematics lesson, the most able pupils completed tasks easily and quickly and made little progress because they already knew and understood the mathematical concepts involved. The lower attaining pupils who were working on the same task did not understand the task or what the 'pictogram' they were working on was. As a result, progress was too slow across the board.
- Books show variability in the progress pupils make across the school. This is reflected in lessons. Where teaching is strongest in Years 5 and 6, pupils make more rapid progress. Pupils' work in books indicate that disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils and this relates to the quality of teaching they receive. Boys and girls are making similar progress across the school. Occasionally, boys show a lack of confidence or enthusiasm for learning.
- Books show that progress in writing in some year groups is much stronger than in mathematics. However, tasks set do not sufficiently stretch the most able pupils or support the least able. In some classes, there has been a notable decline in the amount of extended writing completed by pupils this term.
- Leaders have prioritised the development of reading across the school. Inspectors listened to pupils reading during lessons and heard several pupils read individually. None of the pupils who read with inspectors had their home-school reading records with them in school. All the pupils had selected their own books to read, some of which did not challenge them. Most pupils read with confidence, but some pupils show a lack of understanding of the skills needed to help them when they come into difficulty with a word. There is over-reliance on guessing unknown words or simply leaving them out. Pupils do not consistently apply their phonics skills to help them.
- Parents and pupils told inspectors that the quality of homework set is inconsistent. Leaders have introduced new initiatives such as project work to address this issue, but it is too early to judge the impact of this on pupils' progress.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are proud of their school, and the majority of them are enthusiastic learners. Pupils take on the role of 'ambassadors' in each class and are keen to talk about their school and their learning. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to promote personal development. For example, pupils sang 'Lean on Me' beautifully in assembly, but there was no discussion about the theme of the song afterwards.
- Pupils enjoy learning about their community, and visit a local care home. They show empathy and friendship. As one pupil put it, 'we all look out for each other'.
- Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in school and online. Year 6 pupils have been taught how to get themselves safely to their secondary schools.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. There is very little low level disruption in lessons. When this does occur, it is because teaching does not meet the needs of learners effectively.
- The playground is a busy but safe place. Routines are well established, and pupils respond well to adults. Staff responded swiftly to concerns about some of the sharp edges on the equipment being used during playtime.
- Incidents of poor behaviour have greatly reduced since the start of the year. Pupils say that fighting is now rare and is dealt with effectively by adults. Pupils confidently express their understanding of different types of bullying and know who they can turn to for help at school.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. They welcome visitors with comments such as, 'I hope you enjoy your time in our school.'
- Pupils' attendance at the end of 2016 was in line with the national average. There has been a slight decline in attendance so far this year, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have put actions in place to address this.

## Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The progress of pupils from different starting points is too variable and requires improvement. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils in mathematics and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders and inspectors agree that the work seen in books shows varying rates of progress between classes. This is as a result of the variability in the quality of teaching.
- In 2016, disadvantaged pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was well below that seen nationally for all pupils. Disadvantaged pupils who were middle attainers at the end of key stage 1, attained standards that were in the bottom ten per

cent of all pupils nationally. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils who are currently in the school are improving, particularly in Year 6 where teaching is strongest. Leaders have ensured that smaller teaching groups are helping the current pupils to make adequate progress, or better. As a result, leaders are confident that achievement at the end of Year 6 in 2017 is set to improve.

- Outcomes at the end of the early years have been above the national average for the past three years.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2016 was above the national average and has been for the past three years.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading and mathematics in key stage 1 was broadly average in 2016 and slightly above average in writing. A higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard than other pupils nationally.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- Leaders have not addressed the areas for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection effectively. The learning environment prioritises the development of early literacy skills well, but does not ensure that other areas of learning, such as mathematics, are reflected as well.
- Children’s writing books show some good progress in early writing skills. Children are able to apply their early phonics skills well, and make good progress within this area of learning.
- Teachers use an online system for tracking progress in all areas of learning. Learning in mathematics is captured using photographs. However, children do not see their work in mathematics reflected on the displays in the classroom or in books in the same way as they do for writing. Writing and artwork are celebrated through displays in the classroom, but early number work is not.
- Children can refer to their earlier successes in writing to help them with their next steps. However, they have no record of their developing skills in mathematics to help them with their next steps. The outdoor learning environment offers limited opportunities for pupils to apply their early writing and number skills.
- Children benefit from warm, supportive relationships with adults in the Reception class. They feel safe and are kept safe.
- Occasionally, teaching does not focus sharply on what children are learning. As a result, children become confused and unfocused on learning, resulting in some low-level disruptive behaviour.
- Almost half of the children in the current reception class started school with knowledge and skills, which are below those typically seen for their age range. Most of these pupils have made progress in the different areas of learning, so far this year. The most able children who started school with skills which are at or above those typically seen for their age have not made rapid progress from their starting points, according to the school’s own assessment information.

- As the early years provision consists of only one class, there is no separate early years leader. Funding for disadvantaged children has ensured that they make similar progress to other children in their class.
- Most parents speak highly of the Reception staff and of the provision.

## School details

Unique reference number	137195
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10023676

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Powell
Headteacher	Nadine Bernard
Telephone number	020 8653 4240
Website	<a href="http://www.davidlivingstone.croydon.sch.uk">www.davidlivingstone.croydon.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@davidlivingstone.croydon.sch.uk">head@davidlivingstone.croydon.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	23–24 April 2012

## Information about this school

- David Livingstone is a smaller-than-average sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is above average.
- The majority of pupils come from a Black African, Black Caribbean or White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average.
- Children in the early years are taught in one full-time Reception class.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes at least twice. Observations were undertaken with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors met with members of the governing body, representatives of the academy trust and two representatives of the local authority.
- Meetings were held with pupils to discuss their learning and their views on the school. Pupils took inspectors on a curriculum tour of the school.
- Leaders met with inspectors to discuss their roles and the impact of their work.
- The subject leaders for mathematics and for English carried out a book scrutiny with inspectors to identify the progress pupils are making. Books from all year groups were scrutinised.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to pupils in the lunch hall, in lessons, in the playground and as they moved around the building.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documents, including information on pupils' progress across the school, improvement plans and checks on the quality of teaching. They also examined school records relating to safety, behaviour, attendance and to information kept about pupils with medical conditions or dietary needs.
- Inspectors took account of the 27 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and of information gathered from discussions with parents during the inspection. They also looked at parents' views gathered by leaders during parents evening.

## Inspection team

Ruth Dollner, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jacques Szemalikowski

Ofsted Inspector

Karen Jaeggi

Ofsted Inspector

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