

Inspection of Fulham Cross Girls' School and Language College

Munster Road, Fulham, London, SW6 6BP

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Ofsted has not previously inspected Fulham Cross Girls' School and Languages College as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school provides a supportive and welcoming community. Leaders have developed a curriculum and ethos that are aspirational and meet the needs of all its pupils. Staff and pupils are fully on board with leaders' aims. Pupils enjoy learning. They are proud to be members of the school.

Pupils learn about diversity. They feel they are accepted for who they are, and learn to value others' views, choices and experiences. Helping pupils to grow into respectful citizens is central to the provision for personal development. Leaders seek out pupils' views on how to improve the school further and actively involve them in any decisions made. Pupils particularly like taking part in a rich offer of wider opportunities beyond the academic curriculum.

Pupils are confident that on the rare occasions that bullying occurs, it will be dealt with effectively. Staff are quick to address any concerns that arise. In lessons, pupils behave well, meaning that all can focus successfully on their learning.

Ensuring high expectations and equal opportunities are clear priorities. Leaders and staff are ambitious for all, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects. They focus on helping pupils to learn and remember important knowledge. Pupils typically achieve well across the curriculum.

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

Leaders have established a curriculum that provides ambition, breadth and interest for all pupils. Pupils study a broad range of subjects in Years 7, 8 and 9. They continue to have a wide choice of academic and vocational subjects to choose from in Years 10 and 11.

Ensuring that pupils practise what they know is successfully woven through the curriculum. For example, weekly 'empower lessons' enable pupils to apply and extend their knowledge in different contexts.

In most subjects, leaders sequence pupils' learning carefully. They ensure that pupils increase and deepen their knowledge progressively. Teachers deliver the curriculum through well-selected tasks and resources. Previous learning is revisited regularly and pupils' understanding of essential ideas is checked systematically.

Assessments focus purposefully on finding out if pupils are knowing more and remembering more in a subject. If pupils have gaps in their knowledge, teachers address these promptly. This includes any gaps in understanding that have arisen during the pandemic.

In most subjects, pupils receive tasks that reflect leaders' high expectations and pupils routinely produce high-quality work. Leaders ensure that pupils who need additional help, both with their well-being or academic learning, are identified. In most cases, these pupils, including those with SEND, benefit from adaptations that enable them to learn the same knowledge as everyone else. This includes support in classrooms as well as extra help outside of timetabled lessons. On occasions, however, these adaptations are not sharply focused on helping pupils to overcome any barriers to learning.

Leaders promote a joy of reading, including through the use of 'library lessons'. When pupils join the school, leaders quickly find out if they need additional support to read fluently and accurately. These pupils receive effective and timely extra help. They are encouraged to practise reading regularly. At times, however, staff do not guide pupils to choose books that will help to develop reading fluency and confidence.

As well as providing and promoting a rich set of experiences for all pupils through the wider curriculum, leaders plan carefully to develop pupils' confidence and character. Pupils are taught about how to keep safe as well as treating others with kindness and respect. Pupils learn to recognise their rights and responsibilities, and those of others. Leaders provide frequent leadership opportunities, for example, through becoming a 'kindness ambassador' or joining the school council. Careers guidance is well planned. Pupils receive plentiful information on the options open to them in the future. Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. They learn to understand and value how they can make a positive difference to the lives of others. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and classrooms are free from disruption.

Staff feel very well supported by leaders. They receive regular opportunities to develop professionally and feel their well-being is considered. Governors support and monitor the school effectively, for example, through link governor visits.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have set up systems that are centred on the needs of each individual child. They consider learning, attendance, and behaviour in identifying and addressing concerns about pupils' welfare. Leaders train staff to be vigilant and ensure that they are aware of key issues, including for instance, mental health and well-being. They also teach pupils how to stay safe through lessons and assemblies. When concerns arise, staff share these promptly with the safeguarding team.

Leaders work closely with families and wider agencies to ensure the safety of pupils. This is greatly appreciated by pupils, who have access to a range of support on and off the site, especially for their mental health.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few instances, leaders' approaches to supporting and checking the learning of pupils, particularly those with SEND, are not followed consistently by all staff. This means that, occasionally, adaptations made for these pupils are not finely tuned to their needs. Leaders should ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, benefit consistently from well-targeted adaptations that enable them to successfully learn the planned curriculum.
- Sometimes, pupils do not receive helpful guidance on what books to choose to practise their reading. At times, they choose books that do not fully support their progression in reading. Leaders and staff should support pupils to select reading books that help to increase pupils' reading fluency and confidence.

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	139365
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10202709
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	615
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair of trust	Phillip Barton
Headteacher	Sally Brooks (Executive Principal)
Website	http://www.fulhamcross.net/
Date of previous inspection	26 November 2015, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Fulham Cross Girls' School has not been inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 since it became an academy in March 2013. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- This school provides education for girls aged 11 to 16. It forms part of the Fulham Cross Academy Trust, together with Fulham Cross Academy. The trust operates a sixth form at the Fulham Cross Academy site, which many pupils go on to attend.
- Since the last inspection an executive principal has led the two academies. The two co-headteachers lead the school and also work at Fulham Cross Academy. The executive principal is also the chief executive officer of the trust. Some teachers and support staff also work partly in Fulham Cross Academy.
- The school makes use of three registered alternative providers and one health provision.
- Careers guidance meets the requirement 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

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

- Inspectors spoke to senior staff with responsibility for curriculum, behaviour and attendance, personal development, inclusion, safeguarding and the sixth form. They also spoke with a representative from the local authority and governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: science, English, religious studies, physical education and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were considered as part of this inspection.
- To inspect personal development, behaviour and attitudes, and safeguarding, inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and teachers across the school, considered pupils', parents' and staff's responses to Ofsted's surveys, and spoke to safeguarding leaders. They also spoke to pupils with leadership roles and visited form time and assemblies. Records of pre-employment checks and safeguarding documentation were also reviewed.
- Inspectors spoke to members of the governing body and the chair of the trust.

Inspection team

Alice Clay, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jonathan Roddick	Ofsted Inspector
Sophie Cavanagh	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Hook	Ofsted Inspector

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