

# Inspection of a good school: Eltham Hill School

Eltham Hill, London SE9 5EE

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Inspection dates:

12 and 13 March 2024

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

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

Pupils thrive in this supportive and respectful community. Staff work with great dedication to ensure that pupils have the academic and emotional support they need. In the main school, and in the sixth form, pupils demonstrate a high level of maturity and self-regulation. The atmosphere around the school is calm and purposeful. Behaviour is excellent. Older pupils are considerate of younger pupils. Many contribute to academic mentoring schemes or volunteer as 'Wellbeing Ambassadors'. This contributes to the positive learning environment.

The school has high aspirations for its pupils. Pupils work hard and value their education. They achieve very well here. Staff have the same high expectations of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They make sure that these pupils are given the support they need to achieve.

Staff and pupils work together on many initiatives that make tangible improvements to the school. The personal development programme is exceptional. Leaders ensure all pupils have access to a rich range of cultural experiences, opportunities and trips which support learning and help inform subject and career choices. Many pupils contribute to high-quality drama and musical performances. The school is successful in developing considerate and motivated pupils with a strong drive to achieve.

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

Leaders have established a carefully sequenced, rich and ambitious curriculum. Leaders' ambitions are reflected in pupils' excellent GCSE results. There is a broad curriculum offer in the school and sixth form, including for vocational qualifications. The curriculum has been carefully designed to offer both academic rigour and to develop confident and engaged future citizens. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, demonstrate a keen

interest in wider societal issues and concerns. They engage with the extensive enrichment activities with enthusiasm.

Leaders have identified the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn to be ready for the next phase of their education. For example, in Year 7 English, pupils are taught the key Shakesperean conventions through the study of Macbeth. This prepares them to tackle complex themes in Shakespeare in Years 8 and 9. Students in the sixth form benefit from an extensive employer engagement programme, including from student alumni. This helps students develop the skills needed to be successful in future study or training.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Subject leaders and staff work collaboratively, including across departments, to refine and develop the curriculum. They carefully consider the connections between subjects, as well as how they are distinct. This helps pupils to develop a rich web of knowledge. In art, for example, pupils draw on their geographical knowledge of the rainforest and endangered animals to explore how art is used to help campaign for change. In science and mathematics, pupils learn the unique methods each subject uses for representing and interpreting data.

Pupils with SEND achieve well. This is because teachers and support staff get to know their pupils well and adapt their teaching to meet individual needs. There is particularly strong identification and support for pupils with dyslexia.

Reading is a high priority. Pupils are exposed to a wide range of literature. The library is very popular with pupils. Many pupils take part in local and national competitions with high rates of success. Pupils who need additional support with their reading are quickly identified and given expert help so they can catch up. Older pupils are trained to support younger pupils with their reading.

Pupils behave very well. Routines are well-established and pupils move around the school with ease and purpose. Older pupils make the most of space available for independent study. Low level disruption in lessons is rare. There are clear sanctions in place and strong pastoral support for pupils who struggle to meet the high expectations for behaviour.

Leaders consider the opinions and experiences of staff and pupils in their decision-making. Pupils say they feel empowered by the many opportunities they have to contribute to the life of the school, including facilitating peer support groups. There is a skilled team of pastoral staff who help pupils with wider issues, including their mental health. Pupils develop the knowledge and skills to critically evaluate different points of view as part of personal, social, health and economic education. There is an equally ambitious programme of personal development in the sixth form.

The school has established positive relationships with families, and pupils attend well. Staff are proud to work here and feel supported to develop professionally. Leaders make very effective use of data to inform their actions. They bring staff and pupils with them in all that they do. This is supported by a strong and effective governing body.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## 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 the school to be good in January 2019.

## 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>	100182
<b>Local authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	10313877
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1227
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	115
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Christine Butler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Erika Podmore
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.elthamhill.com">www.elthamhill.com</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	15 and 16 January 2019 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school uses 10 registered alternative providers and two unregistered 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.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for SEND, personal, social and health education, behaviour and attendance, sixth form, and pupils' wider development.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: history, English and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in science and drama and visited a sample of lessons across other subjects.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Polly Haste, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Hatchett

Ofsted Inspector

Russell Bennett

His Majesty's Inspector

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