

# Inspection of Canons High School

Shaldon Road, Edgware, HA8 6AN

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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 Requires improvement

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

Leaders aspire to provide all pupils with a broad education within an inclusive environment. Pupils enjoy being part of a diverse school community, where they all feel valued.

Pupils know that their teachers care about their education and want them to succeed. They said that teachers go out of their way to support them, even outside of lesson time, for example, if they seek extra help to understand the work. This is indicative of the strong working relationships that pupils and sixth-form students enjoy with adults in this school.

The vast majority of pupils behave well. Pupils are safe. There is a large team of pastoral and pupil welfare staff. Pupils thus have many adults they can turn to should they have any worries or concerns. Staff investigate and deal with any allegations of bullying or sexual harassment, for example, in an effective manner.

Pupils are taught a wide range of topics aimed at supporting them in leading meaningful and successful lives. For example, as they progress through school, they are taught about how to form healthy relationships and consent. In the sixth form, students are taught about managing their finances and how to identify online scams.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious. It offers pupils and sixth-form students a wide range of subjects, both academic and vocational.

In the past few years, leaders have worked on developing and improving their curriculum thinking. In most subjects, the changes and improvements are well established. Leaders identify what knowledge they want pupils to learn, step by step and in a logical manner. Teachers have expertise in their subjects. They set suitable activities, use appropriate resources and plan regular recall activities. They check on pupils' learning often. They identify and address specific gaps in pupils' knowledge. As a result, pupils build and remember long-term key knowledge.

In some subjects, well-considered changes have only recently been introduced. They are beginning to have a positive impact. In a few subjects, however, leaders overly focus on general teaching strategies and have not paid enough attention to planning a well-sequenced curriculum. They have not identified what exact knowledge they want pupils to master. In these cases, pupils are not achieving as highly.

Leaders want all pupils to be confident readers. They now assess pupils' decoding ability and fluency. They provide bespoke support to those who are behind in their reading. While this work is at an early stage, this extra support is beginning to help pupils to get back on track with their reading.

Leaders identify, assess the needs and plan appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They share information and strategies with teaching and support staff on how best to support these pupils. In addition, a number of pupils are at the very early stages of speaking English as an additional language (EAL). Leaders also give guidance to staff about how to support these pupils. Support for these pupils and those with SEND usually means that they gain the same knowledge as their peers. In both cases, however, there are a few instances when staff do not act on leaders' guidance. They do not make the necessary adaptations to their teaching or resources to fully meet pupils' needs. When this occurs, these pupils disengage and do not learn as successfully.

The proportion of pupils who study the subjects required to qualify for the English Baccalaureate accreditation is low. Leaders hope to increase these numbers in the future as they raise pupils' aspirations.

Pupils benefit from a comprehensive, impartial careers guidance programme. This helps them to make suitable choices for their post-16 education. Year 12 students have opportunities to attend work experience. Most students who leave the sixth form continue into higher education or apprenticeships.

Pupils are generally attentive in class. Teachers deal with occasional low-level disruption effectively. Learning gets back on track quickly. Sixth-form students use their free time to study independently as they are very keen to succeed. These positive attitudes help pupils to gain new knowledge.

The school has a mainly calm atmosphere during social times. However, there is a very small group of pupils who join the school with high levels of challenging behaviours. Leaders take a 'fresh start' approach. They put in place strategies to try and help these pupils settle in and behave sensibly. It is, however, a slow process, and some of these pupils still struggle to manage their behaviour. For example, they can become involved in incidents of fighting. Staff intervene quickly when this happens and take suitable follow-up actions with the pupils concerned. Nevertheless, these incidents still make some pupils feel uneasy.

Pupils have opportunities to take part in enrichment activities. For example, there are astronomy, chess and sporting clubs. Pastoral care supports pupils in many ways. This includes helping pupils in taking care of their mental and physical health. Staff and students are currently collaborating in researching the effectiveness of the school's work on equality and diversity. Pupils are also taught about risks and how to stay safe, for example, when using social media.

Staff said that their workload is reasonable. Many feel that senior leaders are approachable and care for staff welfare.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding and pupil welfare teams work closely together to support pupils' safety and well-being. Staff have regular training and updates. They know how to recognise concerning behaviours or signs that pupils may be at risk and report these. Pupils needing help receive internal support, such as from designated support staff and the school counsellor. Leaders also make timely referrals to external agencies as appropriate.

There are secure practices in place to vet applicants' suitability to work with pupils before they are appointed to work in the school.

Leaders are alert to risks that pupils face and how these might change over time. For example, leaders are currently running a borough-wide research project, involving pupils and staff at this school, on the use of and access to vaping.

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

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

- In a few subjects, leaders have not identified precisely what key knowledge they want pupils to know and remember. This means that pupils do not build up secure subject knowledge over time. Leaders should ensure that, across the subjects, they identify precisely what they want pupils to know and remember and make sure that teaching supports pupils to recall this knowledge confidently.
- In a few instances, leaders and teachers do not make suitable enough adaptations to teaching and resources to support pupils with SEND or EAL. As a result, those pupils do not learn as successfully as they could because their needs are not being met fully. Leaders should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to provide effective adaptive support for pupils with SEND or EAL.
- A very small group of pupils display extremely challenging behaviours, especially during social times. This sometimes results in fights and makes some other pupils feel uncomfortable. Leaders should refine and ensure greater implementation of their strategies to help these pupils modify and manage their behaviour.

## 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>	137199
<b>Local authority</b>	Harrow
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255403
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<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>	1276
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	297
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Devinia Akonor
<b>Principal</b>	Keven Bartle
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.canons.harrow.sch.uk">www.canons.harrow.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 to 28 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there has been a large turnover of trustees. The chair took up her post in September 2021. There has also been a recent restructuring of the senior leadership team.
- The school uses three registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, history, modern foreign languages and religious education. Inspectors held discussions with leaders and teachers, visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and held discussions with pupils. Inspectors also considered other subjects as part of the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors also met with the chair of trustees and two other trustees.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including information related to safeguarding and the checks carried out before the appointment of staff. Inspectors looked at records of pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors had formal meetings with staff and with pupils. They took account of the responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey. They also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

## Inspection team

David Radomsky, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Daniel Coyle	Ofsted Inspector
Matea Marcinko	His Majesty's Inspector
Heidi Swidenbank	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Phillips	His Majesty's Inspector

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