

Inspection of The Magna Carta School

Thorpe Road, Staines, Surrey TW18 3HJ

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are ambitious for pupils' academic success. Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum and a wide choice of GCSE subjects. A well-planned personal, social and health education programme helps pupils to understand how to stay safe and well.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Pupils are safe but they are concerned about the behaviour of others. They say that bullying occurs, but staff are usually quick to act when they are made aware. Pupils can all name an adult with whom they can speak if they have any problems.

The school has provided an extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities. These cover sport and performing arts as well as frequent trips abroad. Pupils are proud of the opportunities to compete and be successful in a range of sporting events. The careers programme ensures that pupils are well supported in their future career choices.

The curriculum helps pupils to develop their understanding of fundamental British values, and the importance of respect and tolerance. However, not all pupils feel able to express themselves and say it is important to 'blend in'. They are concerned about the use of derogatory language which is too often dismissed as 'banter'.

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

Recently appointed leaders have worked with determination to improve the quality of education that pupils receive. They have made significant improvements to the curriculum. Curriculum plans have been revisited. Content has been adjusted to help pupils to build up their knowledge. Schemes of work are now suitably linked to the national curriculum. However, the overall quality of education is still variable.

Staff have mixed feelings about school leadership. There are many new initiatives and early signs of improvements in terms of vision, direction, behaviour, and the curriculum. Recently appointed senior leaders are having a positive impact on the pace of improvements. Most teachers spoken to say their workload is well managed.

Pupils are engaged in their lessons. Literacy and subject specific vocabulary are well supported. Teachers have strong subject and pedagogical knowledge. In some subjects, this is used well to deepen knowledge and check errors and misconceptions. However, the quality of work in pupils' books and folders is variable. Assessment practice is erratic.

Leaders have made the development of reading a top priority. Reading is well supported by the English department. However, whole-school approaches to reading are only partially effective in encouraging pupils to read for pleasure. School leaders are aware that these procedures need to be revived.

In most subjects, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are suitably supported. Teaching assistants are deployed appropriately. Challenging content is provided for the highest attaining pupils. Disadvantaged pupils are well known. Their performance is variable in relation to their peers because they miss too much school.

Leaders know that improvements are needed in behaviour. A recent change to the policy has been made to mixed reviews from pupils and staff. Pupils believe the policy does not go far enough to address bullying and unkind derogatory language. Pupils do not feel involved in key policy development. There is no student council to hear their voice.

Parents and carers feel disengaged and uninformed. Their feedback is tainted by historical incidents and concerns about behaviour and staffing. They say that communication from the school is poor. The school accepts that communication is a priority for urgent improvement.

The 'Learning shapes lives' philosophy is beginning to gain traction across the school. Senior leaders know their school. The school development plan is realistic and prioritised. Improvement activities are identified, and success criteria provided.

Those with responsibility for governance ensure that the school fulfils its duties. Governors and trust members have a better knowledge and understanding of the school. They recognise the frustrations shared by parents. They have correctly identified, and are beginning to address, the school's shortfalls.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding practices have been tightened. The welfare, well-being and safety of all pupils is a high priority for school leaders. The single central record now meets all requirements. Appropriate vetting checks are undertaken for all staff, governors and volunteers. Leaders collaborate effectively with the local authority and other safeguarding partners. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and frequent updates. They know how to identify risks and what to do if they have concerns. Assemblies and lessons teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils learn about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate context.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are ambitious for the quality of education, but the intent and implementation are not yet consistent across all subjects. As a result, pupils do not always build upon their prior learning to learn more, remember more, and

achieve well. Leaders should ensure that the intent and implementation of the curriculum in all subjects is as good as the very best practice in the school.

- Parents, pupils and staff say that communication is problematic. They do not feel sufficiently engaged in the process of school improvement and do not always contribute their views and ideas for improvement. Leaders should ensure that communications with stakeholders allow them to better understand what is going on in the school and feel more engaged in the process of school improvement.
- The behaviour of a small minority of pupils is not consistently good. As a result, learning is occasionally interrupted. Leaders should ensure that the recently introduced behaviour policy is fully embedded and that pupils' behaviour is positive and respectful. Leaders should also ensure that the policy is reviewed in the light of feedback from all stakeholders including staff, pupils and parents.

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	137116
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10245130
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Laura Ellis-Philip
Headteacher	Jeanette Bell
Website	www.magnacarta.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The Magna Carta School is an above average-sized 11 to 16 mixed secondary school which is part of the Unity Schools Trust.
- Six pupils attend alternative provision at one Ofsted registered education provider and an alternative learning service offered in conjunction with the local authority.
- 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

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 conducted deep dives in English, science, geography, languages, art and physical education. 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 their work.

- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, staff and pupils. They reviewed the single central record and checked the school's safeguarding practices. Inspectors looked at school policies, curriculum documentation, behaviour logs, attendance records and destination statistics. The lead inspector met with trustees and members of the local governing board remotely and face to face.
- Inspectors considered 274 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and 207 additional written comments from parents. They looked at the survey returns completed by 53 staff and 268 pupils. They reviewed email correspondence from parents and spoke to staff at alternative placement schools.

Inspection team

Paul Metcalf, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Nick Simmonds	Ofsted Inspector
Keith Pailthorpe	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Johnson	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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