

Inspection of Queensmill School

1 Askham Road, Shepherds Bush, London W12 0NW

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 February 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school. They like and understand the calm routines staff set up for them to follow. Leaders make sure pupils can make choices and have opportunities to try things which help build their confidence and independence.

Leaders expect pupils, all of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities, to achieve well and work hard. Staff adapt lessons well so that pupils can understand what to do and recognise what they have learned.

Leaders are rightly proud of the wide range of ambitious activities and events pupils can enjoy here. For example, older pupils recently went on a residential visit to Spain and others have performed for the public at a local theatre. Teachers use the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum effectively to help pupils understand their feelings. They are ambitious to help pupils look beyond their immediate surroundings and realise 'they are part of something bigger'.

Staff identify, record and follow up on rare instances of bullying. Pupils behave considerately towards one another and feel secure because they know staff understand their needs.

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

Leaders have continued to provide a good quality of education while successfully tackling the serious safeguarding weaknesses identified at the last inspection.

The curriculum is typically designed to support pupils to achieve well. This is because, in most areas, leaders are clear about what pupils need to learn. It has been sequenced so that important ideas are revisited, practised and embedded. For example, in language and communication, pupils succeed in moving from using gestures to saying words to express meaning and communicate. Pupils are given a wide choice of ways to communicate so they can select what suits them best. Staff find ways of making books accessible to pupils so they can enjoy stories together. There is a phonics programme in place for pupils who are ready to read written text.

However, there are a few areas of the curriculum which are less well designed. In these instances, the important concepts pupils need to learn are not as clearly identified or sequenced. In addition, teachers' confidence in the use of materials aimed at checking how well pupils have learned subject skills and knowledge is variable. Leaders are working on ways to better communicate the sequence and content of the curriculum in these subject areas.

Subject leaders know what is working well and what to improve. Teachers work as an effective team with support staff and therapists to find out pupils' starting points and use resources to set up interesting lessons. Leaders place an emphasis on ensuring that pupils learn what will be most useful in helping them lead enjoyable and independent lives in the future.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and select appropriate resources to make learning enjoyable and accessible for pupils. For example, pupils in Year 4 learn to identify shapes by using different foods. Teachers make sure lessons build up pupils' learning in small steps. For example, students in the sixth form use and apply mathematical skills they have previously learned to become more confident in managing money. Pupils are helped to understand how their learning progresses by using objects or picture cues to know what is coming next.

Leaders ensure there is a well-planned programme of activities aimed at promoting pupils' personal development. For example, pupils learn about democracy by voting for school councillors in imaginative ways adapted to their needs. Students in the sixth form benefit from carefully developed work experience and careers guidance. Some pupils run a café in school, serving snacks and operating a contactless payment system. Pupils learn about different cultures and artistic traditions by going on lots of visits to museums, galleries and theatrical performances.

Pupils behave well in lessons. Staff persuade them to refocus on learning if they become uncomfortable or distracted. Teachers help pupils to become increasingly independent in using strategies to regulate their behaviour.

Most staff like the clarity with which leaders set expectations and think leaders are mindful of their well-being. They appreciate it when leaders are flexible with deadlines when staff sometimes need to change their priorities in the best interests of pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to raise and record concerns. They receive training on safeguarding, and leaders provide updates to help everyone remember key messages.

Leaders have established a suitable process which is consistently carried out to make sure staff new to the school understand the school's safeguarding policy.

Governors check that what is meant to happen to keep pupils safe is actually taking place.

Pupils are kept safe and learn how to stay safe in ways adapted to their needs. For example, because teachers have revisited important content many times with pupils, they understand the reasons why they should not make friends with people online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, it is not clear precisely what leaders have decided pupils should

learn and in which order. There are variations in how well teachers check what pupils have understood. Leaders should ensure that the key ideas pupils need to learn and remember are clearly identified. They also need to continue to develop teachers' skills and confidence in using assessment to establish how well pupils have developed their understanding in different subjects.

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	147793
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10270458
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 25
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	247
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	19
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Greatorex
Headteacher	Aymeline Bel
Website	www.queensmillschool.com
Date of previous inspection	16 June 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Queensmill School converted to become an academy school in June 2021.
- The school admits pupils with autism spectrum disorder. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The main site in Askham Road caters for pupils aged three to 19 years.
- The school has provision for adults aged 19 to 25 at Queensmill College, Goldhawk Road, Shepherds Bush. This adult provision was not included in this inspection.
- The school also includes specially resourced provisions for pupils with SEND, specifically autism spectrum disorder, at Fulham Primary School, Halford Road, London and at Fulham Cross Academy, Kingwood Road, London.
- The school does not make use of 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

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, language and communication, which included early reading, and PSHE. Inspectors spoke with leaders and teachers, visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and spoke with pupils.
- Inspectors also spoke with leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of the board of trustees and the local governing body. They also had a telephone conversation with representatives of the local authority.
- An inspector visited both specially resourced provisions for pupils with SEND the school runs in two local schools.
- Inspectors held discussions with leaders and reviewed documents about safeguarding, the checks carried out before the appointment of staff, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted staff survey. They also considered comments received from parents.
- Inspectors did not make a separate judgement about the early years as there were too few pupils on roll in this age group.

Inspection team

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