

Davidson Primary School

Dartnell Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 6JA

Inspection dates	20 October 2015
Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Teaching does not enable pupils to achieve well enough. As a result, all groups of pupils make inadequate progress across the school. Attainment is below average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of both key stages.
- Leaders do not have a realistic picture about individual teachers' strengths and weaknesses. They do not use all the information available to ensure accurate assessment of the quality of teaching. Teachers are not held to account fully for pupils' achievement.
- Leaders for key subjects do not check and evaluate their areas of responsibility well enough. They lack the skills and experience to make sure that the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are good enough.
- Children in the early years do not have a good enough start to their education. Their literacy and mathematical skills are weak. They are not prepared well enough for Key Stage 1.
- Teachers do not expect enough of their pupils; they set work that does not challenge them. They do not use assessments well enough to pitch work precisely, so that all groups of learners are challenged to make good progress.
- The quality of feedback to pupils on how to improve their work remains inconsistent.
- Leaders at all levels do not set ambitious targets to secure rapid progress. In both key stages, they do not use national figures to make sure that disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as all other pupils nationally. Leaders do not use information about pupils' achievement sharply enough to make sure that the correct priorities are identified.
- Governors know that leaders are not providing a good education for pupils. However, their understanding of the school's performance is not accurate. As a result, the school has declined rapidly over the last two years. Underachievement is identified, but the difference that additional support makes is not checked rigorously enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are kept safe. Staff keep a close watch over pupils and they care for them. Relationships are positive. Pupils respect each other and adults. They are polite and cooperative in their work and play.
- Leaders have created an open and honest culture. All staff and governors are eager and willing to take on advice and support to help the school to improve.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that all teaching is good or better, so that pupils make rapid progress and attainment levels rise quickly, in all key stages, in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - using assessments more effectively to plan work which is pitched at the right level of difficulty, that builds on prior learning and allows opportunities for pupils to extend or deepen their learning
 - providing greater clarity as to what steps pupils need to take in order to achieve well in lessons
 - using these steps to provide useful feedback to pupils on what they have done well and what they need to do next in their learning
 - teaching phonics (letters and the sounds they make) skills, spelling, punctuation and grammar, and key mathematical concepts systematically
 - providing more real-life problem-solving activities both in mathematics and in other subjects
 - establishing consistently high expectations for pupils in relation to the presentation of their work.
- Improve the early years provision so that all children make good or better progress, and that most achieve at least a good level of development, especially in literacy and numeracy by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan ambitious activities which take into account children's current skills, knowledge and understanding
 - better use is made of the learning environment, inside and outside the classroom, so that children can practise and build on key skills through purposeful play and by direct teaching
 - adults provide effective role models for learning and give extra help at key points to develop and build on children's learning, including their language and communication skills.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including in the early years, by:
 - focusing relentlessly on evaluating and improving the quality of teaching, through detailed and thorough examination of all available evidence, including progress information for different groups of pupils, and comparing this to national standards
 - providing all staff with tailored support and training to improve their practice and subject knowledge
 - setting ambitious and measurable targets for school improvement and the performance management of staff based on the progress made by different groups of learners
 - identifying regular measures to evaluate the progress pupils are making, to check whether actions are having a positive impact on standards
 - ensuring that additional funding and intervention work are focused on meeting pupils' particular learning needs, and the impact of this is monitored and evaluated carefully
 - providing governors with a clear and accurate overview of the progress different groups of pupils make, and how this compares to national expectations, so that they hold leaders firmly to account for their work
 - continuing to tackle poor attendance and persistent absenteeism strongly.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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 is inadequate

