

Inspection of The Chalfonts Independent Grammar

19 London Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP11 1BJ

Inspection dates: 10–12 March 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils rightly value the many opportunities available to them at The Chalfonts. They enjoy learning together. They told us, 'We have a joke, but we know when to take things seriously, we listen to each other's opinions.'

Staff want the very best for their pupils. They know pupils very well and make sure that pupils get the right help to be successful. Aspirations and expectations of learning and behaviour are high. Pupils thrive on this and are inspired by the challenges they are given. Pupils achieve well academically. Classrooms are industrious places. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their work and each other are excellent.

Pupils feel secure. They know that their opinions are valued. They are encouraged to express their views and build on their ideas. Pupils know that any hint of bullying or unacceptable behaviour will be challenged by staff and will not be tolerated. Their personal development is planned for well because of the importance attached to this by leaders and the dedication of staff.

Parents and carers are very supportive. All parents who completed our survey recommended the school.

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

Leaders and teaching staff are dedicated to ensuring all pupils do as well as they can. This includes pupils who are in danger of falling behind, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and the most able. The proprietor takes a full and active role in the school and supports leaders well. Consequently, the school has continued to provide a good quality of education since the last inspection and all of the independent school standards are consistently met.

Leaders have a very clear philosophy about how pupils will learn. This underpins the school ethos and curriculum. The curriculum is rich and ambitious. There is a clear focus on providing all pupils, including those with SEND, the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. Every opportunity is taken both within the curriculum and through extra-curricular provision to provide pupils with a rich palette of experience from which to make informed life choices.

Staff are very clear about the approach to learning at The Chalfonts. Leaders make sure that staff have the training and support they need to create well-sequenced learning plans for pupils. Leaders provide professional support to continually raise the quality of teaching. They know that, very occasionally, work is not demanding enough for pupils because it is not closely matched to what they already know and can do.

Teachers' plans are mostly well constructed to link and build on pupils' knowledge. For example, when pupils were introduced to a study of 'The Tempest', they used

their knowledge of Harry Potter books to help explore the themes. Sequences of teaching give pupils the knowledge they need to deepen their learning. For example, pupils dissecting a lamb's heart used their detailed knowledge of the circulatory system to explore parts and functions.

Individual subject plans are detailed. The programmes of study help pupils to do well and attain highly. However, leaders are wisely using them to compile a curriculum overview. They intend to use this to help them to strengthen subject links in some aspects of subjects, such as personal, social, health education (PSHE), where timetabling challenges mean learning can be disjointed.

Leaders quickly identify the needs of pupils with SEND. They put plans in place which help staff adapt the curriculum to pupils' needs. Staff know pupils and their needs well. As a result, pupils with SEND make good progress and take a full part in all aspects of school life.

Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is exemplary. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils rise to these, but are also self-motivated. They are very committed to their education. This means that classes are purposeful and pupils are highly attentive. Pupils are polite. They listen intently to each other and their teachers. They work very well together in groups, building on each other's suggestions with positivity and good humour.

The school's extra-curricular offer is extensive and helps prepare pupils for their next steps in education, employment or training. Helpful careers advice and work experience are built into this. Pupils' health and well-being are given a high priority. Pupils' pastoral care is carefully considered. It supports them well in gaining confidence and overcoming challenges.

Pupils were very positive when talking to us about their school. They enjoy the curriculum on offer to them. They told us their school was a 'democracy'. They are rightly confident that everyone is equal and respected. They value having their say on, for example, the lunchtime arrangements. They respond well to the many opportunities offered to them to take on responsibility. For example, pupils run the lighting and sound at school productions. Their many trips and growing range of sporting and artistic competitions broaden their horizons and nurture their talents. They are well prepared for their next steps in education and the world beyond.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a culture where the well-being and safety of pupils is given the highest importance. Pupils are confident that there are trusted adults they can speak to if they are worried about something. Well-trained staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil.

Leaders use their expertise and knowledge about individual pupils very well when assessing levels of risk and deciding on appropriate next steps. When necessary, they work effectively with agencies to help keep pupils safe.

Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe, including when working, playing and socialising online.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- Although most teachers have good subject knowledge and a firm grasp of classroom practice, occasionally plans are not well matched to what pupils know and can already do. Leaders are aware of this. Leaders should continue to provide training and support to develop staff so that pupils are consistently challenged and their learning is further strengthened.
- Leaders are using programmes of study to establish a useful curriculum overview. They need to use this to review and check provision in all subjects to ensure that they are all equally strong.

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

School details

Unique reference number	142069
DfE registration number	825/6044
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10103864
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Ali Khan
Headteacher	David Shandley
Fees (day pupils)	Middle Years Programme £5,098.50 per term Diploma Programme (post-16) £6,495 per term
Telephone number	01494 875502
Website	www.thechalfontsgrammar.co.uk
Email address	j.fenton@thechalfontsgrammar.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–24 November 2016

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has moved premises and is sited at its current location while a new permanent location is sought.
- The current location does not offer sporting facilities, but the school uses nearby facilities to offer students an extensive sporting programme.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has become fully accredited in the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (ages 11 to 16) and the Diploma Programme (ages 16 to 18).
- At the time of the inspection, there were too few pupils enrolled in the post-16 programme to make a meaningful judgement about the provision.
- The school is part of the Alpha Schools group.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

- We met with senior leaders, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and teachers. We met with the proprietor and the chief executive officer of the Alpha Schools group.
- We did deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics, history and PSHE. In each subject, we met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils, spoke to teachers and looked at pupils' work.
- We reviewed safeguarding records, including the single central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- We considered the views of 31 parents who responded to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, including free-text comments.
- We also spoke with pupils formally and informally about their day-to-day experiences at the school.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Charles Joseph

Ofsted Inspector

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