

Inspection of a good school: Connaught School for Girls

Connaught Road, Leytonstone, London E11 4AB

Inspection dates: 3–4 October 2019

Outcome

Connaught School for Girls continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are polite and respectful. They care about each other. Pupils told us that one of the best things about the school is that staff are always there to help them if they have any worries. They feel safe in school. Serious incidents of poor behaviour, such as bullying, do not happen often. When they do, leaders are quick to put matters right.

Pupils study a wide range of subjects. They work hard and are very settled in class. Pupils are ambitious and determined to succeed. They said that many of the lunchtime and after-school clubs help them to catch up in subjects they find difficult.

Leaders go to considerable lengths to help each pupil fulfil their potential. They give the right extra help to those who need it.

Pupils have a keen interest in topical news items. Pupils want to make a difference within the school, the local community and beyond.

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

Throughout their time at school, pupils study a broad range of subjects. Curriculum leaders have well-established subject plans. These make sure that teachers and pupils know how lessons link together. Pupils learn new knowledge in a logical order. They remember what they have learned and understood in previous weeks and years. Teachers help pupils to recall important facts, for example by linking information to what they learn in other subjects and to examples in everyday life.

Pupils achieve well in all subjects. Leaders ensure that teachers give pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities the support they need to achieve well. Sometimes, leaders' expectations are not quite high enough for those who are capable of more demanding work.

Pupils are confident and speak clearly. They are motivated to succeed and attentive to

their work. This helps teachers to teach with very little distraction or time-wasting. Pupils told us how much they value the wide range of career options open to them because of all the subjects they study at school.

Teachers are quick to spot when individual pupils need extra support with their studies or to help them get the most out of their time at school. Staff arrange opportunities for pupils to attend selected events and activities that boost their confidence and increase their awareness of social issues.

Leaders and staff organise a wide range of extra activities, clubs and subject outings. Subject clubs held at lunchtime are popular and well attended. However, few pupils take part in activities and clubs that broaden their outlook beyond their academic work or introduce them to new interests. Leaders do not check which pupils participate in these opportunities to ensure that no one misses out.

Leaders, including governors, take action to support the well-being of staff and reduce teachers' workload. For example, teachers told us that leaders have reduced checks that teachers make on pupils' achievement. Leaders consult with staff regularly about their views. The school's own surveys show that staff generally feel that leaders support them well.

Throughout their time at the school, pupils gain an insight and respect for contemporary equality issues. The school's programme of personal, social and health education, together with assemblies and guest speakers, encourages pupils' resilience and strength of character. Leaders and staff motivate pupils to be aware of local, national and international political issues. Leaders inspire pupils to take an interest in current affairs and encourage them to be determined to make the world a better place. It was clear to us that pupils have a strong sense of fairness.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that everyone in the school knows what to do if they have any worries about safeguarding. Leaders follow the right procedures when staff, parents, carers or pupils raise concerns. They seek support from outside agencies when needed. Record-keeping is well organised and thorough.

Governors fulfil their responsibilities for safeguarding. They make sure that they know the up-to-date safeguarding legal requirements. They have taken care to check the extra risks associated with the school's ongoing building work. Leaders, including governors, review pupils' safety on and between the school sites. Leaders make all the essential pre-employment checks when appointing new staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers' expectations of what pupils already know and can do are not high enough. In these subjects, pupils are not routinely set demanding work that builds on what they already know. Leaders need to ensure that their curriculum design takes into account pupils' substantial capacity to recall and use complex subject vocabulary and concepts.
- The school provides a range of clubs and enrichment activities. Leaders do not check how well pupils take up these opportunities. Some pupils told us they are not able to attend extra-curricular clubs because they attend subject catch-up clubs held at the same time. Leaders need to ensure that pupils have a wider range of experiences, including in the world of work, and find and pursue interests beyond their academic studies.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 10 February 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	139293
Local authority	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Inspection number	10110415
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	632
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John Buniak
Headteacher	Avani Higgins
Website	www.connaught-school.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	10 February 2016

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up her post on 1 September 2019.
- The school is located on two sites: the main site and an annexe. The annexe houses science laboratories, facilities for physical education and the school's examination centre. It is currently undergoing refurbishment and so was only partly in use at the time of the inspection.

Information about this inspection

- We met with school leaders, governors, groups of staff and groups of pupils.
- We visited classrooms, accompanied by school leaders, where pupils were studying a wide range of subjects. We especially focused on English, science, computing and mathematics.
- We held informal conversations with staff and pupils around the school. We observed pupils' behaviour in and between lessons.
- We looked at documentation, including leaders' subject plans, samples of minutes of governors' meetings and records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- All the above activities contributed to our review of the effectiveness of safeguarding in

the school. We also met with the member of staff responsible for safeguarding and looked at the school's safeguarding records.

- We took into account the 32 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including 18 written comments. There were no responses to the inspection surveys for staff and pupils. We considered leaders' analysis of the school's own surveys of staff's views.

Inspection team

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