

Inspection of a good school: Fulham Cross Academy

Kingwood Road, Fulham Palace Road, London SW6 6SN

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 February 2023

Outcome

Fulham Cross Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They are kept safe in this welcoming community. Pupils appreciate the care and attention that their teachers give them. Pupils learn to respect one another and to celebrate their differences. Bullying is not accepted, and any incidents are dealt with by leaders and staff. Pupils are encouraged to be emotionally aware, to think of others and to help those in need. This ethos is playing a key role in helping the school community to adapt effectively to being a mixed school.

The curriculum is ambitious and well structured. Pupils' learning is enhanced through the special focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics. They value the additional opportunities this provides for them. For example, pupils enjoy being able to make use of specialist equipment in the workshops.

Staff encourage pupils to be 'the best version of themselves'. Pupils behave well, work hard, and typically enjoy positive relationships with their peers. This is because leaders expect them to achieve highly and work well with others. As a result of these expectations, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and well organised, and matches national expectations. Pupils and sixth-form students study a broad range of subjects and vocational qualifications, including in construction, business and technology.

Leaders have recently amended the design of the curriculum to ensure that it is well sequenced. They have focused on making sure that pupils are well prepared for what they will study next. Leaders' work has been successful. For example, in science, pupils understand human respiration because they have already learned about the relevant human anatomy. Similarly, in history, pupils are supported to understand the impact of the

slave trade because they have previously studied different African civilisations and their legacies.

Teachers know their subjects well and present information clearly. The curriculum is designed to ensure that pupils revisit, practise and embed key concepts. As a result, many pupils remember what they have learned and apply this to more complex ideas. However, some teaching does not check pupils' understanding or preconceptions as carefully. When these gaps in learning are not identified, it is more difficult for pupils to build and deepen their knowledge as securely.

Pupils are generally eager to learn and behave attentively in lessons. They are taught to be respectful and behave in a kind manner. Most said that bullying is not tolerated. However, some pupils reported that, on occasion, derogatory remarks are not dealt with rigorously. They would like all staff to approach these incidents with the same consistency.

Leaders and teachers are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers are supported to consider the needs of these pupils. Teaching is adapted well so that pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers wherever possible.

Leaders recognise the importance of developing pupils' reading and vocabulary acquisition, especially for those who speak English as an additional language. Pupils are supported to read with increasing fluency and accuracy and can talk about the books they are reading for pleasure. Teachers systematically check pupils' reading so that appropriate books and additional help are provided for them. Pupils are also supported to develop the vocabulary they need to learn well in a subject. In English, for example, pupils are taught important vocabulary to help them to understand the context and meaning of the poetry written during the First World War.

Leaders plan well for pupils' wider development. The curriculum is designed to develop pupils' social, moral and spiritual understanding. For example, pupils learn about all major world religions. The personal, social and health education curriculum aims to ensure that pupils understand important issues, including personal safety and healthy relationships. Careers provision is strong, and pupils are well informed about subject choices. They have opportunities for work experience and other work-related learning. Leaders strive to provide a wide range of enrichment activities. These include a range of after-school clubs, journeys to Barcelona and Edinburgh, and residential trips featuring outdoor pursuits. Pupils are supported to develop leadership qualities, for example through membership of the student council.

Leaders and governors engage and communicate well with stakeholders. They are sensitive to staff workload and care about staff well-being. Staff, including early career teachers, described working here as like being part of a family.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders promote a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff and governors are well trained to recognise any signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. As a result, concerns and disclosures are picked up and reported swiftly.

Leaders ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to protect pupils who may be at risk or vulnerable. They work closely with outside agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support that they need.

The curriculum has been designed to help pupils learn about how to manage their own safety, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teaching does not check carefully what pupils have learned. This means that errors and misconceptions are not consistently identified and can persist in pupils' understanding. Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment to check what pupils already know so that they can be helped to learn and remember more.
- Occasionally, incidences of derogatory language between pupils are not tackled with consistent rigour and robustness. Leaders must ensure that all staff respond to such incidences consistently and in line with the school's behaviour policies.

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 January 2015.

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	139364
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10269100
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	555
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	92
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Philip Barton
Headteacher	Sally Brooks
Website	www.fulhamcrossacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In 2020, Fulham Cross Academy became a mixed school, admitting its first cohort of girls. There are now girls on roll in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- 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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspection team conducted deep dives in history, mathematics and science. To do this, they discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, talked with pupils and sixth-form students and scrutinised samples of their work. Other subjects were also considered during the inspection.
- The inspection team held meetings with senior and subject leaders to evaluate the impact of their work. Meetings were also held with those responsible for governance, teachers and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors considered the 38 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents and carers. Consideration was also given to the 33 replies to the online staff survey and 98 replies to the online pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors considered a variety of documentation provided by leaders, including leaders' self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, behaviour records and policies, the single central record of pre-employment checks and other information relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Anne Hudson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lauren Thorpe

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023