

Inspection of a good school: Gumley House RC Convent School, FCJ

St John's Road, Isleworth TW7 6XF

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 April 2024

Outcome

Gumley House RC Convent School, FCJ continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Stephen Byrne. The school is a single-academy trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Christine Grindrod.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Gumley House. It is a welcoming and nurturing school where the ethos of 'live that you may have life' is celebrated by all. Pupils are happy and well cared for. They learn about how to stay safe online and in the wider world. Pupils build very respectful working relationships with each other and with staff.

Leaders have created a culture of high expectations. They are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils achieve well, including in public examinations. Students in the sixth form also achieve well and receive effective guidance for life after school.

Pupils behave exceptionally well in class and around the school. Should bullying occur, it is taken seriously and dealt with quickly. The school prioritises pupils' personal development. Pupils take part in an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and visits. They play an active role in the life of the school, for example by taking on leadership responsibilities. These include being on the student leadership team, supporting younger pupils with reading and working to raise money for charities and the local community.

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

The school has an ambitious curriculum which matches the national curriculum and in places exceeds it. All pupils study two modern foreign languages in Years 7 to 9, and pupils are offered a wide range of subjects at GCSE, including vocational options. The number of pupils studying the subjects in the English Baccalaureate is now increasing.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. The school provides effective training for staff. An example of this is the way that the school has developed and trained staff in common approaches to the way that lessons are structured. Through this, staff focus skilfully on enabling pupils to recall previous learning and connect it to what they are studying currently. For example, in science, Year 7 pupils explain clearly how the conduction of heat in metals connects with an earlier lesson about the movement of particles. The school has thought carefully about what pupils should know, do and remember over time. In a few subjects, however, this curriculum thinking is not as secure as in others. Because of this, in this small number of subjects, pupils' recall and understanding of subject content are sometimes not developed in as much depth. The school is taking steps to strengthen the robustness of staff training so that the curriculum is implemented consistently well across all subjects.

Typically, teaching uses a range of strategies successfully to develop pupils' knowledge. This includes using questioning to support pupils in gaining a deeper understanding of what is being taught. For example, in modern foreign languages, teachers regularly check pupils' learning and address misconceptions when they identify gaps. Pupils make strong progress through the curriculum across most subjects in all year groups. The work pupils produce is of a high quality, particularly in the sixth form.

Teachers and support staff work well together to meet the needs of individual pupils with SEND. Typically, teachers make helpful adaptations to their resources so that pupils can learn the curriculum successfully. Pupils who need extra support with their reading receive targeted help so that they can catch up. Staff promote reading with enthusiasm, both reading within different subjects and reading for pleasure across the school.

The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. The personal, social and health education curriculum is carefully and sensitively set out. Pupils learn about tolerance and respect for other faiths and cultures. All pupils, including those with SEND, take part in educational visits, at home and abroad. These aim to broaden pupils' cultural experiences. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is very popular with pupils. The school prioritises careers guidance for all pupils, including those in the sixth form. Pupils complete work experience and receive impartial careers advice. Pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged are given one-to-one support with their next steps and are encouraged to be aspirational.

Staff manage behaviour well and low-level disruption is very rare. Leaders make sure that pupils are taught about their mental health and well-being. Attendance is high and the school does everything it reasonably can to challenge and chase up any non-attendance.

Trustees have a strong understanding of the school's context and provide much support to their school community. They fulfil their duties responsibly and with rigour, including safeguarding and promoting equality. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working at the school and appreciate the support that they receive from leaders. Most parents and carers are equally positive about the school's aspirational and inclusive ethos. Their responses to the survey commented on the wonderful community feel in the school which had pupils' learning and welfare at its core.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the curriculum is not as ambitious and developed as it is in others. The essential subject knowledge that pupils need to know and remember is sometimes not clearly identified. Sometimes, this key content is not sufficiently well sequenced. This means that there are instances when pupils do not understand what they are learning in depth. The school needs to ensure that in all subjects, staff have the curriculum thinking, training and support that they need to deliver an ambitious curriculum consistently.

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 October 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	137928
Local authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	10323381
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,120
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	223
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Christine Grindrod
Headteacher	Stephen Byrne
Website	www.gumleyhouse.com/
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 October 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2020.
- The school has a Roman Catholic religious character. The school had its last section 48 inspection in November 2023.
- The school is part of the Faithful Companions of Jesus Trust.
- The school makes use of two registered alternative provisions and two unregistered alternative provisions.
- 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 met with the headteacher, other leaders and staff, including those responsible for the quality of education, behaviour, attendance, wider development, reading and safeguarding. Inspectors also met with representatives from the trust. These included the chair of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in science, modern foreign languages, design and technology and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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 inclusive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors had formal meetings with staff and with pupils. They took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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