

Inspection of Tomlinscote School

Tomlinscote Way, Frimley, Camberley, Surrey GU16 8PY

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Robert Major. This school is part of The Prospect Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Andy Yarrow, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andrew Needham.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Tomlinscote School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Tomlinscote School and Sixth Form College to be outstanding, before it opened as Tomlinscote School as a result of conversion to academy status.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this exceptional school. They are highly ambitious for themselves and each other. The school provides support, care and guidance to ensure that success is possible for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All pupils are expected to achieve highly, and they do.

Alongside their academic success, pupils develop a rich understanding of the world and their place in it. The school's core values of excellence, perseverance, character, community and progression are lived out every day. Pupils are confident that they are listened to. They learn that they can affect positive change, which prepares them well to be active, engaged citizens.

The school is an inclusive community in which difference is valued and discrimination is not tolerated. Staff and pupils have warm relationships founded on respect and a love of learning. Pupils eagerly explain how the school's extensive and well-considered curriculum helps them pursue their dreams as an engineer, doctor, athlete, artist, or something else. The abundance of wider opportunities enables pupils to discover new interests, such as the use of green power through the 'Race Team' club or knowledge of different cultures through roles as international ambassadors.

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

The school's curriculum is aspirational for all pupils. The moral drive to ensure all pupils succeed is evident throughout the school. The curriculum is ambitious, challenging and engaging. Disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND, are known well and supported sensitively. They are keenly encouraged by their teachers, who offer reassurance and targeted help. Learning is enriched through debates, competitions and trips that help deepen pupils' understanding further. These opportunities also serve to develop pupils' understanding of current affairs, diversity and equality.

The curriculum builds carefully on pupils' primary school education and ensures that they truly master the intended learning. Mastery of knowledge is the thread through all experiences here. Pupils know that staff are experts in their subjects and, rightly, trust that they are taught very well. Staff are passionate about education and they benefit from highly effective training opportunities. They have a deep understanding of subjects and of how pupils learn best. Classrooms are industrious spaces where pupils demonstrate an exceptionally positive work ethic and achieve highly.

Pupils consistently demonstrate exemplary behaviour. They hold themselves and each other to high standards, both academically and in their conduct. Pupils know it is safe to ask questions and make a mistake because this is part of the process of learning. Pupils have a remarkable understanding of how they learn and are full participants in every stage of their learning journey.

Personal development experiences are carefully planned and woven into the curriculum. Pupils learn how to be safe and keep safe, including online. Health, welfare and well-being are systematically supported through assemblies, tutor times and school events. Pupils know that they can talk with a member of staff if they have any concerns. Staff who are experts in pupils' well-being make sure that any pupil who needs help is provided with rapid support.

Pupils benefit from a wealth of wider experiences and develop strong characters through the many leadership roles. For example, 'digital leaders' help others in the school use their tablets most effectively. These leaders also work in the community, teaching primary school pupils to use electronic devices responsibly. Pupils have a sense of duty to support others. Staff teach pupils about cultures, faiths and ethical dilemmas in a way that builds their curiosity, openness and confidence. Pupils are encouraged to consider their futures carefully and to be aspirational through the excellent careers education.

Those responsible for governance know the school extremely well. They provide robust challenge to leaders. Staff describe the inclusive and purposeful culture that is now embedded in the school. Leaders consider staff's workload when they make strategic plans. Everyone in the school is restless to continue to build on the successes already achieved here.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

Unique reference number	140117
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10267924
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,509
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Needham
CEO of trust	Andy Yarrow
Principal	Robert Major
Website	www.tomlinscoteschool.com
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined The Prospect Trust in 2018. The Prospect Trust is a multi-academy trust made up of three state schools.
- The school currently uses four registered alternative providers and four unregistered alternative providers.
- 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 graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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 senior leaders, staff and pupils. They also spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair. An inspector also spoke to a representative from the trust and the CEO of the trust.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, history, science, physical education and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with the directors of learning, visited a sample of lessons, talked with teachers, spoke to pupils and students, and looked at samples of their work.
- An inspector also visited some of the alternative provision the school uses.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, as well as the free-text comments that were submitted. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.

Inspection team

Ally Aldridge-Gibbons, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Adrian Percival	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Hanlon	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Serridge	Ofsted Inspector
Julia Mortimore	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Ellison	His Majesty's Inspector

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