

Inspection of an outstanding school: Wallington County Grammar School

Croydon Road, Wallington, Surrey SM6 7PH

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 November 2022

Outcome

Wallington County Grammar School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school that has a strong sense of community and very high expectations. Staff and pupils are proud to be part of the school. Pupils leave very well prepared for the next stage of their lives.

Leaders have created a culture in which pupils relish supporting others. Pupils run clubs and events for younger pupils, lead charity week and volunteer in a local special school. Of particular note are the Junior Safeguarding Leaders. This group of pupils supports other schools to consider how to address sexual harassment, abuse and violence.

Pupils are respectful towards others. Bullying is rare, and when it happens staff deal with it quickly and fairly. Pupils explained how they feel safe and are accepted by others. They said, 'There is space for everyone and the opportunity to create your own space.' Pupils support this through leading events and clubs, for example Black History Month events and diversity club.

Girls are admitted into the sixth form and take part in all aspects of school life. Girls are extremely positive about their experience. They are mentored by older girls during their first year in the sixth form. In lessons, teachers take care to include them in all activities.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious and distinctive curriculum. In the sixth form, every subject includes knowledge from the first year of a university course. In Years 8 and 9, pupils study courses in politics and civilisations. These courses help pupils make deep connections in and between geography, history and religious studies. For example, pupils learn about different political parties in politics. Pupils then use this knowledge in history when studying the Russian revolution.

Teachers have expert subject knowledge. They use this to identify the important knowledge that needs to be taught and to decide on the best order to teach it. This

means that lessons build on what pupils have learned before. For example, in English, pupils learn about Greek myths before they learn about the English myth of Beowulf.

Teachers are passionate about the subject they teach. They explain new ideas clearly and emphasise subject-specific vocabulary. During lessons, teachers check pupils' understanding. For example, in mathematics every step of a calculation is checked. This means that misconceptions can be quickly identified and addressed.

Leaders ensure that teachers regularly check pupils' learning. Teachers use this information to identify who needs extra help. Teachers provide this help in lessons and in subject 'clinics' after lessons. These are popular with pupils, who appreciate the individual support.

Pupils are enthusiastic readers. All pupils in Years 7 and 8 take part in reading challenges. Teachers ask pupils to read complex articles about their subject in preparation for lessons. This prepares pupils very well for further study.

Leaders ensure that teachers adapt their teaching for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers use the individual strategies suggested for each pupil with SEND. They attend regular training on how best to use these strategies. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve at least as well as other pupils.

Pupils successfully take part in national competitions in most subjects. They are confident when they discuss their work and can recall what they have learned in great detail. Pupils' books show a detailed understanding of the subjects they are studying.

In lessons, low-level disruption is rare. Pupils listen to their teachers and each other. Pupils concentrate on their studies. They often complete their work independently of the teacher. If pupils find a task difficult, they will persevere.

Leaders have developed a comprehensive programme for personal development. Pupils learn more about their interests in after-school clubs. These include academic, sporting and cultural clubs. All pupils take part in these as well as regular whole-school events.

Leaders have thought carefully about the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. External agencies support this. For example, mental health professionals lead lessons on positive friendships. Pupils study fundamental British values. For example, pupils learn about democracy in lessons and in debating clubs.

Careers guidance has been prioritised by leaders. Pupils attend the annual school careers fair where they meet employers and university staff. Pupils attend regular talks with professionals about different careers. They attend clubs, such as the Oxbridge science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) club, that help them apply to leading universities.

Leaders engage with staff and consider their workload. Staff feel that leaders are considerate of their well-being. Governors and trustees have an accurate picture of the

school's strengths and weaknesses. They use this to hold leaders to account and to ensure the school continues to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured there is a strong culture of safeguarding.

Staff attend regular training. This ensures they are alert to the risks pupils face and report any safeguarding concerns directly to leaders. Pupils have regular lessons about the risks they might face. They know how to report their concerns directly to staff or online. There are regular workshops for parents and carers, for example about online safety and consent.

Leaders ensure that pupils can get support through the school counsellors. Leaders work closely with external agencies to secure additional help for pupils when it is needed.

Leaders carry out relevant checks on the suitability of adults working at the school.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in January 2017.

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	136798
Local authority	Sutton
Inspection number	10255412
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,103
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	353
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Katherine Herrick
Headteacher	Jamie Bean
Website	www.wcgs-sutton.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 to 8 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- 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 does not use alternative provision.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other school leaders, teaching staff and non-teaching staff. Inspectors held a discussion with four members of the local governing body and three members of the Folio Education Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: computing, history, English and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited lessons and discussed the curriculum with subject leaders in a range of other subjects, including art and design, geography and PSHE education.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders about behaviour, careers education and sixth-form provision.
- Inspectors observed behaviour in lessons and around the school. Inspectors held formal and informal discussions with groups of pupils from different year groups.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders, pupils and staff about the arrangements for safeguarding and reviewed safeguarding records and documentation. Inspectors also checked the single central record of checks made on the suitability of staff.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys and the responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

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