

Inspection of Fulham School

200 Greyhound Road, London W14 9SD

Inspection dates: 3–5 March 2020

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Outstanding

Sixth-form provision

Insufficient evidence

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Children make a great start in the pre-prep school. They concentrate and learn well. They rapidly develop positive attitudes to learning, which continue through the school. Pupils achieve well in a wide range of subjects.

Pupils learn about faith, culture, diversity and morality. There is an extensive programme to promote British values and enable pupils to make positive contributions to society. Pupils enjoy many educational activities, for example the presentation to parents and carers about their 'Journey Around the World'. Pupils checked everyone onto a flight and acted as air stewards, giving pre-flight safety talks. This involved pupils using role play to develop a better understanding of an international journey.

Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Leaders encourage pupils to be kind and respectful. Pupils generally behave well. Occasionally, pupils are distracted from their work when they find it too easy or too difficult. The teachers help them to refocus swiftly.

Pupils feel safe in the school. They know what to do if they have any worries. Incidents of bullying are rare. They trust adults to deal with any concerns.

Parents are very supportive of the school. Comments such as pupils 'learn through having fun', and they are 'stretched not stressed' are typical.

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

Since the previous inspection, senior leaders have made changes to the leadership and teaching of different subjects. Leaders have strong and confident knowledge of the subjects they plan. They have clear expectations about how subjects are taught in different year groups.

From the moment children start school, there is a well-established routine for teaching them to read. Phonics is taught in a logical order. Staff check what children know and can do before moving them on to learning new sounds. Children develop their reading skills rapidly. Their love of reading continues through the school. Pupils read daily and listen to stories. Older pupils enjoy using the new school library. Pupils who struggle with their reading catch up quickly because of the support provided by specialist staff.

Teachers have the training they need to teach a range of subjects confidently. They make pupils' work relevant to real-life situations, which helps pupils to understand and remember new knowledge and skills. For example, pupils wrote to their Member of Parliament about climate change.

Where leaders' plans are working well, there is a clear link between what pupils learn in different lessons and years. In mathematics, children in the Reception Year

start to learn about fractions by understanding what is meant by double and half. Then in Year 1, pupils build on this knowledge and vocabulary by learning to tell the time.

However, where subject leaders are establishing their roles, their revised plans are not embedded. There is some variation in how well pupils' work in a few subjects links from one year to the next. For example, in science, leaders are not aware of what is planned in the key stages before or after the one they are responsible for. This means that pupils are not able to build on their prior learning as well as they should.

In the majority of lessons, behaviour is exemplary. However, on a few occasions, pupils are reluctant to pay attention when they are unclear about what they need to do or when they are ready for more demanding work. Teachers provide them with the support they need so that learning in the classroom is not disrupted.

In the Reception Year, children concentrate well and enjoy the well-planned activities. Staff have high expectations and place great emphasis on developing children's skills and knowledge in all the areas of learning. Children achieve highly and gain a strong foundation for their start in the prep school.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The SEND team and class teachers work well together to ensure that they swiftly identify and provide the specific support pupils need. Pupils with SEND achieve well at the school. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported, with the right help given according to the level of need.

Senior leaders and teachers are determined that pupils are very well prepared for their chosen pathways when they leave the school. Older pupils have extensive opportunities to develop independence and skills for the workplace, including meeting representatives from a variety of professions. An impressive programme of visits and inspirational speakers prepares pupils well for the future.

Pupils also take part in many enjoyable events beyond their academic studies. Activities in music, drama and physical education enable pupils to experience performance and competition and develop their talents. Pupils acquire a deep understanding of their own culture and that of others locally and internationally through their links with other schools worldwide.

Leaders support the well-being of staff and promote a healthy work-life balance. For example, they recently provided opportunities for staff to experience a head massage in appreciation of their work. It is clear from discussions with staff and their responses to the survey that morale is high.

Governors and senior leaders have ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a good understanding of their statutory responsibilities. Staff receive regular training. They know how to raise concerns if they need to. Leaders have received mental health first aid training.

Leaders teach pupils about keeping safe when they use the internet so that they know of the potential risks of social media. Older pupils have had training about safety risks when travelling around London.

Leaders take prompt action to address all risks. For example, they ensure that all presentation materials are checked before speakers are allowed to deliver sessions to pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- Senior leaders have clear plans for what pupils should learn in each part of the school. In a few subjects, the progression of pupils' skills and knowledge between year groups is not as clear as it should be. This means that pupils' continuity in learning is hindered as they move to different phases in the school. Leaders need to ensure that subject leaders plan together across the three phases to provide a more coherent progression of knowledge and understanding in all subjects.
- Senior leaders have introduced a comprehensive programme of training to support the restructuring of leadership and curriculum development. Leadership is not fully established in some subjects. Senior leaders should continue to support subject leaders so that they are well prepared to fulfil their responsibilities.

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

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| Unique reference number | 131165 |
| DfE registration number | 205/6390 |
| Local authority | Hammersmith & Fulham |
| Inspection number | 10123203 |
| Type of school | Other independent school |
| School category | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in the sixth form | N/A |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 724 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 0 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 |
| Proprietor | Fulham Prep School Holdings |
| Chair | Nick Wergan |
| Headteacher | Will le Fleming |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £17,628–£20,637 |
| Telephone number | 020 7386 2444 |
| Website | www.fulham.school |
| Email address | prepadmin@fulham.school |
| Date of previous inspection | 19–21 September 2017 |

Information about this school

- Fulham School is a non-selective co-educational independent school in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. The school caters for pupils aged from four to 16 years. Plans have been approved for a sixth form to commence in September 2021 on a new site. There are few pupils with SEND. No pupils are disadvantaged.
- The school's last standard inspection took place in September 2017, when the school was judged to be good. All independent school standards were met.
- The school operates on two sites – the pre-prep site, and the prep and senior site, approximately one and a half miles apart. The pre-prep school is located in Fulham High Street. Older pupils aged from seven to 16 years are based in Greyhound Road.

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 looked in particular at the quality of the curriculum in reading, English, mathematics, science, and personal, social, health and economic education. This involved visiting lessons and looking at curriculum plans and pupils' work, and we held discussions with pupils and teachers.
- We visited all year groups in the school.
- We met with parents before the start of the school day on both sites. We considered the responses from 70 parents to Parent View, the online survey.
- We met with pupils from the pre-prep, prep and senior schools. These meetings were used to hear pupils read; to ask what pupils thought about behaviour, bullying and safety; and to find out what wider opportunities there are for learning at the school. We considered the responses from 32 pupils in the inspection survey.
- We met with school leaders throughout the inspection. Meetings were held with teachers. We considered the responses from 20 staff in the inspection survey.
- The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body including the chief education officer for the proprietors.
- We scrutinised a wide range of documentary information in order to check on the statutory requirements of the independent school standards.
- In addition to the above activities, the inspection of safeguarding also included meeting with school leaders with specific safeguarding responsibilities and scrutiny of the school's records of employment checks.

Inspection team

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