

Inspection of a good school: Space Studio West London

Letchworth Avenue, Feltham, Hounslow TW14 9PE

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 February 2023

Outcome

Space Studio West London continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have high aspirations for pupils here. They encourage pupils to develop their independence and professional skills to manage their time and relationships with others. Pupils behave maturely around the school site. They use shared spaces for independent study responsibly. Pupils are safe and bullying is rare. When incidents of bullying do happen, leaders act quickly to tackle it.

Leaders organise opportunities for project-based learning during Years 10 and 12 involving all pupils in teamwork with employers in order to develop presentations and products that address social challenges. Pupils work well together and are keen to contribute to the local community. For example, students in Year 12 presented their work on planetariums to pupils in local primary schools during science week. Students in the sixth form are proud to mentor younger pupils and support them in their learning.

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is clearly structured. They have identified the key knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn and sequenced logically the order in which key content is taught. Teachers know what pupils must remember from each stage of their learning. Leaders have also thought carefully about how to support pupils to settle in when they join the school in Year 10. For example, in English all pupils in Year 10 start by studying a writing unit that focuses on core writing skills before they begin the GCSE course.

Teachers are passionate about their subjects, and they are ambitious for what pupils can learn. In computer science, for example, teachers ensure that pupils can explain their ideas accurately by using subject-specific vocabulary. In English, pupils in Years 10 and 11 build glossaries of key words and phrases to expand their vocabulary and improve their writing. Pupils enjoy their lessons and disruption to learning is rare.

Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified when they start. This means that they quickly receive appropriate support from specialist support staff. Some pupils with SEND occasionally receive individual teaching to help them to access the same curriculum as their peers, which they do with success.

In most subjects, teachers explain ambitious ideas by breaking them down into simple parts and checking that pupils understand. In mathematics, for example, teachers use their subject expertise to model complex tasks for pupils and support them to apply their learning with confidence. However, in a few subjects, teachers move on to introduce new content without routinely checking that pupils know and understand what they have already been taught. This means that gaps or misconceptions are not identified and addressed in a timely manner.

All pupils complete projects that build their professional skills and that support students in the sixth form with their next steps in education or employment. For example, in Year 10, pupils begin to develop engineering skills through working on a project themed around aerospace. In Year 12, As part of the Aspirations Employability Diploma, students work on a series of projects that include engineering, education, and healthcare. As part of this, they address societal and environmental challenges and build teamwork skills.

Pupils' wider development is given careful thought by leaders. The personal, social, health and economic curriculum encourages pupils to think about important topics, such as their digital footprint and how to stay safe online. The active Student Leadership Team mentors younger pupils after school and in lessons. Leaders organise a range of popular clubs and sports, including Flight Sim and American Football, and after-school academic support. All pupils have opportunities to visit workplaces, attend workshops, and hear from professionals about their work through the school's careers programme.

Staff work in subject networks and share best practice across the trust. Leaders survey the views of staff frequently. Staff felt consulted, that their well-being is prioritised and that their workload is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have put in place robust processes to support pupils. This includes working effectively with a range of local agencies and external partners. Leaders are proactive when identifying any pupils who may need help, including at the point of enrolment.

Leaders ensure that all staff are aware of the risks that pupils might face and how to report concerns. Weekly staff meetings contribute to a culture where all adults are vigilant and knowledgeable about safeguarding.

Pupils are taught how to stay healthy and keep themselves safe. They know who to report concerns to and are confident that staff will support them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, teachers do not routinely identify misconceptions or gaps in pupils' knowledge to inform later teaching. As a result, some pupils' recall of key knowledge and skills is not as secure as it could be. Leaders should ensure that teachers routinely check how well pupils know and remember prior learning and address any gaps before moving on to introduce new content.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2018.

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	142126
Local authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	10268800
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy studio school
Age range of pupils	14 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	88
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	James Pomeroy
Principal	Andrew Morgan
Website	www.spacestudiowestlondon.org
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Aspirations Academy Trust. It is located next to Rivers Academy West London, another school in the same multi-academy trust. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 at this school are taught GCSE Geography and History by teachers from Rivers Academy West London. Pupils and students have access to the sports facilities for physical education at Rivers Academy West London.
- The school uses one alternative education provider, which is unregistered.
- The school has a focus on aerospace and engineering. Pupils can choose to study a broader curriculum outside of these areas.
- 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 educational qualification and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- 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 met with senior leaders, subject leaders and groups of staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the regional governing body and from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics and computer science.
- For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning, and reviewed samples of their work.
- Inspectors held a meeting with leaders responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements. They also looked at safeguarding records, including pre-employment checks for staff.
- Inspectors spoke to the staff with responsibility for pupils with SEND, behaviour, and personal development, including careers. They also reviewed a range of documentation in these areas.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about their well-being and workload.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils from different year groups.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Olly Wimborne, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Yvonne Chisholm

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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