

Inspection of Greek Secondary School of London

22 Trinity Road, Wood Green, London, N22 8LB

Inspection dates: 7 to 9 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Sixth-form provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and students value the school's contribution to their education and future. They especially appreciate the efforts staff make to help them gain the qualifications they need to move successfully into further education or university.

The atmosphere around the school is calm, well-ordered and focused on education. Pupils' behaviour in and out of lessons is good. Pupils are polite, courteous and well-mannered. They treat others with respect and tolerance. Pupils recognise that there are different views, all of which are valid.

The school's curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about the wider world and ideas such as democracy, religion, civics, careers and social responsibilities. There are lessons in personal, social and health education programme (PSHE) in Years 8 and 9. However, the school was unable to provide the details of what is taught. Pupils learn about British values and institutions through the academic curriculum. Assemblies and science provide some aspects of sex education, but this is not sufficient to support pupils to develop their understanding and have the information they need to make informed choices. Older pupils said they did not get enough opportunity to discuss issues related to sex education.

Pupils said they feel safe in school. They said that as a small community, there is always someone to help. However, there are gaps in the school's vetting checks of staff. For example, the school does not have suitable arrangements for making sure that all staff have enhanced criminal record checks. This represents a serious concern as it has the potential to place pupils at risk of harm. It also means that the proprietor is not meeting all of the independent school standards (the standards) consistently.

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

The school does many things well. For example, there are comprehensive policies available online, including for safeguarding, complaints, and health and safety. Leaders, the proprietor and staff have pupils' interests at heart. They want pupils to do well and succeed. Most pupils achieve success. For example, when pupils leave the school nearly all go to university in Greece or Britain, or to sixth form and further education colleges in London.

Despite these strengths, the school is not organised effectively enough. Too many things are left to chance, or to the good will and effort of individuals. Important arrangements, such as safeguarding, meeting the standards and staff training, are inconsistent from year to year. Leaders, including the proprietor, cannot fully assure the safety and welfare of pupils.

There are several reasons for this lack of consistency. The proprietor has not ensured that leaders understand fully the requirements of the independent school standards in England. This includes the procedures for checking the suitability of

staff and explains why some of the necessary safeguarding checks have not been completed. Another reason for the lack of consistency is that changes to staffing are often at short notice. As a result, there is not enough leadership capacity to coordinate the school's work effectively and ensure that all of the standards are met consistently.

An example of this weakness is the provision for pupils' personal development. There is a willingness and desire to ensure that the curriculum promotes pupils' personal development. Some aspects of this are provided through assemblies and others through the academic curriculum. Work has begun to map out what the school expects pupils to experience and learn through the opportunities on offer. However, it remains work in progress.

The PSHE programme is at the early stages of being planned. At present the planned programme is incomplete. It does not cover sex education or provide enough opportunities for pupils to learn about public institutions in England. It is taught only in Years 8 and 9. Pupils' general knowledge suffers as a result.

Teachers follow the Greek national curriculum and includes a broad range of subjects. However, there are no specialist resources for science, and art and technology are not included. This limits the scope of pupils' experiences.

In Years 8 and 9, the curriculum follows the 'gymnasium' curriculum and sets out the content, advice about teaching approaches and the assessment criteria. Teachers use set textbooks for each subject. The 'lyceum' curriculum, in Years 11 to 13 is highly structured, and supports students in acquiring knowledge, as well as working towards Greek national examinations. Pupils and students in the sixth form learn the intended curriculum effectively.

The curriculum includes English as a foreign language, which also follows the Greek national curriculum and uses the set textbooks. Those pupils who start school with limited English learn to read quickly and become increasingly confident as they move through the school.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are provided with suitable support. Their needs are identified appropriately so that help can be provided in a timely manner. Staff are aware of those who need additional help with their learning. They are supported by leaders to provide pupils with targeted help. As a result, pupils with SEND leave school ready for the next stage of their education or careers. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equalities Act 2010.

Opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests through extra-curricular activities are limited. However, pupils take the initiative to put on a play each year. They make all the decisions and staff facilitate the production. Pupils are regularly asked about their views, for example of the content of assemblies, which include issues such as safety, consent and careers. These opportunities, and the taught curriculum, contribute to pupils' personal development. For example, civics

lessons help to develop pupils' understanding of citizenship, while careers education helps them to make decisions about their future.

The school's arrangements for managing pupils' attendance are effective. The school's online system and a paper-based process track patterns of attendance appropriately. There are clear procedures for following up absence.

Leaders ensure that staff well-being is given proper attention. Staff appreciate the support and help they get from leaders. They also said that they were trained in the Greek curriculum but that they had little training about the English education system. This, they felt, added to their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Despite a willingness, leaders do not have sufficient knowledge to meet the safeguarding requirements consistently. Not all staff have an enhanced criminal record check. At the start of the inspection, the single central record was incomplete. Important prohibition checks had not been carried out. Although most of these checks were rectified by the end of the inspection, it still means that the school lacks an understanding of all the necessary vetting checks for staff.

Safeguarding training for staff is not up to date. They have not received training on the latest safeguarding guidance. Consequently, there has not been an opportunity to understand the implications for their practice. However, individually, staff have completed online training in areas such as child protection, radicalisation and domestic abuse.