- Leaders' actions lack a sense of urgency to make sure that all pupils achieve their full potential. Aspirations for pupils and staff are not high enough. As a result, attainment declined at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2015, and remains below average at the end of Key Stage 2. All key groups of learners make inadequate progress across the school. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils has widened.
- Leaders have not secured improvements in the quality of teaching rapidly enough. Checks on the quality of teaching are not rigorous enough and leaders have an over-optimistic view of the quality of teaching. There is a lack of sharp analysis of the quality of teaching. Leaders acknowledge that this is weakness. Furthermore, the progress made by different groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, is not routinely checked. This means self-evaluation is weak.
- Leaders do not evaluate the impact of their work systematically. For example, leaders do not have a secure understanding of the effectiveness of extra support sessions and activities that are put in place to boost pupils' achievement. Despite regular pupil progress meetings, where underachieving pupils are identified, leaders do not do regular checks of whether these strategies are working well. These strategies are largely unsuccessful and pupils continue to underachieve significantly.
- Pupil premium funding is not being used effectively. Leaders are not able to show precisely what proportion of the funding is allocated to specific strategies. As a result, leaders, including the governing body, do not know how the funding is spent or what difference it is making. Governors are not aware that the gaps have widened at the end of both key stages and that it remains too wide in the early years.
- Planning at all levels lacks measurable targets or milestones to check the rate of improvement linked to the progress made by different groups of pupils. This means that teachers and both senior and middle leaders are not being held to account for the quality of teaching and pupil achievement.
- Leaders have created a culture of openness and transparency. Staff work well as a team. All are keen to improve their practice. Teachers feel well supported through a range of professional development strategies. These include observing good or better teaching. However, they do not receive tailored support and training matched to their areas of need. Equally, common weaknesses such as the quality of feedback remain because leaders have not made sure that all teachers follow the marking policy well enough.
- Although there is now a better match between teachers' performance and pay, the appraisal cycle is not robust enough. Despite some improvements in the quality of teaching, particularly in upper Key Stage 2, teachers are not held to account for the progress their pupils make. This is holding back rapid improvement in pupils' achievement.
- Middle leaders are beginning to oversee their areas of responsibility. They are well supported by the deputy headteacher. However, they have not yet made a lasting impact on improving the quality of teaching and securing better rates of progress for their areas of responsibility. They need further support on how to plan for improvement, in order to set challenging targets for different groups of pupils and to monitor performance more rigorously.
- The curriculum is being redesigned to incorporate the new National Curriculum. It offers a wide range of cross-curricular topics which usually engage pupils well in their learning. The school offers many extra-curricular activities, including sporting opportunities. It plays an important role in developing pupils' positive attitudes to school. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. The school nurtures respect and tolerance and prepares pupils for life in modern Britain well.
- The sports funding is not used well enough to secure greater access to sport for all pupils. There is a specialist coach for archery and some new equipment has been purchased. Some of the funding has been used to finance a lunchtime club specifically for disadvantaged pupils. Staff have received training to increase their skills in teaching physical education. However, the school does not analyse or evaluate the impact of the funding.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governance of the school has been ineffective since the last inspection. Governors have not made sure that leaders secure effective improvements. The new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body are strong in their determination to improve the performance of the school. They are seeking to secure a firm foundation on which to build a path of improvement via sponsorship with a local multi-academy trust. They are currently working with the local authority to achieve this goal.

