

Inspection of Coloma Convent Girls' School

Upper Shirley Road, Croydon, Surrey CR9 5AS

Inspection dates: 30 November and 1 December 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected since its previous inspection on 30 September-1 October 2009.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe. Pupils embody the school mantra of 'work hard, be kind'. Most teachers have high expectations of every pupil. Many pupils go on to study at top universities. However, pupils' experiences in lessons are variable.

Pupils behave well. They appreciate rewards for good effort and behaviour. Leaders have a renewed focus on tackling bullying. Pupils feel confident to report bullying to a trusted teacher if they feel upset. They know that teachers will resolve any issues quickly. Sixth-form students are trained to support pupils as part of the school's anti-bullying strategy. Pupils also said that they can discuss with staff any friendship problems. They value the personal, social and health education curriculum. This teaches pupils how to stay safe online. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and lifestyles, including sexuality and diversity.

Leaders and staff celebrate diversity well and pupils appreciate this. They enjoy learning about each other's cultures through events such as 'diversity week'. Sixth-form students led work on Black History Month. They provided lesson plans for teachers and organised a showcase event and assemblies. Pupils also do fundraising activities and recently raised money for a sickle cell charity.

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

New leaders already have a clear picture of what needs to improve in the school. They want to provide an inclusive environment where every pupil can thrive. Leaders have already made appropriate changes and know there is much work to do.

The quality of education pupils receive is variable. Senior leaders have worked with subject teams to develop their thinking about what pupils should learn. The curriculum plans are ambitious. Staff aim to help pupils learn subject knowledge and develop their wider knowledge of the world. These high expectations do not always translate into pupils' typical experience in class. Subject teams have not planned how best to teach the subject content and which activities to choose. In some subjects, teachers do not assess pupils' understanding in a systematic way. They do not adapt their teaching to address pupils' misconceptions.

In the sixth form, teachers check students' understanding in different ways. They use their strong knowledge of the subject and the examination specification well. Teachers encourage students to be independent. They signpost wider reading, podcasts, online university lectures and online talks by experts in their field. These help students to consolidate their learning.

In the lower school, staff do not always consider what pupils have learned previously. Teachers underestimate what pupils know and can do, especially in Years

7 and 8. This means some of the work pupils complete is too easy. Pupils often race through their tasks and become bored.

Leaders have improved the identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff are trained to use helpful strategies to support pupils in lessons. Curriculum plans give clarity for teachers in how to support pupils with SEND. This is beginning to have an impact on the progress of these pupils.

Teachers provide support to a small number of pupils who need help with reading. They are quick to identify these pupils when they arrive in Year 7. Pupils attend reading groups. They work on fluency, vocabulary and pronunciation of words. These pupils enjoy reading and make strong progress.

Pupils are polite, respectful and hardworking. Leaders have reviewed the behaviour policy and teachers follow it well. Lessons are rarely disrupted. Occasionally, pupils' levels of motivation vary. This happens where the curriculum is less demanding than in other subject areas.

Pupils learn to be responsible global citizens. They have a say in the running of the school. For example, leaders have changed the uniform policy so girls can wear trousers. They have adapted the rules about hairstyles. Pupils learn about democracy, the rule of law and respect. They can take part in a range of extra-curricular activities. These include music lessons, the school choir, sports clubs and combined cadets, to name but a few. There is a detailed careers programme. Staff provide pupils with useful information about vocational qualifications, training and apprenticeships, as well as university applications.

Governors support school leaders in their work to develop the school. Governors have improved the level of challenge they offer to leaders. They have worked with leaders to identify key priorities for the school. Most staff are on board with these.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made recent improvements to the school's systems for managing safeguarding. Staff are trained on the latest government guidance. They know what to look out for and how to report any concerns about pupils. The safeguarding team makes appropriate referrals to the local authority and is well supported by the school's social worker.

Leaders work with the safer schools team. They have been trained to support pupils with mental health. Leaders keep staff aware of local safeguarding issues. They make appropriate referrals to the local authority. Governors ensure the appropriate checks are in place for adults who work with pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is some inconsistency in delivering the curriculum across subjects. Some work and activities do not meet the ambition of the curriculum plans. This means that pupils' learning is limited. Leaders should ensure that staff have a consistent approach so that pupils have an engaging and challenging experience of learning.
- Teachers do not always use assessment effectively. They do not always identify gaps in pupils' understanding and make adaptations to their plans so that all pupils can achieve well. Leaders should ensure that assessment is more sharply focused to help all pupils learn and remember what they have been taught.
- Many subject teams are not familiar with what pupils have learned previously. Teachers underestimate what younger pupils know and can do. Some of the work they are set is not suitable. Pupils complete it too easily and sometimes lose motivation. Leaders should ensure that teachers provide work that matches the ambition of their curriculum plans and is tailored to pupils' needs.

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

Unique reference number	101823
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10202642
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1082
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	278
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mike Buckingham
Headteacher	Elizabeth Englefield
Website	www.coloma.croydon.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	30 September to 1 October 2009

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been several changes to the leadership team. The new headteacher has been in post since June 2021.
- Currently the school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic school. The last section 48 inspection took place in October 2019. The next section 48 inspection will be due between 2022 and 2024.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 and senior leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair and vice chair of governors and spoke to the director of education at the diocese and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, biology, business, English, history and mathematics. Inspectors visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with subject leaders and teachers. Inspectors also met with the heads of computer science, music and physical education to discuss their curriculum plans.
- Inspectors considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded through discussions with pupils, staff, leaders, governors and representatives of the local authority and the diocese. Inspectors also looked at records related to safeguarding, including records of checks carried out before staff are appointed.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils of all ages, including students in the sixth form. They spoke to pupils during lesson visits and observed behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes. The inspection team spoke to staff about pupils' behaviour and their workload. The responses to Ofsted's staff and parent surveys were also considered.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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