The school's safeguarding policy sets out clearly how to spot the signs that a pupil may be experiencing difficulties. It provides information about the actions to be taken where there are concerns. Staff understand these procedures. However, some aspects of the policy are not put into practice effectively enough. For example, the safer recruitment guidance to take up references is not always followed closely enough.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders do not have sufficient knowledge to meet the safeguarding requirements consistently. Not all staff have an enhanced criminal record check. This represents a potential risk to pupils' safety and welfare. Staff have not received training on the latest safeguarding guidance. The school needs improve the arrangements for safeguarding by:
 - carrying out the required vetting checks on staff to ensure their suitability to work with young people

- making sure that safeguarding records provide clear and up to date information
 - ensuring that the designated safeguarding lead has full cognisance of the arrangements for safeguarding, including knowledge of the actions taken on recent safeguarding cases
 - ensuring that all staff receive regular safeguarding training so that they are aware of the guidance and its implications.
- The school has not put in a place a suitable programme for RSE, which gives due regard to the statutory guidance. Aspects of relationship education are being developed but the PSHE programme is not well planned. As a result, the school does not meet the independent school standards and pupils’ personal development is limited. The school needs to ensure that it meets the standards by:
- having a PSHE programme that is properly planned and documented and ensuring that this is taught consistently. This includes having a programme for RSE that reflects the statutory guidance and includes relationships and sex education.
 - consulting with parents to produce a written statement of its RSE policy. This should make clear that pupils can be excused from sex education. The policy should be published on the school’s website.
- Although the curriculum meets the independent school standards, there are some subjects that need to be developed further. There are limited specialist resources for science, and art and design and technology are not included. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum in all areas enables pupils to develop a suitably broad and detailed body of knowledge.
- The school is not organised effectively enough. Important arrangements, such as safeguarding, meeting the standards and staff training, are inconsistent from year to year. Frequent staff changes mean that there is not enough leadership capacity to coordinate the school’s work effectively and meet all of the standards consistently. Leaders need to improve the consistency and coherence of leadership and management of the school by:
- ensuring that changes to staffing are managed in a way that provides continuity of provision. This means making sure that specialist expertise is handed on effectively
 - where it is necessary for teachers to move into another role, ensure they are trained effectively so that they understand the role and its scope
 - ensuring that leaders, including the proprietor, have the knowledge and skills needed to meet the requirements of the independent school standards consistently.

How can I feed back my views?

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The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

School details

Unique reference number	101959
DfE registration number	309/6081
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	10286374
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	12 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	30
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	8
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	The Greek Ministry of Education
Headteacher	Maria Komninou
Annual fees (day pupils)	None
Telephone number	020 8881 9320
Website	https://greekschool-london.wixsite.com/mysite
Email address	hellenic_gym_lyk@yahoo.gr
Date of previous inspection	15 to 17 May 2019

Information about this school

- The Greek Secondary School is an independent secondary day school for pupils aged 12 to 18 in the London Borough of Haringey.
- The school was established in 1983 by the Greek Embassy, for Greek children living in London.
- The Greek government provides free education at the school for Greek speaking pupils.
- The school is managed by a deputy headteacher who was appointed in September 2023.
- Some staff are appointed on secondment from Greece by the Greek Ministry of Education. The school also employs teachers from England who have a knowledge of the Greek curriculum. There are no middle leaders or managers and no teaching assistants. The deputy headteacher is responsible for ensuring that Greek legislation, alongside English statutory requirements, are implemented in all aspects of the school's work.
- The school is accountable to the education office of the Greek Embassy in London.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

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.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: English, science, and PSHE. They spoke to staff about the curriculum in these areas and talked to pupils and looked at their work. Other areas of the curriculum were also considered as part of this inspection.
- Meetings were held with the senior leaders and the proprietor.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of policies and documents provided by the school.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if:
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively;
- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor-
 - 2A(1)(b) ensures that every registered pupil who is provided with secondary education at the school is provided with relationships and sex education, except in so far as the pupil is excused as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2),
 - 2A(1)(d) in making arrangements for the purposes of paragraphs (a), (b) or (c), has regard to any guidance under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 that applies in relation to the provision of education by maintained schools,
 - 2A(1)(e) makes and keeps up to date a separate written statement of its policy with regard to the provision of education as required by each of paragraphs (a) and (b),
 - 2A(1)(f) consults parents of registered pupils at the school before making or revising a statement under sub-paragraph (e), and
 - 2A(1)(g) publishes a copy of the statement on a website and provides a copy of the statement free of charge to anyone who asks for one.
- 2A(2) Arrangements made by the proprietor for the purposes of sub-paragraph (1)(b) must ensure that where a pupil's parent requests that the pupil is wholly or partly excused from sex education provided as part of relationships and sex education, the pupil is so excused until the request is withdrawn, unless or to the extent that the head teacher considers that the pupil should not be so excused.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor-
 - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which-
 - 5(b)(iv) enables pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-

- 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 18(2)(d) the proprietor ensures that, where relevant to any such person, an enhanced criminal record check is made in respect of that person and an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained before or as soon as practicable after that person's appointment;
- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment.
- 20(6) The standard in this paragraph is met in relation to an individual ("MB"), not being the Chair of the school, who is a member of a body of persons corporate or unincorporate named as the proprietor of the school in the register or in an application to enter the school in the register, if-
 - 20(6)(b) subject to sub-paragraphs (7) to (8), the Chair of the school makes the following checks relating to MB-
 - 20(6)(b)(i) where relevant to the individual, an enhanced criminal record check;
- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
 - 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or before 1st May 2007, whether-
 - 21(3)(a)(v) an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S;
 - 21(3)(a)(vi) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d);
- 21(4) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation to each member of staff in post on 1st August 2007 who was appointed at any time before 1st May 2007, whether each check referred to in sub-paragraph (3) was made and whether an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained, together with the date on which any check was completed or certificate obtained.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-

- 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
- 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
- 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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