

Inspection of a good school: Hodge Hill Girls' School

Bromford Road, Hodge Hill, Birmingham, West Midlands B36 8EY

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 March 2022

Outcome

Hodge Hill Girls' School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils value the education they receive at Hodge Hill Girls' School. They appreciate how their experiences prepare them for future learning and adult life. They clearly understand the purpose of their education.

Leaders and the majority of staff have high expectations of pupils. Teachers help pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding through the many opportunities available to them. The school is 'educating tomorrow's women today'.

Pupils enjoy positive and productive relationships with staff and other pupils. They behave very well in lessons. They listen attentively and complete activities to the best of their ability. Pupils are proud of the work that they produce.

Pupils attend a range of extra-curricular activities and additional lessons before and after school. They have many opportunities to take responsibility and develop their leadership skills. For example, during the inspection, pupils devised several activities to raise money for Comic Relief.

Pupils learn how to stay safe and feel safe in school. They do not consider bullying to be an issue. Staff help pupils to quickly resolve any concerns that arise. Pupils would recommend the school to others.

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

The curriculum reflects leaders' high aspirations for all pupils. It is broad and balanced. It is designed to help pupils respond to the opportunities and challenges of the modern world. The curriculum includes all aspects of spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education, careers, enterprise, work-related learning, citizenship, cultural capital, and study skills. It is well structured and sequenced.

At key stage 3, pupils study the breadth of subjects in the national curriculum. At key stage 4, there is a strong academic foundation to the curriculum. Staff help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils to succeed in all subjects.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that gives pupils the knowledge they need for future learning and adult life. It is well planned so pupils can build upon prior learning and deepen their understanding of the subject matter. Pupils are able to make links between what is taught in different areas of the curriculum.

Many pupils start school with a level of knowledge that is below that expected for their age. Staff use assessment well to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Staff then use this information to plan learning to address and close these gaps. In the past, teachers worked closely with feeder primary schools to help prepare pupils for secondary education. This does not currently happen as regularly. Staff do not have the information they need about pupils with SEND when they start at the school.

Staff have secure subject knowledge and many use questions and a range of resources to help pupils to learn. However, some staff do not deliver the curriculum as well as others. They do not always ensure that work is sufficiently challenging to enable all pupils to thrive.

Pupils' work across the curriculum is usually of a good quality. Pupils achieve well in a range of subjects, including English and modern foreign languages. Achievement in other subjects, including mathematics, is improving. Pupils with SEND are well supported. However, the school has not yet established its new reading programme and phonics scheme to help less-confident readers improve their reading skills.

Leaders have created a positive learning environment. Pupils behave well around the school and in lessons. This helps them to deepen their understanding and make good progress through the curriculum. Most pupils attend school regularly and punctually. However, a few pupils arrive late too often.

Staff promote pupils' personal development exceptionally well. Staff help pupils to develop positive characteristics and to have high aspirations. Careers education is very effective, and pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders are considerate of staff workload. They also promote staff well-being effectively. Governance has improved since the time of the last inspection. Governors are well informed and use their knowledge to offer appropriate support and challenge to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff are well trained in their safeguarding duties. Staff follow up potential concerns quickly and thoroughly. They involve outside agencies appropriately. There is a culture of vigilance and support throughout the school.

Staff identify signs of concern and monitor vulnerable pupils closely. They are aware of risks pertinent to the school's cohort and the local area. Leaders ensure that thorough checks are carried out on staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they are taught about internet safety, positive relationships and the dangers of drugs.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff do not ensure that pupils are consistently challenged to produce their best work. Consequently, some pupils do not achieve as highly as they should. Leaders should ensure that all staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- The new phonics scheme has not yet been introduced. This means that some readers do not make the progress they should. Leaders should ensure that the new programme is implemented and fully embedded to help less-confident readers develop their knowledge of phonics to improve their reading.
- Sometimes, staff do not get all of the information they need about pupils with SEND from their primary schools so some pupils are not fully prepared for their secondary education. Leaders should ensure that transition activities help pupils make a strong start to their education at Hodge Hill Girls' School.
- A few pupils often arrive late and so miss valuable learning time. Leaders should work with pupils and their families to improve the punctuality of this small number of pupils.

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 March 2017.

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

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| Unique reference number | 103483 |
| Local authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 10212478 |
| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Girls |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 748 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Siva Yogaiswaran |
| Headteacher | Sonia Adu |
| Website | www.hodgehgs.bham.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 7–8 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed after the previous inspection.
- The school makes use of two registered off-site alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

This inspection was carried out under section 8 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 leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders, groups of staff and three members of the governing body. The lead inspector also spoke to the headteacher of one of the alternative providers.

- Inspectors met formally with groups of pupils and spoke with pupils in their lessons and around school. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during social times.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in design and technology, English and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's safeguarding arrangements. They spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding. The lead inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding information and the school's single central record.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and free-text comments. They considered responses to the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Simon Mosley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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