

Inspection of an outstanding school: The Compton School

Summers Lane, London N12 0QG

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 March 2024

Outcome

The Compton School continues to be an outstanding school.

The executive headteacher of this school is Ann Marie Mulkerins. This school is part of Middlesex Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The school has two acting Heads of School, Andrew Hammond and Louise Ismail. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO) and executive headteacher, Ann Marie Mulkerins, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gareth Jones.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending The Compton School. They achieve exceptionally well here, regardless of their starting points. Leaders have put in place an academic and personal development curriculum that supports all pupils to succeed. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, appreciate being part of this school community. They are happy at school, feel safe and are kept safe.

Leaders have very high aspirations for pupils. They have established an approach that is embodied in the phrase 'Learn DNA', which includes being ready for learning, excellence and positive attitude. Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are exceptionally well supported.

Pupils build very respectful, working relationships with each other and with staff. They learn how to reflect on their own actions through discussion and debate. Pupils behave well in lessons and when moving around the school site. Bullying is not tolerated here, and staff are vigilant. The atmosphere is calm and welcoming.

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests. Pupils take part in a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, including cooking, photography and coding. Pupils are encouraged to take on leadership roles, such as acting as prefects or reading champions, and also engage in charity fundraising.

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

The school has put in place a broad and ambitious curriculum for all pupils. Students in the sixth form are provided with a well-rounded experience that prepares them thoroughly for their next steps. Pupils with SEND are supported to access the same broad offer as their peers. Teachers are provided with information about pupils' individual needs and are well trained to adapt their teaching appropriately. Strong collaboration between the SEND and pastoral teams works exceptionally well to identify pupils who need extra help.

Leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum content they want pupils to know and remember and the order in which it is taught. The curriculum builds sequentially so that pupils, and students in the sixth form, develop a depth of knowledge that they draw on when approaching new learning. For example, in English, when pupils study 'Henry IV Part 1', they look carefully at the vocabulary and language so that they can apply this to their own writing later on. Similarly, in science, pupils confidently apply their prior knowledge about forces and equilibrium covered when studying changes in momentum and acceleration.

Pupils are encouraged to express themselves with fluency. In history, for example, pupils engage confidently and knowledgeably when debating the legacy of different historical figures. Teachers use questioning skilfully to check what pupils know and understand. They provide regular and clear feedback so that pupils know how to improve. Assessment is used well to check what pupils can do and identify who may need extra help.

Teachers have high expectations for the work that pupils produce. Pupils meet these expectations with consistently high-quality work. They achieve very well in a wide range of subjects and, as a result, are fully prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training.

The school ensures that all pupils read regularly and have access to a well-stocked library. This helps them to develop their vocabulary and a love of reading. Pupils in Year 10 help younger pupils with their reading. Weaker readers have suitable support in place to enable them to catch up quickly, including an appropriate phonics programme.

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, are supportive and respectful of each other. Clear routines and high expectations have been established by leaders, which results in a calm and purposeful learning environment. Pupils are focused, engaged and participate well in lessons. Teaching is rarely interrupted by poor behaviour. Attendance is high and systems for improving this further are well established.

From Year 7 through to the sixth form, pupils benefit from a carefully planned personal development curriculum. Teachers receive specific training to ensure they can deliver the programme effectively. There is an emphasis on debating topical issues, with a focus on the development of tolerance and respect. Pupils take part in a wide range of clubs, as well as enrichment activities linked to their academic studies. Pupils understand how to look after their physical and mental health and learn how to keep themselves safe. The

careers programme is well structured from Year 7 onwards to ensure that pupils get the information they need.

The school is very well led and managed. Staff, including early career teachers, feel that their workload and well-being have been carefully considered by leaders. They value the many opportunities to improve their professional practice. Knowledgeable governors and trustees provide highly effective challenge and support to school leaders, for example through regular monitoring visits.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 outstanding 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](#)' 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	136418
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10296725
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,350
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	299
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gareth Jones
CEO of the trust	Ann Marie Mulkerins
Headteacher	Ann Marie Mulkerins (Executive headteacher)
Website	www.thecompton.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The CEO of the Middlesex Learning Trust also acts as executive headteacher and is responsible for two other schools.
- The school makes use of three registered 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

- 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.
- The inspection team completed deep dives in these subjects: English, science, history and geography. To do this, they met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, had discussions with staff and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- 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.
- The views of pupils, staff, parents and carers were considered through discussions and looking at information collected from Ofsted's surveys.
- Inspectors met with a representative from the local governing body. They also held discussions with the chair of the trust board.

Inspection team

Robert Grice, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alice Clay

Ofsted Inspector

Costa Dyer

Ofsted Inspector

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