

Inspection of Churston Ferrers Grammar School Academy

Greenway Road, Churston Ferrers, Brixham, Devon TQ5 0LN

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Churston Ferrers Grammar School Academy 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?

Leaders have high expectations of all pupils. They have put in place strong principles that guide school life. Staff and pupils understand and value these. One of the principles is active citizenship. Some pupils demonstrate this through being on the school council or part of a debating club. Students in the sixth form are subject champions and many lead extra-curricular activities in school. A significant number of pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

Pupils are happy at school and enjoy strong relationships with staff. They are positive about the education they receive, both in and beyond the classroom. Pupils feel safe in school and have a trusted adult they can talk to. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and describe it as a caring and nurturing environment.

Pupils show positive attitudes towards their learning. There is very little low-level disruption in lessons, and it is not tolerated by teachers. Bullying is rare, and most pupils agree that staff resolve any incidents quickly and effectively. A small minority of pupils say that they experience derogatory language from their peers. Leaders have created the 'Churston Charter' to address this, specifically around inappropriate sexualised language or harmful sexual behaviours.

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

Leaders provide a broad and ambitious curriculum. There are high expectations for what all pupils can achieve, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Across subjects, the scope of the national curriculum is followed. Leaders have a clear vision for the intent of the curriculum. However, in some subjects, the knowledge that pupils need to learn and the sequencing of this learning have not been considered carefully enough by leaders.

Pupils with SEND are well supported at Churston Ferrers. Staff know them well and ensure that their needs are met. The school provides reasonable adaptations for pupils where required. Leaders ensure that this is in the best interests of an individual. Pupils who may find aspects of reading a barrier to learning receive effective support. However, there is not a wider reading programme across the school to ensure that all pupils read widely and fluently.

Across the curriculum, teachers have strong subject knowledge. Leaders provide continuing professional development for teachers to develop subject knowledge. In lessons, information is presented clearly to pupils. Teachers use different forms of assessment to check that pupils remember what they have been taught. In the strongest subjects, teachers use this information to address misconceptions and adapt the curriculum. In the sixth form, there is a clear focus on revisiting learning regularly, which is helping students to know and remember more.

In lessons, pupils show a consistently positive attitude towards their learning. Educational technology is important in the school, and where devices are issued to

pupils, they look after them well. Around the school site, pupils are polite and move purposefully between lessons. Lateness to lessons is rare. During social times, pupils manage their own behaviour well and show a high level of mature independence. Students in the sixth form are role models to the younger pupils in the way they act around the school.

There is a detailed curriculum in place for the positive wider development of pupils. It follows the themes of health and well-being, relationships and living in the wider world. Pupils say that the lessons are relevant and age appropriate. As part of the curriculum, they learn about different religions and cultures and gain an understanding of inclusivity. Pupils identify and discuss fundamental British values. They access a wide extra-curricular offer, including chess, productions, birdwatching and numerous sports. Pupils make suggestions about other activities they would like to experience.

Pupils benefit from high-quality advice and guidance about careers from Year 7 onwards. There is a planned curriculum that supports the development of pupils' knowledge around potential future careers. 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. However, not all students in the sixth form currently complete a work experience placement. Leaders are taking steps to address this. All students encounter the world of work through employer visits and careers fairs. They learn about different potential pathways, including university and apprenticeships. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, are well prepared for their next steps.

Governors are supportive of the school. They understand and meet statutory obligations. They seek out the views of staff around their well-being and workload. Staff say that they feel well supported. They are consulted about any significant changes and given time to plan accordingly, for example around the changes to the timings of the school day.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a robust process in place for the safe recruitment of staff. Leaders ensure that all staff, and governors, receive the necessary statutory safeguarding training. There are regular updates to all stakeholders in response to any local or national issues.

There is a clear and effective system for reporting and recording any safeguarding concerns. Staff are confident in what to do, including when to involve external agencies. As a result, help is secured quickly for any pupils who need it.

The curriculum raises awareness to all pupils of potential safeguarding risks. They know how to use electronic devices provided by the school safely. Leaders monitor this carefully.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the intent of the curriculum and sequencing of learning have not been considered carefully enough. This leads to gaps in pupils' knowledge, where they cannot build on what they already know. Leaders should ensure that there is coherent planning and sequencing across all areas of the curriculum.
- There is not an effective reading programme in place. This means that some pupils are not reading challenging texts beyond the curriculum. Leaders should put in place a comprehensive approach to reading so that all pupils are reading widely and often.

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

Unique reference number	136388
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	10247347
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
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	1,033
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	325
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rob Tyler
Headteacher	Kieran Earley
Website	www.churstongrammar.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Churston Ferrers Grammar School Academy converted to become an academy in January 2011. When its predecessor school, Churston Ferrers Grammar School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- 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.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 discussions with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders and a group of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, history and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record of adults working in the school. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to consider how well the school identifies pupils who are at risk and engages with external services. Inspectors also spoke with a range of pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to the staff survey and responses to the survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Kelly Olive, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Helen Coulson	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Collins	Ofsted Inspector
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