

Inspection of St Angela's Ursuline School

St George's Road, Forest Gate, London E7 8HU

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

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

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected since March 2009.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils develop an extremely strong sense of community here. Older pupils support the personal and academic development of those younger than them. Pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 take on the role of peer mentors for pupils in Year 7 when they first join the school. There is a generous culture of celebrating pupils' successes and rewarding those who try hard.

Leaders have high ambitions for all pupils in the school. The well-sequenced curriculum gives pupils a sophisticated understanding of the subjects they study. Teachers are highly skilled. They know how to challenge and support pupils so that they flourish.

Pupils' behaviour reflects the high expectations of leaders, as well as the respect that pupils have for staff and for each other. Pupils and their parents reported that bullying seldom occurs. Leaders are swift to address any issues between pupils when they do arise. As a result, pupils are happy and safe.

Leaders support pupils' wider development through the school's Rise Up curriculum days. Pupils of all ages take part in exceptionally well-thought-through workshops. These help pupils to develop an increasingly deep knowledge of important issues such as equalities, relationships, sex and health education and financial literacy.

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

Leaders are determined that all pupils will succeed academically. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), study a broad and ambitious curriculum. Pupils are committed learners. They do not waste valuable learning time in class. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and take pride in their work.

The curriculum has been well-thought-out by leaders. Pupils develop a complex understanding of the links between pieces of knowledge that they have learned in different subjects. Leaders have considered ways to make the curriculum more relevant and interesting to pupils. In English, pupils study texts which draw from a range of cultures and traditions which are as equally diverse as the school's community. In art, pupils create sculptures inspired by key themes within illustrated novels.

Teachers have expert subject knowledge. They deliver subject content in manageable chunks. This helps pupils to build their knowledge and skills over time. Sixth-form students develop sophisticated research and independent learning expertise. Teachers encourage them to read scholarly texts to prepare them for their next steps in education.

Teachers routinely check what pupils know and can do. They adapt their teaching to address any gaps in pupils' knowledge as they arise. Teachers use assessment information well. As a result, pupils know what they need to do to improve their work. Assessments in mathematics and science include questions on concepts from prior learning. This encourages pupils to recall and commit their learning to memory over the long term.

Leaders prioritise reading. During English lessons in the library, teachers help pupils to pick appropriate reading books and learn research skills. Students in the sixth form lead group reading sessions for pupils in Year 7. Leaders ensure that weaker readers get the support they need to develop their reading fluency.

Leaders are meticulous in ensuring that all staff meet the precise needs of every pupil, including all those with SEND. Every pupil with SEND has an assigned adult who supports them to be fully immersed in school life. This includes the wide range of popular enrichment activities offered by the school.

Leaders encourage all pupils to take on leadership roles. This includes membership of the school council, charity and sports event organisers and school-wide leadership as senior prefects. Older pupils, especially students in the sixth form, are role models for the younger ones and inspire them to emulate them in the future. Sixth-form students work together with leaders to improve the school's environment and sustainability.

Outings and educational visits, including to galleries, theatres and museums, enrich pupils' learning in the classroom. Leaders have made sure that information about careers is delivered to pupils through each subject curriculum. Pupils felt very well-informed when making choices about their future study. The programme of careers education, advice and guidance is exceptionally thorough for pupils of all ages in the school. Pupils take part in a vast range of encounters with employers to help them to decide on their next steps in education.

Everyone supports each other here. Leaders provide a range of opportunities for staff to develop their subject knowledge and subject-teaching skills. Staff are able to contribute their views to whole-school initiatives. Leaders consider staff workload and well-being carefully when decision-making. Leaders have worked with the governing body to offer staff more flexible working hours.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that the procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust, including pre-employment checks on new staff. Staff are trained to spot the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. They apply the school's safeguarding policy and know how to report their concerns. Leaders identify vulnerable pupils and support them through a range of outside agencies to get the help they need.

Leaders have identified mental health as a particular aspect of challenge for pupils since the pandemic. They have revised the school's personal development curriculum to include more opportunities for pupils to be encouraged to look after their mental well-being.

Pupils also receive age-appropriate information about healthy relationships, about how to recognise and deal with sexual harassment, and about the importance of consent. They are taught ways to keep themselves safe online and in the local area.

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	102786
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	10242420
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1274
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anthony Kieran
Headteacher	Mark Johnson
Website	www.stangelas-ursuline.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 March 2009, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher took up post in September 2009.
- The school has a Roman Catholic religious character. The school had its last section 48 inspection by the Diocese of Brentwood in May 2022.
- 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.
- School leaders does not use any registered 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 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 held meetings with the headteacher and other school leaders. They met with members of the governing body, including the vice-chair of governors.
- Inspectors conducted curriculum deep dives in English, mathematics, art, geography and computer science. Inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited a range of lessons and spoke to subject teaching staff. Inspectors also met with a sample of pupils to ask them about their learning and looked at a selection of pupils' work.
- To judge the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, scrutinised school records relating to safeguarding and checked the school's single central record.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff and pupils who responded to the staff survey and pupil survey. They also considered the responses of parents to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Annabel Davies, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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