

Inspection of Shirley High School Performing Arts College

Shirley Church Road, Croydon CR0 5EF

Inspection dates: 30 November to 1 December 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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Trustees, leaders and staff want the very best for all pupils, including students in the sixth form. One parent or carer reflected the views of many when they stated: 'Leaders' ambitions and high expectations of pupils, teachers and parents cascade throughout the community.'

Pupils support the changes that leaders have introduced since the previous inspection. Pupils have embraced the higher expectations in all areas of school life.

Leaders work in partnership with pupils to improve the school. Leaders consider pupils' views and act on them. Following feedback from pupils, leaders improved pupil access to laptops to help them complete their homework.

Staff have positive relationships with pupils. During lessons, pupils are attentive to their teachers and concentrate on their work. When pupils are debating during lessons, they listen to each other respectfully. Around the school, pupils act with maturity. Pupils are safe. They know that bullying is unacceptable. On the rare occasions bullying happens, leaders act promptly.

A highlight of the school year is cultural capital week. Pupils go on visits that link to their studies, such as a visit to the Imperial War Museum to study the First World War and to the Old Bailey courts to study justice.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum for all pupils. This includes dance, music and drama as part of the school's performing arts specialism. Spanish has been introduced so that pupils can study two modern foreign languages. This is part of leaders' plans to increase the proportion of pupils studying the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects.

Leaders have identified the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. They have thought carefully about the order in which subject content is taught. This ensures that new teaching builds on pupils' previous learning.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use this to explain things clearly one step at a time. Teachers check regularly for understanding and take action if pupils need help. For example, in chemistry pupils who did not fully understand new information about isomers were quickly identified and supported to catch up.

Leaders have ensured that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have individual plans that describe the strategies teachers should use with each pupil. Teachers use these plans to adapt their approach when teaching the curriculum. If pupils with SEND start to fall behind, they receive support to help them catch up. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve as well as other pupils.

Leaders promote a love of reading through the new library, twice-weekly online reading challenges and reading during form period. Struggling readers are prioritised for extra help but this is not always precisely matched to their needs.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of behaviour. Pupils are motivated to achieve the rewards for good behaviour. Teachers respond quickly and effectively to any rare instances of low-level disruption in lessons.

Leaders ensure that pupils are supported to improve their behaviour, including in the School House specialist provision. Pupils typically express the view that 'everyone deserves a second chance'.

Pupils have opportunities to develop their leadership skills. They speak highly of the training they receive to become prefects, mental health ambassadors or anti-bullying ambassadors. There is a range of clubs available for pupils to attend. However, many pupils do not take part in these regularly.

Leaders provide pupils with a comprehensive careers programme. This includes talks from visiting professionals. For example, pupils attended a workshop on portrait photography and learned about careers in photography. Pupils receive guidance on their next steps, including applying for apprenticeships and university. The scholars club supports students applying to highly selective universities.

Leaders have created a well-designed personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. Pupils are taught about mental health, puberty and healthy relationships. Leaders consult pupils regarding the content of PSHE. As a result of this consultation, leaders have added more lessons on personal finance and sexual harassment, abuse and violence. Pupils study fundamental British values. They use their understanding of these during the weekly current affairs debate that all pupils take part in.

Staff are proud to work in the school. They report that it is well led. Leaders have taken steps to reduce staff workload. They are considerate of, and provide activities to support, staff well-being.

Trustees are well informed about the school. They undertake regular visits and consider a wide range of information. Trustees challenge leaders and ask demanding questions of them. Trustees fulfil their statutory responsibilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff receive regular training and updates. Pupils learn about how to stay safe through PSHE lessons and assemblies. They have learned about topics such as consent and online safety. Parents receive information about safeguarding risks.

Leaders encourage staff and pupils to report any concerns. They ensure that these are acted on. Leaders work closely with external partners to secure help for pupils. The school-based social worker, counsellors and mentors provide additional help for pupils when it is needed.

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

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' systems for ensuring that struggling readers are matched to the correct reading intervention are not precise. This means that these pupils do not catch up quickly. Leaders should ensure that they identify the precise gaps in pupils' reading knowledge so that pupils receive the right help to enable them to develop their reading swiftly.
- A large proportion of pupils do not take part in enrichment activities, such as clubs. This means that pupils do not develop a range of interests beyond the academic curriculum. Leaders should improve participation in enrichment activities so that pupils have more opportunities to broaden their outlook and interests.

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	137772
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10241131
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	920
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	157
Chair of Trust	Magdalene Nyerovwo Adenaike and Joey Theodore Bajela (co-chairs)
Headteacher	Tyrone Myton
Website	www.shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher joined the school in September 2019.
- Careers guidance meets the requirement 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 the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other school leaders and teaching staff. Inspectors held a discussion with three members of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art and design, English, languages and mathematics. 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 history, PSHE, science, and travel and tourism.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders about attendance, 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 survey, responses to the staff survey and responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Gary Phillips, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Bec Allott	Ofsted Inspector
Jonty Archibald	Ofsted Inspector
Lauren Thorpe	Ofsted Inspector

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