

# Inspection of a good school: Epsom and Ewell High School

Ruxley Lane, West Ewell, Epsom, Surrey KT19 9JW

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Inspection dates:

29 and 30 March 2022

## Outcome

Epsom and Ewell High School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school and enthusiastic to learn. Their behaviour is calm and mature. Their attitudes are positive and enthusiastic. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with their teachers. There is a strong sense of community.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct. Bullying is not tolerated. Any bullying that does happen is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils say that they are happy and feel safe. They make a positive contribution to the school. Pupils take on many leadership roles, including school prefects and the junior leadership team. Older pupils help younger pupils with their reading and mathematics.

Pupils relish opportunities to attend a range of clubs and sporting activities. These include choir, dance, drama, philosophy and creative writing as well as the gender and sexual alliance club. Pupils benefit from a successful careers programme. This incorporates the annual careers fair as well as visits to colleges and universities. Sixth-form students appreciate the support they receive for university applications, including Oxbridge entrance.

Leaders give pupils' mental and physical health a high priority. The school is the proud recipient of the gold Mental Health Award for Schools. This award offers a framework for improving mental health and well-being for staff and pupils.

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

The school provides a broad, balanced and bespoke curriculum. Leaders and staff have high ambitions for all pupils. Subject leaders have given careful thought to the order of the curriculum, which builds on the work in the primary schools. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. This helps them to check pupils' learning effectively. Teachers use assessment information thoughtfully to address misconceptions and make adaptations to plans. Pupils value the feedback and support that they receive.

Staff are enthusiastic and supportive of the school's various innovations. These include the reviewed school day and the ambitious educational recovery programme. There is a rebranded personal, social and health education curriculum. This covers health and well-being, relationships and sex education, and living in the wider world. These initiatives are new and have not been running long enough to fully assess their impact. The school is also working diligently to increase the uptake of languages and allow more pupils to take triple science.

The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same curriculum as others. They achieve well, including through the school's specialist hearing impaired provision. The school's alternative provision supports disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. This provision encourages skills in gardening, mechanics and cookery alongside academic studies. Pupils who have been higher prior attainers are supported to work towards the Crest award for scientific curiosity and a GCSE in further mathematics. In addition, the Brilliant Club allows pupils to experience university education through project work alongside university students.

Students in the sixth form have access to a range of opportunities to help them to take their next steps in education, employment and training. Effective pastoral support is provided, and students are taught how to keep safe and form healthy relationships. The sixth-form curriculum is carefully considered and builds well on the work in key stage 4. Students are actively involved in the life of the school, such as volunteering in mathematics and science. Students enjoy being part of the sixth form. They say that their teachers have strong subject knowledge and give their time freely. They speak confidently about their plans for the future.

Leaders prioritise reading through regular whole-class reading sessions. These foster a love of reading as well as broadening vocabulary and increasing fluency. There is also a bespoke accelerated pathway for pupils who have fallen behind. The impact of these initiatives is tracked through reading fluency software measuring progress over time. Assessments confirm that pupils are reading more proficiently and more often.

Inspectors agree with the school's self-evaluation, which says that leaders are innovative, creative and highly aspirational. Leaders at all levels are passionate, enthusiastic and determined to improve the quality of education. Leaders engage fully with their staff and take account of the many pressures on them. They assist staff with workloads. Staff report that their welfare and well-being are a priority.

The school benefits considerably from the support of the trust and the trust benefits from the school. Governors are knowledgeable and experienced. They challenge the school but do not always ask about the impact and evidence to support assertions about improvements. The trust and the governors ensure that all statutory requirements are fully met.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding has a high priority across the school. Safeguarding leaders are knowledgeable and effective. Staff training is comprehensive. Staff are clear about the dangers which pupils may face and work diligently to minimise risk.

The safeguarding policy is up to date and very detailed. Safer recruitment practices are applied to all appointments. The single central record is compliant. It is regularly checked, by leaders and governors, to ensure that it is fit for purpose. Procedures for managing pupil's welfare and communicating with external agencies are very strong.

Pupils know how to stay safe, including online. They learn about healthy relationships and understand consent. Their welfare and well-being are closely monitored and sensitively supported. The safety of pupils placed with alternative providers is actively scrutinised.

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

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

- The school's curriculum intent and implementation are not yet fully embedded across all subjects. Leaders have introduced a range of innovative initiatives to support and enhance the curriculum. These initiatives are still relatively new and need to be embedded securely and consistently. Leaders should continue to monitor these initiatives and collate evidence to evaluate their effectiveness and impact.

## **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 May 2012.

## 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>	137595
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227010
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	937
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	125
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Phil Cairns
<b>Headteacher</b>	James Newman
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.epsomandewellhighschool.com">www.epsomandewellhighschool.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 April 2017

## Information about this school

- Epsom and Ewell High School is an 11 to 18 academy which is part of the Bourne Education Trust.
- The school has a specialist support centre, funded by the local authority, for pupils with hearing impairment.
- Eight pupils attend alternative provision at two registered education providers and two alternative education 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 educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

## 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 conducted deep dives in English, mathematics, and philosophy, religion and ethics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, talked to teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders as well as staff and pupils. They looked at the single central record and reviewed the school's safeguarding procedures and practices.
- Inspectors looked at school policies, curriculum documentation, behaviour logs and attendance records. The lead inspector met with the chair of the trust. He also spoke with the chair of governors remotely.
- Inspectors considered 173 responses to the Ofsted Parent View online questionnaire and 105 additional written comments from parents. They looked at the survey returns completed by 69 staff and 385 pupils.

## Inspection team

Paul Metcalf, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mark Roessler

Ofsted Inspector

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