

# Inspection of a good school: Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School

High Street, Barnet, Hertfordshire EN5 5RR

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Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2021

## **Outcome**

Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy learning and achieve well. They feel safe, behave sensibly and are well supported by their teachers.

Being kind is central to the school's culture. Pupils work together well, try hard and are considerate of others. Bullying is not tolerated. Pupils are confident that it will be dealt with effectively if it does occur. Pupils are taught to be respectful and inclusive of their peers.

The curriculum is ambitious for all. Teachers encourage pupils to work hard to achieve their aspirations. In most subjects, pupils' learning is typically planned well. This means that pupils develop a deep understanding of the subjects studied. Pupils read widely and enjoy learning the wide range of subjects on offer. Science subjects are particularly popular with pupils.

Pupils' wider development is promoted well. Leaders and staff seek to nurture pupils' self-belief and confidence. Pupils take part in a wide range of opportunities and responsibilities beyond the classroom. For example, pupils enjoy attending the 'Big Bang' science fair. Leaders and staff celebrate pupils' successes and hard work. They want pupils to set their sights high, both in their learning and next steps after school. Pupils are encouraged to challenge stereotypes in pursuing their interests and goals for the future.

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

Leaders and trustees have high expectations for all pupils' learning. They review the curriculum regularly and make changes, when necessary, to ensure that pupils learn effectively in a wide range of subjects. Every pupil learns two languages in Years 7, 8 and 9. Reading is also a whole-school priority. Effective extra help is provided for pupils who need it. Staff guide pupils' book choices very well and promote reading for pleasure. Pupils enjoy visiting the school library regularly.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn the same ambitious curriculum as others. Pupils' needs are identified early. They learn successfully because staff support them effectively. In classrooms, pupils behave very well. This means that their learning is hardly ever disrupted.

The broad, well-planned curriculum in Years 7 to 9 prepares pupils effectively for the subjects they choose for continued study. Pupils, including pupils with SEND, select a wide range of subjects at GCSE. These include languages and the arts. Staff support all pupils well in making decisions. Many pupils opt to study all three sciences. Leaders provide additional classes in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. These deepen and complement pupils' learning. They also encourage pupils to consider further study and careers in these subjects. In the sixth form, too, students have a wide range of A levels to choose from, reflecting their interests and aspirations. Sixth-form students spoke positively about the information they receive about their next steps.

Teachers consider carefully how to motivate pupils to learn. They find out how much pupils recall about their learning and then set work to help them to remember more. Pupils said that they find this helpful and supportive. Pupils, parents and carers were very positive about the support they received with learning online during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most subject leaders plan pupils' learning effectively. This includes the subjects offered in the sixth form. Subject plans set out the essential knowledge pupils need to know and understand. In most subjects, pupils practise and develop their knowledge well. New ideas and concepts are taught in a logical sequence and build on pupils' prior learning. In English, for example, pupils study a wide range of contemporary and historical texts. They use their knowledge of language, plot and structure to compare and evaluate texts with increasing confidence. Leaders' high expectations for the planning and delivery of the curriculum are clear. However, in a few subjects, these expectations are not consistently embedded. Where this is the case, the curriculum is not as sharply focused on deepening pupils' knowledge.

Planning for pupils' wider development is a strength. This includes the provision for sixth-form students. Personal, social, health and economic education aims to build pupils' self-confidence and resilience, both in and beyond the classroom. Pupils learn about issues that may affect them individually as well as wider issues affecting society. They are taught about diversity, as well as the importance of tolerance and respect for others. Staff encourage pupils to express their views and identity. Pupils value this.

The leadership team and trustees lead the school effectively. They are trusted by their staff, who described them as supportive and considerate of their workload. Leaders' plans for improvement are underpinned by pupils' best interests.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Teachers are vigilant and identify pupils who may be vulnerable. They know the signs to look out for and how to report any concerns. Training for staff helps them to stay vigilant. For example, staff have been trained on how to spot and support pupils' mental health needs. Leaders act on staff's concerns effectively. They work well with external professionals to identify and put in place the help that pupils need.

Parents, staff and pupils all feel confident that the school is a safe community. Pupils are also taught about how to be safe in a range of contexts. This includes learning about healthy relationships and risks they may face outside of school.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have designed a broad and aspirational curriculum. In most subjects, teachers follow the curriculum effectively. Pupils across the school benefit from demanding and well-sequenced learning. However, in a few subjects, these strengths are not as well embedded. Leaders need to ensure that all subjects are planned and taught to the same consistently high standard.

## **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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 school and 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137131
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199711
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1054
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	110
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Rebecca Pier
<b>Headteacher</b>	Violet Walker
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.qegschool.org.uk">www.qegschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 and 22 April 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes since the previous inspection.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers.

## Information about inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the two deputy headteachers and the chair and vice-chair of trustees.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, geography and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders and teachers, visited lessons, met with pupils and looked at their work, and viewed subject plans.
- Inspectors also considered some other subjects as part of this inspection. This included discussions with leaders and reviewing curriculum plans. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about their learning.
- In order to inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke to pupils from several year groups, met with leaders and staff and looked at records. Inspectors also spoke to trustees.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses from Ofsted’s surveys for pupils, parents and staff.

### **Inspection team**

Alice Clay, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Daniel Burton

Ofsted Inspector

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