

# Inspection of a good school: Saint Claudine's Catholic School for Girls

Crownhill Road, London NW10 4EP

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Inspection dates:

11 and 12 October 2022

## **Outcome**

Saint Claudine's Catholic School for Girls continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders and staff are ambitious for every pupil. The school provides pupils with a safe, warm and caring community. Leaders recognise where pupils may need additional support, and are quick to provide this. Pupils were keen to emphasise that their teachers adopt a helpful and supportive approach.

Every pupil is guided to achieve their ambitions. Sixth formers are particularly positive about the help they receive in choosing their next steps. There are many opportunities designed to encourage pupils to become active citizens. Older pupils often support younger ones, for example, through shared reading activities. The 'Big Sister' scheme, where pupils take on the role of mentoring their peers, is another way that leaders encourage kindness and responsible attitudes. Pupils enjoy taking part in the wide selection of clubs and activities offered by the school.

Pupils typically behave well, meaning that little learning time is lost. When problems arise, teachers address them quickly. The behaviour system is set up to ensure that pupils are supported to do the right thing. Pupils are rewarded for learning well and for being kind. Bullying is dealt with effectively.

Pupils study a broad curriculum, and all take a wide range of academic qualifications in Year 11. They enjoy their learning, and take pride in their achievements.

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

In the last few years, leaders have taken a number of successful steps to develop and improve the curriculum. It is suitably broad and ambitious. Leaders have focused on increasing the range of subjects and qualifications on offer, for instance, in the creative arts and computing. Leaders plan to build on this further, for example, by introducing computing to the sixth-form curriculum from September 2023.

Leaders have ensured that the subject content pupils learn reflects the breadth and ambition of the national curriculum. Careful decisions about what is taught and when, enable pupils to develop secure knowledge across the full range of subjects. All pupils learn the same broad curriculum. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils who speak English as an additional language.

A large number of pupils join the school mid-way through an academic year. These pupils are warmly welcomed, and their needs are quickly assessed. If pupils are at the early stages of speaking English, they receive targeted teaching to give them a working grasp of the language. This ensures that these pupils can quickly begin to learn the curriculum alongside their peers.

Typically, pupils learn and remember key knowledge well. This is because teachers make suitable adaptations to learning. They check that pupils are building on what they already know. Pupils with SEND receive targeted help where needed. Pupils who arrive needing help to read fluently are also quickly identified and given suitable support, including with phonics. All of this work enables pupils to follow the same ambitious curriculum.

Leaders keep a careful eye on how the curriculum is delivered. In many subjects, leaders have decided exactly what pupils should be learning. They have also ordered learning into clear, well-organised steps. This approach helps teachers to check and, where necessary, reinforce pupils' recall of important knowledge. In languages, for example, teachers frequently expect pupils to recall the vocabulary that they have learned. In a few subjects, however, pupils are not remembering knowledge deeply in the long term. This is because learning is not ordered and revisited precisely. Leaders know where their curriculum thinking needs to be improved, and are acting effectively to address this.

Leaders and staff encourage pupils to reflect on their work and achievements and to make improvements. Leaders also ensure that the school environment is pleasant and stimulating. They provide numerous opportunities for pupils to take part in the life of the wider school, for example, through music, sport, performances or as part of the 'student parliament'.

Sixth-form students are especially pleased with how well the school meets their academic needs and promotes positive behaviour. Pupils are taught to stay safe, and to value and respect one another. The school's ethos is inclusive, and pupils said that tolerance is highly valued. This helps pupils to feel safe and confident.

Governors and trustees were highly supportive of leaders' efforts to support families during the COVID-19 pandemic, including with practical help. They are ambitious for the school to provide excellence within the wider community. This includes making sure that vulnerable pupils and their families receive high levels of pastoral care. They know the school very well, support its ethos, and hold leaders to account.

Staff said that they feel well supported by leaders, including with workload.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff are trained appropriately to recognise and report possible concerns. They are vigilant about the issues in the local area. Pupils are confident that they can speak to staff about concerns, and that they will receive help.

Leaders work effectively with outside agencies to address needs and act as advocates for pupils' best interests. They have also put in place a wide range of pastoral support on site, such as school-based counsellors.

Leaders consider safeguarding when putting together plans for assemblies and personal, social, health and economic education. This means that pupils learn how to stay safe.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Learning is not sequenced equally well in all subjects. While subject leaders are clear about their curriculum aims, pupils' learning has not been ordered to help them understand and remember more in the long term. Leaders have already identified this. They should continue their work to ensure that, in all subjects, learning is planned and sequenced in a sufficiently coherent way.
- Leaders recently introduced a new computing curriculum for pupils in key stage 3. Computing is also available as an option in the sixth form as a level 2 qualification or A Level. Leaders need to embed their plans to make further improvements to the computing curriculum, including extending the option to study computing to key stage 4.

## 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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 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.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137994
<b>Local authority</b>	Brent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211447
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy convertor
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	921
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	164
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Patrick Murden
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Louise McGowan
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stclaudines.co.uk">www.stclaudines.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school is part of the Diocese of Westminster Academy trust. The school received its most recent Section 48 inspection in October 2021.
- Until last year, the school was called the Convent of Jesus and Mary Language College.
- A new headteacher started at the school in September 2017. Since then, there have been several changes to leadership roles in the school.
- The school uses two registered providers for alternative provision.
- The school took over 200 new pupils onto its roll during the course of the last academic year.

## 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.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, members of the governing body, subject leaders and representatives from the governing body and trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art and design, modern foreign languages, and mathematics. Each deep dive involved discussing the curriculum with subject leaders, visiting a sample of lessons, reviewing samples of pupils' work and speaking with teachers and pupils from the lessons visited.
- The lead inspector also visited lessons and spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects. This included looking at how well the school supported pupils' reading.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during breaktimes and lunchtimes to gather evidence about the behaviour and attitudes of pupils in the school. The lead inspector also spoke about behaviour with leaders and pastoral staff.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements. They looked at safeguarding records, including pre-employment checks for staff.
- Inspectors spoke to staff about their well-being and workload. They considered responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils from different year groups. They considered pupils' responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey.

## Inspection team

Alice Clay, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Luke Stubbles

His Majesty's Inspector

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