

Inspection of West London Free School

241 King Street, London W6 9LP

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish here. Leaders have high academic expectations for pupils. The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Teachers are skilled and know how to get the best from their pupils. Pupils behave well and work hard in lessons.

Leaders encourage pupils to develop their skills in public speaking. Pupils are confident and articulate. They engage in debate around current affairs and are considerate of the views of others. Pupils report that bullying is rare. When it does happen, staff are quick to deal with it.

Leaders make sure that all pupils develop their talents and interests. Pupils who attend a range of physical, academic and creative clubs receive a special diploma from the school. Leaders have built valuable links with the local community, including a range of local sports facilities. This increases the opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide range of sporting activities.

Sixth-form students are role models to younger pupils. They support younger pupils with mathematics and reading and organise sections of the school's orchestra.

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

Leaders have carefully considered what they want pupils to learn. The curriculum is knowledge-rich and sequenced so that pupils' understanding and skills build over time. Subject leaders have broadened the range of authors, artists and historical figures that pupils study to reflect the school's community. The curriculum offered to sixth-form students is of exceptional quality. Teachers routinely expose students to work that is above A-level.

Leaders have planned the curriculum to be broad and ambitious for most pupils. All pupils have the opportunity to study Latin from Year 7. A small number of pupils do not study modern foreign languages or classics alongside their peers. This limits the breadth of the curriculum for these pupils and narrows the range of GCSE subjects they can take.

Teachers are experts in their subjects. They communicate new learning with clarity. Teachers use every opportunity to revisit learning and check pupils' understanding. They support pupils to remember key knowledge over time. Teachers use assessment well to help pupils to improve.

Pupils are polite and well mannered. They listen carefully to their teachers. Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. They have introduced a system of rewards to further encourage pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour. They provide support for pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour. Leaders have built strong relationships with parents and carers and help them to support their children's learning.

Teachers are trained to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Leaders have developed clear plans that outline the specific support each pupil needs. Adults who work with pupils with SEND have the expertise needed to help pupils to access the same curriculum as their peers.

The library is the 'heart' of the school. Leaders encourage pupils to read for pleasure. Form tutors read aloud with their form groups every week. Some pupils attend lessons to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. However, leaders do not ensure the needs of these pupils are accurately assessed. This limits the progress these pupils make over time in developing fluency in reading and mathematics.

The personal development curriculum is exemplary. Pupils explore a wide range of important issues such as mental health, tolerance and respect, and British politics. The school's 'great conversations' theme days give pupils the opportunity to debate challenging topics and question the world around them. Pupils in Year 7 engage in public speaking in an annual presenting competition.

Sixth-form senior prefects work with leaders to improve the learning environment for all pupils. They organise charity events and run a range of clubs and activities for younger pupils. Some students in the sixth form take part in an 'academic scholars' programme. These students explore global issues through research and debate.

Pupils choose from a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. Pupils who join the school with a music scholarship receive additional opportunities to develop their musical talents. All pupils in the school are supported to make informed choices about their next steps in education, training and employment. The school invites a diverse range of guest speakers to discuss aspects of careers and further education with sixth-form students.

Leaders are ambitious for the school's future. Staff are proud to work at the school and value the support they receive from leaders. Members of the local governing body and trustees support leaders well with school improvement. Parents appreciate the regular communication they receive from the joint headteachers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe are clear and well understood by all staff. Staff know how to identify any pupils who may be at risk of harm. When necessary, leaders work effectively with outside agencies to support vulnerable pupils. The procedures for the safe recruitment of new staff members are secure.

Leaders have increased support for pupils who are anxious or experience problems with their mental health. The school has two full-time counsellors and a school nurse who work with any pupils who need additional support. Pupils are taught about

healthy relationships, sexual harassment and consent. They feel well supported by the school when they need help.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of pupils do not study a modern foreign language or classics alongside their peers. They are removed from these lessons for additional literacy and numeracy. Leaders should ensure that proposed plans for all pupils to study the full curriculum are put into practice.
- Leaders do not accurately assess the needs of pupils with weak literacy and numeracy skills. Support for these pupils is not sufficiently tailored to help them to improve quickly. Leaders should ensure that pupils with weak literacy and numeracy skills are given specific support to enable them to access the full curriculum.

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	136750
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10228397
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
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	889
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	239
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	William Rollason
Headteacher	Ben McLaughlin and Rob Peal (joint headteachers)
Website	www.wlfs.org
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Knowledge Schools Trust.
- In September 2021 the school appointed two new joint headteachers.
- The school uses two registered alternative 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 education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors held discussions with the chief executive officer of the Knowledge Schools Trust and joint headteachers, as well as members of the wider school leadership team. They also met with trustees and members of the local governing body, including the chair of the local governing body and the vice-chair.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in science, English, art and history. They met with curriculum leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to classroom teachers. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school improvement documentation including headteachers' reports to the governing body. They also looked at records related to attendance, behaviour, and pupil movement.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders responsible for safeguarding and checked the record of pre-employment checks. They also reviewed safeguarding documentation and spoke to pupils and staff about the safety of pupils in school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and responses to the online survey of pupils' views. They also reviewed responses submitted by parents to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Annabel Davies, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Aruna Sharma	Ofsted Inspector
Debbie Lebrett	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Hudson	Ofsted Inspector

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