

Gumley House RC Convent School, FCJ

St John's Road, Isleworth TW7 6XF

Inspection dates

16–17 October 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and teachers have high aspirations for their pupils, in line with the school's values. These promote excellent behaviour and respectful relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils and sixth-form students are rightly proud of their school's values and Catholic ethos.
- The headteacher has focused on improving teaching through a whole-school approach to professional development of staff. This, coupled with greater accountability for pupils' progress, is having a clear impact on the quality of provision and outcomes in the school.
- There are strengths in teaching, particularly in key stage 4. Pupils are given effective guidance to help them understand examination assessment criteria while, at the same time, developing their appreciation of the subject.
- Pupils are motivated to learn and enjoy subjects such as art, physical education (PE), Mandarin, French, textiles and English. In these subjects, teachers use assessment information effectively to plan work for pupils at the right level. However, practices in other subjects are inconsistent, so leaders are supporting teachers to improve through training.
- Leaders provide a wide range of high-quality and innovative extra-curricular opportunities.
- Leaders provide good support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Leaders, including governors, check the progress and welfare of disadvantaged pupils.
- Staff look after pupils well. Pupils' personal development is rightly at the heart of the school's work. Safeguarding and the promotion of pupils' well-being are strengths.
- Leaders keep the curriculum under review and monitor teaching closely, making the necessary changes to promote greater consistency.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Leaders are working to rapidly improve this provision. In the past, leaders have not monitored the sixth form well enough. There is too much variation in students' progress in a range of subjects and too few students reach the high grades of which they are capable. Assessment practices are uneven and teachers give insufficient weight to students' starting points in their planning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders should improve the effectiveness of provision in the sixth form, by:
 - continuing to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of sixth-form provision and outcomes
 - improving assessment practices so that they are consistently effective
 - ensuring that teachers make use of information on students' prior learning to plan challenging work that underpins strong progress.
- Leaders should improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, by:
 - continuing to work closely with subject leaders to eradicate inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders are ambitious for their pupils and have been successful in their drive to promote good progress for all, whatever their starting points. As a consequence, middle- and high-attaining pupils are now making substantial progress, as well as lower-attaining pupils. Pupils relish this challenging environment and are aiming high. A pupil stated, 'It's really good now in Year 11 because we now know exactly what we need to do to reach the higher marks.' Pupils are making equally strong progress in key stage 3 and key stage 4.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching well and provide appropriate training to help staff improve their teaching. This includes both in-house training and productive links with external partners with specific expertise. This means that training is tailored to staff needs and the school's strategic priorities.
- The role of middle leaders has been consolidated; even those new to the role are confident about the school's priorities and their responsibilities as leaders. Staff responses to the Ofsted questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive. Staff speak enthusiastically about their school and the positive impact of changes the headteacher has made.
- The curriculum is shaped around the pupils' current and future needs as British citizens, developed within a strong Catholic ethos. The curriculum is planned to be broad and relevant. For example, during the school's curriculum extension day, pupils had opportunities to apply their knowledge of chemistry and biology to the role of a forensic scientist. Pupils explained the benefits of applying learning to real-life situations and careers, for example by preparing a business case.
- The vast range of extra-curricular activities, for example in drama, sport, music, and religion, helps to develop pupils' self-confidence, support and respect for others. Pupils said that they also benefit from learning skills such as teamwork and public speaking.
- Leaders have introduced a consistent approach to tracking pupils' progress in key stages 3 and 4. This means that they can analyse the performance of different groups of pupils and take action accordingly.
- Pupil premium funding is used well so that, overall, disadvantaged pupils make the same progress as other pupils nationally. Leaders are committed to ensuring that they evaluate the impact of the pupil premium grant on pupils' social and academic outcomes.
- Leaders use the funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities effectively. Leaders track pupils and evaluate the impact of provision well, making sure that staff and appropriate resources are deployed to good effect.
- Leaders check the impact of the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding to ensure that it improves pupils' reading and mathematical skills.
- Senior leaders have worked closely with mathematics and science leaders to reverse the downturn of results in 2017. GCSE results in 2018 show the positive impact of this work, which is continuing further with a programme of staff development.

