

Inspection of a good school: Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School

Hurst Road, Sidcup, Kent DA15 9AG

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2022

Outcome

Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this school. They have access to a broad curriculum and a large range of wider opportunities. Leaders have high expectations for pupils' conduct. They seek to develop inquiring, informed and compassionate young leaders. Pupils are polite, hardworking and proud of their school.

Leaders have high aspirations for what pupils can achieve. The curriculum is ambitious and pupils enjoy being challenged. They take pride in their work. The examples of art work on show in the school gallery typify the high-quality outcomes pupils produce. Leaders have carefully considered all their pupils when developing the extra-curricular programme. Opportunities range from sport and music activities, jewellery club and the 'zen-den', which takes place every lunchtime to provide a quiet space for pupils.

Pupils are safe in the school. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary both in lessons and around the school site. Leaders ensure staff are well trained to support pupils pastorally. Sixth-form students have been trained as mental health ambassadors. Incidents of bullying are rare. If it does happen, leaders act quickly to address issues. Leaders have developed the 'respect curriculum' to support pupils' personal development. Pupils consider the content of this programme to be relevant and helpful.

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

Leaders ensure that pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. This matches, and in places exceeds, the ambition of the national curriculum. All pupils study the EBacc suite of subjects at GCSE. Students in the sixth form can choose from a wide range of A Level subjects.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum for each subject is set out in a way that helps pupils to build knowledge over time. Subjects are sequenced in a logical order so that topics are revisited and become increasingly complex. Low-level disruption is rare during lessons. Effective systems are in place to ensure it does not affect learning.

In many subjects, pupils demonstrate a firm understanding of new content and they typically remember knowledge learned previously. For example, in English, Year 12 pupils remember how the theme of gender has developed in lessons from the younger years to sixth form. However, this is not consistent in all subject departments. Sometimes, pupils' misconceptions are not successfully addressed, or they cannot use key vocabulary accurately.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and use various strategies to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. For example, in art, pupils receive regular targeted feedback on their work, and sixth-form students take part in weekly peer review sessions.

Leaders have placed an emphasis on developing literacy and reading which is visible around the school. All pupils in Year 7 take a reading test. This highlights pupils who require more practice or support with comprehension. These pupils receive help from the English department to catch up with their peers.

Leaders provide teachers with training and strategies to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This helps these pupils to access the full curriculum effectively. That said, leaders have not embedded systems to check that strategies are effective or being consistently used by staff.

Pupils' broader development is underpinned by the 'respect curriculum'. Teachers deliver this programme during form time, assemblies and skills for life lessons or drop-down days. Leaders have made sure that the programme covers key topics which are developed and built upon in an age-appropriate manner.

Leaders have developed strong careers provision. Pupils have access to independent careers advice and the programme meets the Baker Clause and Gatsby benchmarks. Pupils have access to various external speakers and organisations, including a range of employers, universities and apprenticeship providers. The school has recently been re-accredited with the National Equalities and Careers Award.

Students in the sixth form have access to effective support when planning their next steps in education, employment or training. Leaders have developed a programme to support students' early entry applications, including to medicine and dentistry courses and to top universities.

Leaders track pupils' attendance and participation in wider curriculum activities. Pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils are encouraged to take part in these. They are also prioritised for opportunities to participate in school trips.

Leaders carefully consider the health and well-being of staff. They are conscious of the pressures of workload, and staff appreciate leaders' open-door policy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have set up secure systems to identify and support pupils' needs. Staff are well trained and vigilant in reporting concerns. Leaders take swift action to address any emerging safeguarding matters and understand the local context of the school.

Leaders have established a range of strategies to care for pupils. These include a support hub, specialist staff and work with external agencies when required. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They know how to report any concerns and trust staff to help them if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teaching does not identify or clarify pupils' misunderstanding precisely. This means that sometimes pupils are not ready for new knowledge and concepts. Leaders should ensure that teachers check understanding and address gaps in knowledge consistently well.
- Systems to check the strategies in place for pupils with SEND are not fully embedded in the school. This means that leaders do not know if the strategies are effective or used consistently. Leaders should develop systems to regularly check the support that is in place for pupils with SEND.

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 December 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

Unique reference number	137423
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10250720
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	1440
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	486
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Amanda Sutton
Headteacher	Nigel Walker
Website	www.csgrammar.com/
Date of previous inspection	19 September 2017

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 uses no alternative provision.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, and a range of staff. They also met with members of the governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, art and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum and visited lessons in some other subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke with the designated safeguarding leads, along with pupils and staff. Inspectors reviewed the single central record and other relevant documentation.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils and staff, including through responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

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