- Previously, the local authority has brokered support from a good school to reinforce and strengthen leadership. This has had limited impact.
- Governors have also benefited from training and support from the local authority. However, they do not have a clear picture about the progress different groups make, including disadvantaged pupils and how this compares to the national norms. They rely too much on the information they receive from the headteacher. They do not know about the impact of the pupil premium. As a result, they are not able to hold senior leaders to account for their work.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective. All staff have had the required level of training, including the named lead with responsibility for overseeing safeguarding, deputies and several governors. The named lead has undertaken Prevent training, and all staff have had awareness-raising on tackling radicalisation and extremism. The school understands its duty to report any cases of suspected female genital mutilation. Discussions with staff confirm that they all share a collective responsibility to safeguard pupils and there are clear procedures to report concerns which are fully understood by everyone.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- Some teachers do not plan activities that build on what pupils know and can do. In many lessons, all ability groups complete the same work. Some pupils find this work too hard and more-able pupils find the work too easy.
- Work in mathematics is too easy for more-able pupils, who usually get all the answers right. Their learning is not moved on at a fast enough pace because they are not given additional challenging work. There are too few opportunities for pupils to solve problems and deepen their understanding in mathematics or across the curriculum.
- Some teaching assistants are skilled at providing good support for those pupils who need to catch up in lessons, including disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language. However, extra help given outside the classroom is not consistently good enough to help all of these groups of pupils to achieve their best.
- Leaders have recognised that pupils need more opportunities to develop and improve their writing skills. Pupils are beginning to write at length in literacy lessons and in other subjects. However, this way of working is still very new and there remain many differences across the school in the way that teachers do this. Basic grammar and punctuation skills are not systematically taught well enough. Furthermore, in some classes, teachers do not use pupils' mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar skills as opportunities to reinforce these skills.
- Marking in pupils' books is inconsistent and not all teachers follow the school policy effectively. Some teachers are more skilled than others at using feedback to support pupils' learning. In too many classes, marking and other feedback does little to increase pupils' progress over time.
- Teaching is much stronger in Years 5 and 6. These teachers have good subject knowledge and use pupil progress information accurately to plan work effectively, so that pupils make better progress. However, as this is not consistent across all year groups, too many pupils do not catch up and achieve highly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Observations in lessons confirm that pupils, particularly younger pupils, are not fully aware of how to be successful learners. When teaching is strong, pupils are informed clearly about what they need to do to achieve well. Clear steps to success and guidance provide the framework for them to think deeply about their own learning and progress. However, this is not a typical feature across the school. Pupils often lack confidence about their ability to learn effectively. This slows their progress.
- Pupils talk very positively about their school. They appreciate the strong relationships they make with adults and each other. This provides them with a firm foundation for their personal growth and development. They know that adults will keep them safe, and pupils know how to stay safe. There are few incidents of bullying or discriminatory behaviour. This is because differences, including cultural and religious backgrounds, are valued. The school is a harmonious place to work and play.
- Topics explore the importance of physical well-being. Pupils know how to live a healthy lifestyle, to take

regular exercise and to eat healthily.

- The inclusion team provide pastoral support for both pupils and families. There are 'drop-in' sessions for those pupils who find breaktimes too stressful and nurture groups for those pupils moving on to secondary school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Some pupils lose interest in lessons when teachers' expectations are not high enough and work is either too easy or too hard. They do not concentrate as well as they might and their progress slows.
- Not all teachers expect pupils to present their work neatly or to develop good handwriting. Despite new workbooks with plastic covers in an attempt to raise expectations for presentation, some pupils' books are scruffy and untidy.
- Attendance remains below average despite the school's efforts to improve it.
- Pupils' conduct is good. Children in Reception are able to take turns and work cooperatively together. Pupils are polite and courteous. Older pupils enjoy additional responsibilities and are proud to be members of the 'pupil leadership' group.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 is below average. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment is well below average in all three subjects. Although there was a slight improvement in the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check in 2015, the gap remains too wide compared to the national average. Only one in two disadvantaged pupils achieved this level.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment remains below average in the core subjects. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and all pupils is too wide, with this group of learners being at least a year behind national expectations.
- At the end of both key stages, very few pupils achieve the higher levels in English and mathematics. Over time, skills, knowledge and understanding are not taught progressively in both subjects.
- Pupils do not have enough time and are not given a variety of activities to practise and develop fluency in basic mathematical skills. This hampers their ability to develop a good understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Similarly, in literacy and specifically in the teaching of phonics, pupils were asked to blend initial sounds of letters to read simple words. Some pupils found this difficult because they did not know all the initial sounds the letters make.
- From different starting points, all groups of pupils make slow progress, particularly in writing and mathematics. There is no significant difference between most key groups. Those who find learning difficult, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and the most able make inadequate progress in these two subjects. Disadvantaged pupils make the least progress of all.
- Although the school's information indicates that progress rates across the school are better than the headline figures, work in pupils' books confirms much slower progress. There are some green shoots in the progress pupils make in their reading, as a result of the school's recent focus on developing reading skills. Some pupils use their decoding skills confidently to read unfamiliar words. They have good comprehension skills, although some pupils lack fluency and confidence in their reading. Better reading skills are not securely embedded in all year groups.

