

Inspection of Meridian High School

Fairchildes Avenue, New Addington, Croydon, Surrey CR0 0AH

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have ensured that the school ethos of 'present the best version of yourself' is central to the daily life of the school. Pupils learn how to speak with confidence and to present their learning with pride. This prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education or training.

Pupils feel safe. Relationships are warm and friendly. Bullying is rare and when it takes place leaders act quickly. Pupils value the pastoral support they receive.

Pupils typically express the view that behaviour has 'drastically changed' for the better. They believe that the school has improved and 'gone through a monumental transition'. Staff are proud to work at the school and consider the school to be well led.

Pupils take part in a weekly debate about current affairs. Through this they discuss moral issues and learn about fundamental British values such as respect and tolerance.

Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to learn outside the classroom. As part of geography, pupils visit the North Downs to study rivers. To develop their resilience and teamwork, all Year 7 pupils take part in an outdoor activities residential programme. Pupils in Year 10 visit Cambridge University to find out about studying at a leading university.

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

Leaders have developed a new, ambitious curriculum. They are planning to further increase the range of subjects available from September 2023. Results in national tests at age 16 do not yet reflect the impact of this new curriculum.

Lessons are sequenced so that each lesson builds on the knowledge learned in the previous lesson. For example, in table tennis pupils learn the forehand push, then the forehand drive and then the spin shots.

Teachers explain things clearly. They break down lessons into smaller parts. Teachers ensure that pupils understand each part before moving on. Before pupils start each activity, teachers carefully explain how to complete it.

In Years 10 and 11 leaders use information from assessments to take decisive action to close pupils' knowledge gaps. In Years 7, 8 and 9 teachers do not consistently identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge successfully.

Attendance is improving. Leaders promote regular attendance and support pupils who need extra help to attend. Despite this, some pupils' attendance remains low. Where attendance is low, gaps in pupils' knowledge widen.

Leaders have prioritised the identification of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and the best ways of supporting them. Teachers adapt their approach so that pupils with SEND work towards the same curriculum goals as their peers. Pupils with complex needs receive specialist support for some lessons in the Pinnacle Centre. This includes speech and language therapy and learning about independent living.

Reading is a priority for leaders. During registration, teachers read with pupils. Individual reading books are matched to pupils' reading ages and interests. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read receive specialised support.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for behaviour. If there is low-level disruption, teachers act quickly so that it does not disturb learning.

Leaders have designed a well-planned personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme. This includes themes such as healthy relationships, mental health and online safety. Leaders have ensured that all pupils, in particular those with SEND, can fully contribute.

Pupils can take part in after-school clubs. These are mainly sports clubs. Pupils would like a greater range of clubs in order to develop their talents and interests.

Leaders have thought carefully about careers guidance. Pupils receive one-to-one support to apply for further education and apprenticeships. They learn about different careers. For example, pupils learn about how to create and run their own business.

Leaders take effective action to support staff with workload and well-being. They consider the impact on staff workload before they introduce new initiatives. Governors and trustees are highly knowledgeable about the school. They provide clear direction and hold leaders to account.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. Pupils learn how to stay safe and how to report concerns. Pupils with SEND have extra opportunities to talk about their concerns. Staff take part in regular training so they know what to look out for and how to report things.

Leaders ensure that pupils receive the help they need. If appropriate, leaders will make a referral to an external agency and ensure that pupils get the best possible help.

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)

- Some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge in Years 7, 8 and 9. Teachers do not consistently identify these gaps with precision. This makes it harder for pupils to learn and remember subject content. Leaders need to ensure that knowledge gaps are systematically identified and addressed in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- Too many pupils do not attend regularly. As a result, they miss lessons and can develop gaps in their knowledge. Leaders need to address poor attendance with greater urgency.
- Most pupils do not take part in enrichment activities such as clubs outside of sports clubs. This limits pupils' chances to develop and extend their talents and interests. Leaders should provide a wider range of opportunities for pupils to enhance and strengthen their 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	143846
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10255405
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	541
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lynne O'Reilly
Headteacher	Amy Anderson
Website	www.meridianhigh.london
Date of previous inspection	14 June 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher joined the school in April 2020.
- The school is part of the GLF Schools multi-academy trust.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder or speech, language and communication needs. There are 28 pupils, aged between 11 and 16, accessing this provision which is called the Pinnacle Centre.
- 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 uses one registered alternative provider and one unregistered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other school leaders and teaching staff. Inspectors held a discussion with members of the board of trustees and the school standards board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, history, languages, mathematics and physical education. 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 business, PSHE, and religious studies.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders about attendance, behaviour, and careers education.
- 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

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