

# Inspection of Coombe Wood School

30 Melville Avenue, South Croydon CR2 7HY

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Inspection dates: 17 and 18 January 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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

Pupils are happy and well cared for at this school. They especially value the support of their teachers. They said that they have lots of help to do well academically. Leaders have high ambition for their pupils' academic and personal success. Leaders prioritise pupils' health and well-being through their focus on health-related fitness and staying safe. They ensure that all pupils are involved in opportunities to be healthy, including those who may not see themselves as being very 'sporty'. Sixth-form students speak highly of the support they receive from form tutors, leaders and teachers.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They work purposefully in lessons, which are usually free from disruption. Bullying is not commonplace here. Both pupils and leaders accept that it does happen from time to time. When it does, leaders take action to stop it. Sixth-form students are excellent role models for younger pupils. They demonstrate considerate, caring behaviour and commitment to their studies.

Leaders have ensured that every pupil accesses a wide and hugely varied range of opportunities through Wednesday afternoon enrichment periods, including caring for the school's chickens, knitting, beekeeping, documentary club, fashion and textiles. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about sporting activities in particular.

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

Leaders have chosen to include complex and challenging ideas within subject curriculums. In most subjects, these ideas are well thought through to enable pupils' knowledge to build up securely over time. For example, in English, pupils in Years 7 to 9 study a wide range of Shakespeare plays in chronological order. As a result, they have very detailed knowledge about what may have influenced Shakespeare's writing over time. Pupils use this knowledge effectively to make interpretations of Shakespeare's plays. In a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified clearly enough the order in which some key ideas should be taught.

Teachers are experts in their subjects. They explain new information clearly to pupils and break complex ideas down into manageable chunks. They identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge and teach pupils what they need to know to address those gaps. Typically, they check that pupils have understood new ideas before moving on, including in the sixth form. Teachers revisit important ideas regularly with pupils to help pupils to know them securely. As a result, pupils generally remember what they have learned and can link prior knowledge to new ideas.

Leaders have a detailed understanding of pupils' needs. They take account of pupils' starting points from primary school or, in the case of students in the sixth form, from secondary school. Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified and given the support that they need. Teachers

make adjustments to resources and teaching in the classroom so that pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers.

Leaders prioritise reading. They ensure that all pupils who need support with reading are recognised and provided with the right help, including phonics for those who need it. Teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to read during lessons, including in the sixth form. Leaders have ensured that the school's library is well stocked and regularly accessed by pupils. The library staff visit tutor rooms to ensure that all pupils have a well-chosen reading book.

Leaders have created a calm, orderly school environment in which pupils typically follow the school rules and are considerate towards one another. Pupils are generally motivated, work hard in class and take their sporting and extra-curricular commitments seriously. Occasionally, learning in class is disrupted by less-than-respectful behaviour. Leaders have introduced new systems to help all pupils to conduct themselves to the same high standards.

Leaders have set out a clear programme for pupils' personal development which prioritises keeping safe, including within relationships and online. Pupils are taught regularly about current affairs and are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils are encouraged to think about their next steps through weekly sessions. Students in the sixth form spoke highly of the many opportunities they have to learn about careers first hand from people in a range of different professions. Leaders do not organise as many opportunities for younger pupils to meet as wide a range of technical education and apprenticeships providers. Leaders have made arrangements to provide further opportunities to these pupils without delay.

Staff are well supported. Typically, staff said that leaders are taking the right action to improve the school although they felt that some changes have resulted in increased workload for staff. They said that leaders listen to them and take steps to reduce their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including the governing body, and staff are well trained and very knowledgeable about the potential risks to pupils at this school. Leaders have made it a priority to ensure that all pupils have a trusted adult at school. Typically, pupils commented about how many different people they could talk to if they were worried. Pupils also know about the reporting button on the school's website.

Staff regularly report even minor concerns. As a result, leaders can sometimes spot when a pupil might need help without them having to ask for it. Leaders work closely with external agencies to secure the help pupils need quickly.

Leaders take every opportunity to share information that might prevent pupils from coming to harm. Pupils attend safeguarding assemblies every other week. Staff are

provided with a helpful weekly safeguarding 'tip'. Parents receive a safeguarding bulletin each week.

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

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

- In a few subjects, leaders have not identified clearly the order in which some important ideas should be taught. As a result, pupils find it harder to remember important ideas in these subjects and do not routinely make links between what they have learned previously and what they are learning now. Leaders should ensure that teachers in all subjects know in which order pupils should learn important knowledge.
- Opportunities for encounters with employers and apprenticeship providers for younger pupils are limited. As a result, younger pupils do not have as many opportunities to learn about possible next steps in education or training as they might. Leaders should ensure that younger pupils have timely opportunities to meet with a range of providers.

## **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>	145875
<b>Local authority</b>	Croydon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255286
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1027
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	129
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	David Herrick
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicole Williams
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.cws-croydon.co.uk">www.cws-croydon.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school uses the following alternative provisions: Croydon Afro-Caribbean Family Organisation, Bromley Trust Academy and Saffron Valley Collegiate.
- The school has a sports specialism in 'Health-Related Fitness'.

## 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, art, modern foreign languages and physical education. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to teachers and spoke to some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and supporting pupils' health and safety, as well as their welfare and well-being. This included looking at case studies and reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors also met with leaders with responsibility for SEND, reading, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors met with members of the local governing body, the chief executive officer of the Folio Education Trust and members of the trust board.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Rebecca Iles-Smith, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lauren Thorpe	Ofsted Inspector
Bec Allott	Ofsted Inspector
Olivia Page	Ofsted Inspector
Ian Morris	Ofsted Inspector
Polly Haste	His Majesty's Inspector

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