

Inspection of a good school: Isleworth and Syon School for Boys

Ridgeway Road, Isleworth TW7 5LJ

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 May 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school and appreciate the support they receive from teachers. The school serves a diverse area. Leaders have established several partnerships at local level: support with physical education is offered to nearby primary schools. Girls attending lessons in the sixth form feel well integrated within the school community.

Working relationships between staff and pupils are generally positive. In the classroom, when expectations are clear and tasks engaging, pupils work well. However, they produce poor work if they do not understand what they are learning. This also happens when the tasks set do not challenge them.

Pupils interact positively with their peers and show control when involved in games at break or lunch. However, some pupils occasionally show boisterous behaviour. This mainly happens in corridors outside of lesson time.

Leaders deal with any bullying incidents which are brought to their attention, although some pupils feel that problems are not always followed up with enough rigour. Nevertheless, pupils feel safe at school and know whom to approach for help if it is needed.

Extra-curricular activities are being reintroduced following the pandemic. These include sports, debating skills and creative opportunities in drama, music and art. Pupils feel there is something for everyone.

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

Leaders have put a lot of thought into planning the curriculum, including careful sequencing of the order in which lessons are taught. Teachers are secure in their own

subject knowledge and present new information with clarity. They understand the importance of questioning pupils on a regular basis, to check their understanding and promote thinking. Sixth-form students, in particular, are involved in detailed discussions during lessons. These help them recall and consolidate previous learning.

Leaders understand the importance of helping all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to gain greater knowledge and skills over time. However, the written tasks provided in lessons do not always reflect leaders' ambition. The knowledge and skills that pupils show orally when responding to questions are not reflected with enough consistency in their written work. This is especially the case for pupils with SEND. For example, in science, these pupils engage well with practical activities. However, they are not supported well enough to express their learning in written form. In languages, they struggle to produce longer pieces of writing when the teacher provides insufficient scaffolding guidance.

When the level of challenge in classroom work does not match pupils' abilities or, in the case of pupils with SEND, their needs, they become disengaged. Too much work is not attempted or is only partially finished. On occasion, this also results in low-level disruption. Leaders have introduced a three-point graded system – 'ready, respectful, safe' – to promote good behaviour. However, not all staff follow this protocol, which allows poor behaviour to persist.

Leaders prioritise the promotion of reading skills. A carefully structured programme is in place to support struggling pupils to become fluent readers. Teachers model best practice. They also check speaking skills carefully, especially in English, as part of discussions. This practice extends to the teaching of modern foreign languages, where teachers correct pronunciation when pupils are reading out loud.

Pupils have opportunities to discharge leadership roles in the school council, in the library and in support of the reading recovery programme. Students in the sixth form speak highly of the support they received in choosing their courses. They also valued the information provided about the vocational offer.

Leaders are very supportive of teachers and consider their professional development. Opportunities are provided for staff to work in teams. These have a positive impact on reducing workload. In particular, they make more effective use of the time teachers spend planning lessons and marking assessments. Staff feel well supported by leaders in managing pupils' behaviour. They are confident in approaching leaders with any concerns they might have.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Systems and procedures are clear. Ongoing training ensures staff remain alert to safeguarding priorities. Regular bulletin items followed by quizzes help teachers remember important information. Assemblies address important safeguarding issues. Key

messages are also shared in some lessons. Pupils feel well supported by the curriculum in becoming knowledgeable about risks.

Safeguarding personnel work well together as a team. High-level cases are allocated based on the expertise of the chosen team member. The school has a leading role in the community action partnership project, a local forum. There is productive cooperation with all external agencies. Leaders do not hesitate to challenge these where required.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Although the curriculum is carefully planned, ambition in lessons is inconsistent and expectations vary. When tasks are not sufficiently challenging, the quality and volume of work produced are sometimes disappointing. Leaders should ensure that the work set challenges all pupils appropriately.
- In some lessons, the work set for pupils with SEND does not match their needs closely enough. As a result, these pupils struggle to produce the work expected of them. Leaders should ensure that the work set is accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND.
- On some occasions, pupils' behaviour fails to meet the standards set by leaders. This results in disruption both in unstructured times and in lessons. Leaders should ensure that policies are applied consistently and that sanctions provide an effective deterrent for all 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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 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	137940
Local authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	10211369
Type of school	Other secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1124
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	191
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Vanessa Smith
Headteacher	Euan Ferguson
Website	www.isleworthsyon.org/
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently uses one alternative provider, the Woodbridge Park Education Service.

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 held meetings with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers, and had telephone discussions with a senior leader at the alternative provision. During the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils about life at school and about their work.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: modern foreign languages, computer science, geography, English and science. 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. Inspectors also visited lessons in other subjects as part of the inspection.

- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents and carers in the 130 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered the responses from staff and pupils to Ofsted's surveys.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff. They also reviewed information about pupils' behaviour.

Inspection team

Luisa Bonelli, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Janice Howkins

Ofsted Inspector

Ian Morris

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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