Governance of the school

- Governors have addressed the recommendations made at the previous inspection. As a result, governance is strong.
- Governors have access to relevant school assessment information to allow them to hold leaders to account and provide support where necessary.
- Leaders have provided training for governors on interpreting school data.
- Governors have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities, including safeguarding, and of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- There is now more evidence of strong challenge by governors to ensure that senior leaders remain focused on improving pupils' progress, including that of the most able.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of keeping pupils safe. Pupils are taught how to keep safe, including through use of social media and online. Leaders' understanding about risks locally and further afield means that they do everything possible to keep pupils safe. Leaders take opportunities to engage a range of professionals to give pupils advice on the actions they can take to mitigate risks they are exposed to. For example, pupils spoke positively about a theatre group that helped them think about how to deal with situations where they might be at risk online.
- Leaders carry out risk assessments before trips and visits take place. Staff are well equipped to support pupils with medical needs and have procedures in place to ensure that the correct medication is administered or stored in school.
- Leaders train staff and ensure that they have regular safeguarding updates, which helps to maintain a high profile on the potential risks to pupils. Staff are aware of the dangers of radicalisation, gang and knife crime, for example, and find appropriate ways to enable all age groups to understand how to keep safe and avoid risks. There is a well-mapped programme of safeguarding for every year group across the academic year. Pupils speak knowledgably about how to keep safe.
- Leaders support parents through updates and newsletters about how to keep their children safe. Leaders make links to external agencies to find appropriate help for pupils and their families. This supports the strong safeguarding culture across Gumley.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have a deep understanding of their subjects. Most teachers use their subject knowledge and understanding of learners' needs to plan lessons that pupils enjoy. This means that the relationships between pupils and their teachers are positive.
- Teachers give pupils effective guidance about how to improve their work. Pupils say that they value this and, if they need help, their teachers are always willing to support them.

- Teaching over time is particularly effective in languages, art, English and PE. Through their monitoring, leaders were clear that teachers were applying the training the school has developed through effective partnership working across the school and externally. This was also evident through looking at pupils' books across a range of subjects. This means that leaders are improving the quality of pupils' learning by developing approaches about how learning is planned and the use of questioning to deepen learning.
- There remains some variation in the quality of teaching. Much teaching makes good use of assessment information to plan work that is tailored to pupils' needs and abilities. This has had particular impact in strengthening the progress of middle and high prior attainers, as shown by improvements in the provisional 2018 GCSE results. The work of pupils across key stage 3 and 4 also demonstrates that where learning is well planned pupils make strong progress. Leaders are aware that this is not consistent. In particular, leaders are working to make sure that work in mathematics and science is pitched at the right level and that subject literacy is strong. Some of the positive impact of this work was seen in pupils' books.
- Teachers' effective use of questioning across many subject areas demonstrates how pupils are supported to clarify misconceptions and deepen subject understanding. Questioning used indicates that the depth of teachers' subject knowledge contributes, over time, to the progress pupils are making. This means most pupils are supported to develop their knowledge well over time and the skills to cope with the demands of their next stage of education.
- The majority of pupils spoken to understood the school's use of assessment and how it helps them know what they need to do to improve. Pupils' books, where planned learning was strong, highlight that they are able to explain, evaluate and draw conclusions well, due to effective teaching.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' confidence and awareness of how to contribute to society are developed through a wide range of opportunities. They are extremely courteous and polite with teachers and other adults. The support given to them by teachers means that pupils are mature and confident. Leaders have taken a strong strategic approach to this aspect of pupils' lives and learning. A pupil shared a commonly held view that, 'It's so good to be in a school where it's not just about academic subjects: we learn about so much more and learn to try things we wouldn't have thought about.' Through physical education; personal, social and health education; religious education and assemblies, pupils learn how to keep mentally and physically fit and healthy. Pupils speak confidently about the importance of a healthy mind and body.
- Pupils are ambitious. They are encouraged to take part in a range of activities and events so that they can develop their self-confidence. Pupils are proud of their school's traditions and values.