Early years provision

is inadequate

- Children enter Reception with skills levels which vary significantly. Sometimes these are well below those typical for their age. This is particularly in language and communication, especially for those children who speak English as an additional language. However, there are a small number of children who are more able and not sufficiently challenged.
- Trends over time confirm low attainment. In 2015, too few children, particularly disadvantaged

children, achieved a good level of development by the time they left the reception classes. More-able children are not stretched enough. No children exceeded the national averages in literacy and mathematics. Just under one in two children enters Year 1 without the necessary skills and knowledge they need. This reduces to one in five for disadvantaged children. These significant gaps have not been addressed with enough urgency or success.

- Leaders do not have a secure overview of strengths and weaknesses, because checks on teaching are not linked well enough to rates of progress made by the children. There is too little regard of how well children achieve compared to the national figures at the end of Reception. As a result, children's targets are unambitious and improvement planning does not focus on the key priorities precisely enough. Gaps between disadvantaged children and other children remain too wide. The gap between the school's performance and the national averages is not closing quickly enough.
- Although children's progress is assessed regularly, these assessments are not used effectively to make sure activities provide children with the right experiences to build on what they already know and can do. Adults do not plan well enough to make sure that all activities have purpose and challenge. Children play imaginatively and cooperatively with toy animals. However, they are not encouraged to sort these animals into sets or to count them, in order to develop their early mathematical skills. This lack of structure is repeated when adults do not step in to support in children's play, to develop and extend their learning and vocabulary.
- The indoor and outdoor classrooms are spacious, but they do not promote children's learning well enough. Children are not encouraged to write for a purpose on their own in role-play situations. Reading areas are dull and uninspiring. Displays serve little purpose and do not enable children to learn as they play. There are also few opportunities to inspire children to investigate the world around them, to develop their powers of observation and to extend their language skills. The curriculum is too narrow and does not promote children's knowledge, understanding and skills well enough.
- Children are well cared for. Adults are nurturing and sensitive to children's emotional and social needs. They keep children safe. Children are cooperative and confident to work with each other and on their own. They are naturally curious and keen to find out more. When activities are interesting, they engage well in their learning and are able to keep going and hold their concentration. Children make better progress in their personal development than in most other areas of learning.
- Parents appreciate how the school promotes the welfare of their child. They know that their children are happy and enjoy coming to school. Nonetheless, children's attendance is low.

School details

Unique reference number	134449
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10005499

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	460
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrea Chamberlain
Headteacher	Ann Cooksley
Telephone number	020 8654 1460
Website	www.davidsonprimary.croydon.sch.uk
Email address	office@davidsonprimary.croydon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	October 2012

Information about this school

- Davidson Primary School is a larger than average primary school.
- Pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest being from a White British, Black African and Caribbean heritage. Of these, almost half speak English as an additional language. This is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average.
- Just over one in three pupils receives support through pupil premium funding. This is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding given to schools for disadvantaged pupils who qualify for free school meals or for children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Reception classes.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There have been significant changes to staffing since the previous inspection. This includes the headteacher, appointed in September 2013, and a deputy appointed in September 2015, who had previously been seconded on a part-time basis from a good school. There is a new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body.
- The school has recently been in discussions with the Department of Education with a view to becoming part of a multi-academy trust.
- The school was issued with a warning notice from the local authority, with concerns relating to low attainment and in the quality of leadership and management.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of learning activities across both key stages, in the early years and in a range of subjects. These included one longer visit to a series of lessons and 15 shorter visits to lessons. Some of the observations were jointly undertaken with senior leaders. Pupils' books from different year groups and subjects were looked at. Two assemblies were also observed.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with several middle leaders and members of the governing body, including the Chair and Vice-Chair. A meeting was also held with two local authority representatives. Inspectors also met with two groups of pupils, listened to several pupils read and spoke to pupils informally throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors considered parents' opinions through the 22 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day and an examination of the school's latest parent survey.
- Inspectors reviewed the nine staff questionnaires returned during the inspection.
- The inspection team studied information about achievement and the assessment of learning. They examined any records relating to behaviour and attendance, and looked at documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's work.
- A review of safeguarding records and procedures was carried out.

Inspection team

Mary Hinds, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Danvir Visvanathan	Ofsted Inspector
Roger Easthope	Ofsted Inspector
Rebekah Iiyambo	Ofsted Inspector
James Robinson	Ofsted Inspector

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