

# Inspection of a good school: Acland Burghley School

Burghley Road, London NW5 1UJ

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Inspection dates:

18 and 19 October 2023

## **Outcome**

Acland Burghley School continues to be a good school.

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

Leaders have developed an inclusive community in which all pupils feel welcome. Staff know pupils very well, which ensures they are safe. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils behave well during lessons and around the school site. On the rare occasions when low-level disruption occurs, teachers use clear systems to address it. Pupils enjoy school. They are enthusiastic, happy and take pleasure in learning.

Pupils take part in a range of wider opportunities in the school. These include clubs for creative writing, debating and coding. Students in the sixth form are encouraged to plan and deliver their own clubs for younger pupils in the school. Pupils take part in leadership opportunities, including the student council, the diversity group, and eco-warriors.

There is a wide range of music and sporting opportunities. These include a variety of sports clubs and competitions, choirs and ensembles, and a partnership with a professional orchestra. Pupils have further opportunities to develop their characters through delivering assemblies. They also create podcasts and take part in regular in-class debates.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that is ambitious and in line with the expectations of the national curriculum. They have identified the key knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn. The curriculum progressively builds on pupils' knowledge over time.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and present information clearly during lessons. They make adaptations to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the same ambitious curriculum. Staff match work for pupils to their individual needs, including a personalised curriculum for those with more complex needs.

Sometimes, teaching does not check or deepen pupils' understanding before moving on to new content. This means that, on occasion, pupils do not commit knowledge to their long-term memories.

Staff swiftly identify pupils who may struggle to read when they join the school. They identify pupils' individual needs and put in place bespoke support quickly. This ensures that pupils make rapid improvements in their fluency and confidence in reading. A range of strategies are in place to promote a love of reading. Pupils all read regularly in school, including during library lessons, tutor periods and whole-school reading events. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND receive strong support with their reading.

Pupils generally demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. Typically, they take great care over their work and produce work of a high quality. On occasion, pupils lose focus in class. Sometimes, staff do not ensure that they support pupils to concentrate on their learning consistently well. Leaders support pupils to have high attendance. They have robust and bespoke procedures in place to enable pupils to attend regularly.

Leaders have designed a comprehensive and well-planned personal development curriculum. This helps pupils to develop an understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Staff are highly effective at assessing pupils' understanding of these topics. They put in place bespoke support, sometimes using external providers, to support any pupil who needs to deepen their understanding.

Leaders provide a broad range of outings, in which all pupils participate. All pupils, including pupils with SEND, are involved in these opportunities. This helps to enrich pupils' broader personal and cultural development. These include visits to concerts, museums and an outdoor activities centre.

Leaders make sure that all pupils access high-quality careers, advice and guidance. The school welcomes a range of external speakers, including employers and speakers from universities. A variety of talks and workshops ensure that pupils are well informed of their future options and build important employability skills. Students in the sixth form receive high-quality guidance to support their future education and employment.

Leaders look after the health and welfare of staff. They are conscious of the pressures of workload and explore strategies to minimise this where possible. Leaders have built strong working relationships with parents and the local community.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- On occasion, teaching does not check pupils' understanding and identify misconceptions consistently well. This means that, sometimes, pupils are not fully

ready to learn new content and commit knowledge to their long-term memories. Leaders should develop the expertise of all teachers so that they consistently identify and address any gaps in pupils' understanding.

- On occasion, staff's expectations of pupils are not high, including in keeping all pupils attentive in lessons. As a result, some pupils do not demonstrate a consistently positive attitude to the quality of their work. Leaders should ensure that all staff have consistently high standards for the quality of work produced and support pupils to focus and concentrate.

## 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 school to be good in March 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100053
<b>Local authority</b>	Camden
<b>Inspection number</b>	10289763
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community school
<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>	1,163
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	267
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Kim Issroff
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicholas John
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.aclandburghley.camden.sch.uk">www.aclandburghley.camden.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	March 2018

## Information about this school

- The school uses five alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, and a range of staff. They also met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: art, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, discussed with pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work. The curriculum in other subjects was also considered.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils, and staff, including through responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Simon Conway, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ed Simmons

Ofsted Inspector

Sam Johnson

His Majesty's Inspector

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