- Pupils say that there is rarely any bullying in school, as they learn how to respect each other, but that when any bullying occurs teachers deal with it effectively.
- Staff make every effort to ensure that all pupils understand the consequences and risks associated with using the internet. They encourage pupils to think through potential risks and equip them with the skills to use the internet safely.
- Staff create a school culture where older pupils actively seek out opportunities to take on leadership or mentoring roles. Older pupils willingly take part in training so they can look after younger ones and fulfil pupil support roles well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Staff maintain a high expectation of behaviour and pupils respond well, with exemplary behaviour in most classrooms and around the school.
- The revised behaviour policy means that pupils and staff are clear about what is expected. This contributes to the school's calm and purposeful learning environment.
- Pupils manage their own behaviour effectively and are well-mannered and mature.
- On the rare occasions when there is low-level disruption, the school's behaviour policy is adhered to. Fixed-term and permanent exclusions are well below national averages. There are low numbers of incidents that require internal exclusions.
- Pupils' attendance is high and persistent absenteeism is below national averages.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make strong progress over time in the majority of their subjects, as shown by GCSE examination results and scrutiny of pupils' books.
- After a dip in GCSE mathematics results in 2017, provisional results for 2018 show improved attainment and progress. Current assessment information and work in pupils' books confirm this improvement.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress. In the 2018 GCSE examinations their attainment was strong, in line with their peers nationally and in a range of subjects, including English.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are also making strong progress. Leaders meticulously check the progress of these pupils and use this information to ensure they are supported to overcome identified barriers to learning. Over time, there has been an improving picture of their outcomes in GCSE examinations.
- In recent years, the progress of middle- and high-attainers, in some subjects, including maths and science, has not been as strong as in others. Leaders' actions to address this have made a positive impact. This is evident in provisional GCSE results and the work seen in pupils' books across the school. Work in pupils' books also highlights the higher levels of challenge planned into the curriculum to deepen learning.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Over time, students in the sixth form have not made the progress of which they are capable. In particular, students who have high prior attainment at GCSE make less progress than other students.
- Leaders have acted quickly to address the findings of their internal evaluations and external audit of the sixth form. There is now a strong improvement plan in place, with clear lines of accountability.
- Leaders are aware that their monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment has not been as effective in the sixth form as in key stages 3 and 4. Steps have been taken to ensure that a consistent approach is taken for the sixth form. However, the impact of leaders' actions is not yet evident.
- Leaders have extended the post-16 curriculum offer in order to meet students' needs and increase retention rates. This means that this academic year has seen an increase in the number of students who choose the sixth-form to continue their education. The sixth form now offers both vocational and academic courses. Students commented that they were pleased with the school's decision to widen the curriculum. Leaders are working to ensure that for new vocational courses all students have planned opportunities for work experience.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies across subjects. When it is strong, teachers effectively use information they have about students' prior learning to plan lessons that build on and deepen their knowledge. Students' learning is shaped to enable them increasingly to work independently and think hard about links in their learning.
- Where teaching is less effective, there is a lack of appreciation of students' starting points. Learners have limited opportunities to engage with more-challenging ideas and concepts or discuss their work.
- Leaders are working closely with staff to ensure that training has the necessary impact on curriculum content and students' progress. Leaders have identified that past assessment practice has not provided an accurate picture of students' progress. In-house training and support from external partners is being used to improve the way students are assessed and the use of this information.
- Leaders have identified best practice within the sixth form in subjects. Leaders are drawing on the approaches of the leaders and teachers of art, languages, textiles, English and PE to create greater consistency in teaching and assessment across the sixth form.
- Students' attendance has improved due to leaders' actions to tackle the high absence rates found in the recent past.
- Students receive appropriate pastoral support. Impartial careers guidance is received positively and students move successfully to higher education and training.
- Students say that they feel safe and have an in-depth understanding of the risks they face, including the dangers of extremism and radicalisation.
- Leaders have created a strong package of extra-curricular opportunities for students.

For example, sixth-form students have a termly conference, the most recent of which focused on climate change. This is led and managed by a member of staff whose main focus is on ensuring that the school has an innovative approach to student development. To date, this has enabled students to have strong links with businesses and higher education providers. Pupils and students speak confidently about the knowledge and skills they have gained.

School details

Unique reference number	137928
Local authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	10053285

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,058
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	152
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Christine Grindrod
Headteacher	Caroline Braggs
Telephone number	020 85688692
Website	www.gumleyhouse.com
Email address	general@gumley.hounslow.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 January 2018

Information about this school

- The school is of religious character. A section 48 inspection of the school was completed in November 2017.
- The school is a standalone academy and a member of the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ) Educational Trust.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision but has links to Woodbridge Park school's provision.
- The school works collaboratively with local secondary schools and other schools within the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ) Educational Trust.

- The school's 16 to 19 provision is part of a consortium with other schools locally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons across all key stages and subject areas. They scrutinised work in pupils' books. Inspectors visited the sixth-form conference and a range of activities as part of the curriculum extension day that took place on day one of the inspection.
- Inspectors had discussions with pupils, teachers, middle and senior leaders, trustees and governors. The lead inspector met with the school's independent improvement adviser. Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including information relating to teaching and learning, extra-curricular activities, sixth form and pupils' progress and attainment.
- Inspectors considered 48 responses to the staff survey and 54 responses to the pupil survey. Inspectors also considered the 167 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

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