

Inspection of a good school: Woking High School

Morton Road, Horsell, Woking, Surrey GU21 4TJ

Inspection dates:

3–4 December 2019

Outcome

Woking High School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school and they are very proud of it. They get on very well with each other and with staff. Pupils say that the school feels like a family. Parents, carers and pupils praise the very high quality of pastoral care that the school provides. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. There is always somebody in the school they can talk to if they have a problem.

Most pupils benefit from high standards of teaching. They appreciate the help that staff give them. Year 11 pupils doing their mock examinations told us that they feel staff are 'rooting for them to do well'.

Pupils behave very well in lessons. They work diligently and independently. Inspectors saw a high standard of work in a variety of lessons. Around the school, the atmosphere is relaxed and friendly. Pupils say that bullying and incidents of poor behaviour are rare.

Many pupils take advantage of the extensive range of clubs and activities provided outside of their regular lessons. Pupils have numerous opportunities to have their say in how the school is run. For example, they have improved the school environment by reducing the use of plastics.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and well designed, with strong academic and vocational elements. Most curriculum leaders have carefully considered what pupils should learn and the order in which things are taught. In science, for example, pupils understand the big ideas because they learn how different concepts in the subject are connected. In some topics in a small number of subjects, pupils are sometimes left with misconceptions because the curriculum is less well organised than in other subjects.

All pupils study the full national curriculum for three years in key stage 3. At key stage 4, the curriculum contains a broad range of appropriate subjects and pupils have a free

choice of option subjects. Pupils enjoy many visits and other activities that relate to what they have been learning. The 'day 11 timetable' allows all pupils to take part regularly in activities that broaden their horizons. In addition, large numbers of pupils take part in a wide range of clubs. These include sport and music, as well as opportunities for pupils to develop leadership and communication skills.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They present information in clear and interesting ways. They use questions to probe how well pupils have understood and check their understanding before moving on. Pupils cope well with demanding work because it is well planned and taught. Teaching and assessment approaches help pupils to remember important ideas and information.

Most pupils achieve very well and results in public examinations are above the national averages. Leaders' recent work to raise the aspirations and achievement of disadvantaged pupils has been very successful. These pupils did much better in their examinations last year.

Leaders recognise that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not always achieve as well as they could. Staff need more training on how to adapt their teaching so that pupils with SEND achieve their very best. Leaders are clear about what they need to do. They are beginning to check more carefully that extra support for these pupils is helping their learning. However, pupils with visual impairment achieve well and play a full part in school life because of the excellent support they receive.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They establish clear routines and boundaries. These go hand in hand with well-planned teaching and, all together, they mean that pupils behave well in class.

The school is very well led. Leaders do not rest on their laurels and are constantly striving to improve the school further. The whole school community, including governors, shares leaders' ambitious vision. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about leaders' concern for their workload and well-being. Staff say that the changes made to standardise assessment have made a positive difference.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff share in the responsibility for ensuring that pupils are kept safe. Governors and leaders set the tone that 'it could happen here'. There is a large well-trained safeguarding team that works well together to support pupils at risk.

Leaders regularly update staff on local safeguarding issues. Staff at all levels know what to do if they have concerns about pupils. The designated safeguarding lead keeps meticulous records.

Parents say that their children feel safe at school. Pupils know who to go to if they need help and feel confident that their concerns will be dealt with.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders know that there is more to do to make sure that pupils with SEND achieve as well as others. In particular, they need to make sure that staff have the knowledge and skills needed to adapt their teaching successfully to meet the needs of these pupils. Leaders need to check more rigorously that these pupils are achieving well in lessons and that interventions are having the desired impact.
- Leaders have made considerable inroads into developing the curriculum. However, in some topics within a small number of subjects, pupils' learning is not sequenced as coherently as it is in other subjects. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders have strong expertise so that plans are consistently strong.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 10–11 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	139993
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10111241
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,196
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Mr Zamir Tehal
Headteacher	Mrs Maiken Walter
Website	www.wokinghigh.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 February 2016

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for up to 10 pupils with visual impairment. Currently, eight pupils use this provision.
- The school uses the following alternative providers to support pupils with their vocational learning and well-being: Merrist Wood College, Gasp Motor Project, SOS online learning, Bike Project (City and Guilds Charity) and A2E (Access to Education). Pupils who attend these provisions do so on a part-time basis.
- The school suspends the timetable for one day each half-term to provide all pupils with the opportunity to take part in educational visits and enrichment activities. This is known as the 'day 11 timetable'.

Information about this inspection

- We held meetings with the headteacher and other leaders. We also met with a range of teaching and support staff.
- We did deep dives in the following subjects: English, science, modern foreign languages, geography and design and technology. We discussed curriculum design with leaders, carried out lesson visits, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to pupils and

teachers from the lessons visited about the curriculum.

- We evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. The school's single central record was reviewed. We met with the designated safeguarding lead and pastoral staff.
- I met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- We considered the views of 91 members of staff who responded to Ofsted's online staff survey, 95 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the 85 free-text responses. We met with groups of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally about the school. We took account of the 268 responses to Ofsted's online pupils' survey.

Inspection team

Mark Bagust, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Steve Baker

Ofsted Inspector

Peter Fry

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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