

Inspection of a good school: Abbey Manor College

40 Falmouth Close, London SE12 8JP

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 January 2022

Outcome

Abbey Manor College continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Abbey Manor helps pupils to get back on track after having had a difficult time at their previous schools. Many attend for a short period before returning to their original school or another mainstream school. Other pupils, especially if they are in Year 10 or 11, stay for longer and complete their exams here.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. Pupils learn a broad range of subjects throughout the school. As a result, most pupils in Years 7 to 9 return to mainstream education. Leaders have high expectations of what pupils in Years 10 and 11 can achieve. They support pupils with their post-16 applications and they encourage them to aim high. Nearly all pupils leave the school for further education or employment.

Leaders want pupils to be proud of their school. Pupils now wear uniform and are keen to be rewarded for good behaviour. They move around school calmly and are engaged in their learning in lessons. There are good relationships between staff and pupils.

Pupils said that bullying is not a problem at this school. They feel safe and they trust school staff. If they have concerns, pupils know they can tell a teacher or their mentor and they are confident it will be resolved quickly.

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

Leaders aim to provide pupils with an education equivalent to a mainstream school. Pupils study a broad range of subjects in all year groups. Leaders assess pupils when they arrive at the school so they can make sure that pupils receive the support they need in class and through intervention programmes.

In most subjects, including English, leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge they want pupils to learn and remember. Leaders make sure that the plans in these subjects cater for pupils who arrive at different times of the year. Leaders identify the

gaps in pupils' learning. They prioritise these before helping pupils to move on to more complex concepts.

Leaders plan subjects in line with the national curriculum. Leaders are clear about what they want pupils to be taught in each subject. Overall, they have planned the curriculum well. In most subjects, what pupils learn builds on what they have previously been taught. However, in a few subjects it is not always clear what order pupils should learn new knowledge. This makes it more difficult for teachers to build on pupils' previous learning, particularly when pupils join at different times of the year.

Many pupils in the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Sometimes, pupils' needs are assessed and identified before they join the school. When this is not the case, leaders use initial assessments effectively to find out what pupils need help with. Leaders share intervention plans with teachers and teaching assistants so that pupils receive the support they need. Pupils with SEND study the full range of subjects.

Teachers make sure that they have an in-depth understanding of pupils' reading. Pupils who struggle with reading get the help they need to catch up. Leaders devise personalised sessions to develop pupils' reading knowledge and skills. These sessions include the teaching of phonics to those pupils at very early stages of reading.

Some pupils join the school having had problems managing their behaviour and emotions in previous settings. Nevertheless, pupils settle quickly at Abbey Manor, behave calmly and follow teachers' instructions. They are respectful to adults. Pupils know the consequences of their behaviour and they are motivated by the rewards for behaving well. Staff apply the behaviour policy consistently and pupils think it is fair. If pupils cause any disruption in lessons, staff deal with it quickly so that it does not escalate.

Leaders make pupils' wider development a priority. Pupils have weekly lessons in citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education as well as tutorials and assemblies. During these sessions, they learn about healthy relationships and life in modern Britain. All pupils participate in extra-curricular activities on Friday afternoons.

Staff enjoy working at this school. They said that they feel supported by leaders and that their workload is manageable. They acknowledged the changes the headteacher has implemented and the positive impact they have made.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a detailed understanding of pupils' needs and circumstances. Staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and they are aware of the issues most likely to affect pupils. In addition to formal training, staff also receive regular safeguarding updates during daily briefings and 'pupil focus meetings'.

Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare. Leaders have good relationships with external agencies and make use of their expertise to support pupils.

These agencies also offer support to individual pupils as well as speaking to pupils as part of the school's PSHE programme.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are clear about what pupils should be taught in each subject. In most subjects, pupils' learning is planned sequentially so that it builds on what they have learned previously. In a few subjects, the order in which pupils need to learn new subject content is sometimes unclear. This makes it difficult to build securely on pupils' prior learning, particularly for pupils who join at different times of the year. In the few subjects where this is the case, leaders should ensure that the curriculum is further refined to identify the order in which pupils need to be taught new subject content.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2013.

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	130856
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10192562
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jim Mallory
Headteacher	Heather Johnston
Website	www.abbeymanorcollege.com
Date of previous inspection	25 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a pupil referral unit for pupils who have been permanently excluded or who are at risk of permanent exclusion. Most pupils who join the school in Years 7 to 9 return to mainstream schools before Year 10. Most pupils in Years 10 and 11 complete their education at this school. Pupils are frequently joining the school throughout the year.
- The school uses one alternative provider.
- The school operates on two sites. The main site is at 40 Falmouth Close, London SE12 8JP and is for pupils in Years 10 and 11. The second site, for pupils in Years 7 to 9, is at Dressington Lodge, Dressington Avenue, London SE4 1JQ.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and assistant headteachers. Inspectors also met with members of the management committee, representatives of the local authority and the chair of the secondary headteachers' forum.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, geography, and hospitality and catering. Inspectors visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with subject leaders and teachers. Inspectors also looked at subject plans for science and talked to leaders about science.
- Through discussions with leaders, governors, pupils and staff, inspectors considered how pupils are safeguarded. Inspectors looked at records related to safeguarding, including records of pre-employment checks on staff.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils in both key stages. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about safeguarding and behaviour and about their workload. Inspectors also looked at the responses from pupils, staff and parents to Ofsted's surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Mark Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Radomsky

Her Majesty's Inspector

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