

# Inspection of Selly Park Girls' School

5 Selly Park Road, Selly Park, Birmingham, West Midlands B29 7PH

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Inspection dates: 23 and 24 November 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 13 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time. From then 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.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Many pupils thrive both academically and socially at this school. Leaders have high expectations for what they want pupils to achieve and for pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond positively to the high bar that staff set across many areas of school life. The school's vision to be 'a beacon of inspiration and aspiration' is evident throughout.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. In lessons, they are highly focused and motivated young adults. Many pupils enjoy strong relationships with staff. Bullying is extremely rare. Where there are acts of unkindness, this is not tolerated and the pastoral team sort this out.

The curriculum is broad and varied. At key stage 4, pupils can opt to study a range of different subjects. Staff provide high levels of support, including a Saturday school, so that pupils are well prepared for their GCSE examinations. In many subjects, pupils achieve impressive outcomes.

Pupils enjoy a wide, rich set of experiences that help to broaden their personal development. The 'Selly Park Seven' ensures that all pupils undertake an extensive range of different activities throughout their time at school. These range from volunteering events in Year 7 to visiting local and national tourist attractions in Years 10 and 11.

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

Leaders have a strong understanding of the community they serve. They recognise that many pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds. This is not seen as a barrier to success. Leaders have put in place a highly ambitious curriculum, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Many subjects at key stage 3 go beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum. In addition, all pupils study a modern foreign language as part of their key stage 4 curriculum.

The curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced. Leaders have carefully considered the order in which topics are studied and how pupils build on their learning over time. In many subjects, leaders have tailored the curriculum to the local context and the pupils at the school. In history, for example, leaders have included topics on civil rights, women's rights and roles as well as industrialisation in Birmingham. Similarly in English, leaders have chosen texts with strong female characters or narrative voices. Many pupils enjoy their learning in these subjects and make strong progress.

The curriculum is taught highly effectively. Many teachers use their subject knowledge very well to explain new ideas and concepts. Alongside this, teachers use questioning effectively to check what pupils know and can remember. This helps to ensure that pupils make strong progress. However, on a few occasions, assessment

strategies in key stage 3 are not used consistently to help pupils improve their understanding.

Pupils with SEND are extremely well supported. Teachers, alongside learning mentors, provide effective support in the classroom so that pupils with SEND can access learning. Individual learning plans are regularly reviewed and leaders provide ongoing training for staff around specific SEND needs. Pupils with SEND are fully integrated into the school community and well prepared for their next steps.

Leaders have put in place a clear strategy to support and develop pupils' reading skills. Leaders accurately assess pupils across all years to identify those who would benefit from literacy support. Weaker readers benefit from one-to-one or small group intervention to practise their phonics. As a result, pupils who struggle with reading catch up quickly.

The school's personal development curriculum is comprehensive. Aspects of both citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education are taught in form time, Period 6 lessons and assemblies. Leaders ensure that pupils build their knowledge and understanding of topics like consent and relationships in an age-appropriate way. Many other aspects to enhance and develop pupils' character are fully embedded into school life. This includes inter-house competitions and enrichment activities, such as free music lessons. Pupils also benefit from completing first-aid training.

The school's careers programme provides a wealth of different experiences. Leaders ensure that pupils are well supported in making choices about post-16 destinations, including visits to local colleges, career interviews and apprenticeship talks. Many pupils value the various opportunities they are given to engage with the world of work.

Governors carry out their role highly effectively. They are extremely committed to the school and provide strong support and challenge to leaders. They carry out their statutory duties well.

Leaders seek many ways to engage with staff regarding workload and well-being. This includes establishing a workload committee, consulting on the school calendar and changes to data collection. However, some staff in Ofsted's survey stated that there is increased workload around new systems that are not always fully considered by leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a strong knowledge of the school's context and the main safeguarding issues that occur locally. Leaders have ensured that there are appropriate systems in place so that staff can record concerns about a child. There are regular briefing

sessions with staff so that their knowledge of safeguarding is kept up to date. Leaders ensure that pupils who need help and support get this in a timely way. Safeguarding records are detailed and well-managed.

Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe through the PSHE curriculum, and the information provided in assemblies and form time. This valuable support has included 'PSHE Days' at the start of the year with a focus on child-on-child abuse and how to report concerns.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- On a few occasions, teachers' use of assessment methods in key stage 3 is not as effective as it could be. This means that some pupils do not improve their understanding fully in all areas. Leaders should ensure that assessment at key stage 3 is further strengthened so that pupils consistently benefit from the most effective support for their learning.
- Some staff do not always understand the rationale for changes made at the school or the introduction of new initiatives. Some say these changes have a negative impact on their workload. Leaders should continue to engage with all staff so that the impact of new processes and systems are fully considered.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103498
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10242475
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	794
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Lily Man
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lisa Darwood
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sellyparkgirls.org">www.sellyparkgirls.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 and 15 January 2009

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- 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.

## 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 focused on the following subjects: English, mathematics, history, modern foreign languages and religious education. Inspectors examined leaders' curriculum plans, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about the way these subjects are taught.

- Inspectors also looked at other subjects to check how the curriculum is implemented.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school's curriculum and improvement planning. The school website was also checked.
- Inspectors talked to staff and leaders about safeguarding arrangements. They examined how leaders make employment checks on staff and scrutinised further safeguarding records. They also asked how incidents reported by pupils are recorded and analysed.
- Inspectors observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They also talked informally to pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Mark Howes, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Tim Bassett	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Scott	Ofsted Inspector
Elaine Haskins	Ofsted Inspector

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