

Inspection of a good school: St Crispin's School

London Road, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 1SS

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 May 2022

Outcome

St Crispin's School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St. Crispin's School is a welcoming, inclusive and ambitious school. Effective support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders are determined to help pupils achieve their best. The curriculum is broad. There is a wide range of subjects available for pupils to study at GCSE level and in the sixth form.

Expectations are high, especially with behaviour. Older pupils and sixth-form students play an active role in their community by supporting their younger peers. Most parents particularly value how well staff support their child, promoting self-esteem and character as well as academic success.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. The environment is calm and orderly. Pupils behave very well. They are polite and courteous. They are confident that if bullying happens, staff will deal with it quickly and effectively. There is a strong pastoral team that works alongside the safeguarding team to keep pupils safe.

Leaders make sure that all pupils can take part in a wide range of clubs that inspire and interest them. For example, there are opportunities to play sports and music, as well as activities that develop pupils' leadership skills. The school is currently reinstating visits that did not take place because of COVID-19.

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

Leaders are very clear on what they want pupils to know and be able to do in each key stage. They ensure that all pupils study a wide range of subjects from Year 7 to Year 9. This gives pupils a good foundation from which to make their choice of GCSE subjects. The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum, which ensures pupils make good progress in learning. This is seen in many subjects but is particularly strong in English, mathematics and science. Many subject leaders have thought about the order in which they teach subject content so that pupils can build on previous knowledge. Leaders are aware of the further improvements they want to make to ensure pupils learn well

across the curriculum. In the sixth form, there are courses to suit the needs and aspirations of all students. They achieve well, and are driven to aim high through choosing the right pathway for the next step in their education, employment or training. The majority go on to university.

Reading is a priority for leaders. They have taken proactive steps to make sure that anyone who has fallen behind during the pandemic is given intensive support to help them catch up. Pupils are happy to read out loud in class. They are confident to do so because of the positive atmosphere created by their classmates and teachers.

Pupils with SEND are ambitious for the future. They enjoy school and value their positive relationships with staff. These pupils receive effective support and, crucially, access the same curriculum as everyone else. This includes those who attend the specialist resource base. This is a strength of the school. Thoughtful support is provided in lessons that focus on pupils' individual needs. This support could be strengthened further by ensuring that teachers provide learning support assistants with specific subject knowledge. This will help pupils with SEND develop more key knowledge in the different subjects.

Led by the school leaders, the staff's high expectations of behaviour ensures that pupils' conduct and attitude are consistently impressive across the school. Strong and trusting relationships exist between pupils and staff. Pupils are keen to learn and actively follow the routines their teachers put in place. Sixth-form students fulfil key roles in school life and enjoy their leadership opportunities, which they excel in. Across the whole school, tutors provide the support for pupils to become increasingly confident, independent and aspirational. For example, the members of the student leadership team expertly greet scheduled visitors, helping them to feel welcome and ensuring that important procedures are followed.

Trustees, local advisers (governors) and leaders are conscious of teachers' workload and prioritise the sharing with staff the reasons behind the changes and decisions that are made. This contributes to a vibrant sense of togetherness. The vast majority of staff told inspectors they are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders perform the necessary checks on staff recruited to the school. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They complete additional online training in key areas, such as peer-on-peer abuse and radicalisation.

There are clear procedures for reporting concerns and all staff know how to use these. Safeguarding has the highest possible profile in school. Leaders are reflective and review their practice to strengthen safeguarding arrangements as necessary. They proactively engage with the school community to keep everyone safe.

Leaders quickly identify pupils who need support. They make timely referrals to outside agencies, rigorously following these up if required.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Learning support assistants do not always know what the intended subject knowledge and skills are within different subjects. Leaders should make sure that structures and processes are in place to ensure that learning support assistants have the specific subject knowledge they need to support pupils with SEND in the classroom. This will further help these pupils to achieve well. Leaders are aware that they want to further strengthen the curriculum in some of the foundation subjects. Leaders must continue to work closely with staff to securely and consistently embed the teaching and assessment of the intended curriculum across every subject. This will help to ensure that pupils know and remember more across the school's full curriculum.

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 predecessor school, St. Crispin's School, to be good in July 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	145286
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10227668
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1230
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	252
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Beckett
Headteacher	Ginny Rhodes
Website	www.crispins.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined the Circle Trust in 2018.
- The school has an additionally resourced provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school uses one registered provider of alternative education.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders, teachers and pupils. The lead inspector also met with the chair of trustees and members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, history and music. In each subject, inspectors visited lessons, scrutinised the work in pupils' books and held discussions with subject leaders, teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors spoke informally with pupils around the school site. The lead inspector also met with groups of pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation, including policies and records of behaviour, exclusions and attendance.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a senior leader from the alternative provider of education used by the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors viewed the school website and policies. Inspectors held meetings with safeguarding leaders, spoke to pupils and staff, scrutinised school records of the safeguarding checks on adults working in the school and spoke to governors.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's staff's and pupils' surveys.

Inspection team

Gary Tostevin, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Cousins	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Willman	Ofsted Inspector

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