

Inspection of Thomas's Putney Vale

Stroud Crescent, London SW15 3EQ

Inspection dates: 11 to 13 June 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils get an excellent education here. They are safe and well looked after in this welcoming school, where leaders ensure equal opportunities for all pupils to succeed. Pupils take their learning seriously and work hard. At the heart of the school's culture is the simple motto, 'be kind'. This is reflected in the positive and respectful working relationships between pupils and staff.

Pupils' character development is just as important as academic success here. Pupils are encouraged to be 'givers not takers', with an emphasis on teamwork and helping others. Through the house system, for example, pupils from all year groups work together on quizzes and sports events, competing to win the coveted 'House Cup'. Staff work hard to ensure that everyone is involved in school life. In sports, for instance, every pupil represents the school in at least one fixture each year.

Pupils flourish here and pursue a broad range of interests. The 'Thomas's Options' system in Years 10 and 11 ensures that pupils can continue their learning in subjects that they have not selected to study at GCSE. For example, pupils can choose various creative arts and activities such as horse riding and cooking. Many pupils take part in the staging and production of school plays. Keen musicians participate in jazz, rock and vocal ensembles.

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

Leaders, including the proprietor body and those responsible for governance, have realised their ambition to provide an exceptional standard of education for pupils at this school. Leaders keep pupils at the heart of all that they do. They have created a culture of high expectations that motivates and inspires pupils and staff.

The curriculum is planned thoughtfully and in meticulous detail. Over time, pupils develop essential subject knowledge, building on what has been taught before and deepening their learning. For example, in English, when pupils study Macbeth in Year 9, they learn about historical context and themes such as patriarchy. This learning and key themes are then recalled and revisited and developed further when pupils study Romeo and Juliet in Year 10.

Staff are experts in their subjects. The school supports staff effectively with a structured and personalised programme of coaching and training. Leaders value the hard work and dedication of staff. They actively encourage and develop a cohesive team of staff.

The school uses high-quality resources and well-chosen tasks that support learning very well. Subject-specific terminology, as well as general academic vocabulary, is explicitly taught in all year groups. Consequently, pupils are confident in their use of sophisticated vocabulary in both their written and oral work. Teachers check pupils' understanding routinely in lessons, identifying and addressing any gaps in knowledge. Staff are well trained to support the needs of all pupils with special

educational needs and/or disabilities and identify pupils' needs accurately. Teachers use appropriate strategies to tailor work to individual pupils' needs. Across the curriculum, all pupils develop in-depth knowledge and skills and achieve highly.

Staff promote reading very well. Pupils have access to a wide range of texts and read widely. This includes reading novels for pleasure and regular access to non-fiction texts that pupils discuss and debate. As a result, pupils show a genuine love of reading and use the well-resourced library regularly. Pupils, including pupils learning English as an additional language, are given effective additional support to help them develop their reading fluency and confidence if necessary.

Through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) programme, pupils are taught about wide-ranging issues. Staff adapt the curriculum to emphasise certain aspects in response to themes that emerge through pupil discussions or safeguarding concerns. For example, staff have organised additional teaching on topics such as nutrition and positive masculinity. The school's extensive careers programme is an integral part of the curriculum. Regular careers lessons are supplemented with work experience for all pupils, individual careers interviews, and a wide range of talks from external speakers on different professions and employment.

In lessons, pupils are attentive to their teachers and listen carefully to each other. The school works closely with parents and carers to address any concerns about pupils' absence from school. While pupils' attendance is not as high as the school would like, staff do everything they can to promote and secure high attendance rates for all pupils.

The school ensures that every pupil has the opportunity to take on responsibility, developing their teamwork and leadership skills. For example, pupils fulfil roles as 'house captains' and 'digital leaders', and contribute to the 'equality and diversity committee', helping to organise celebration events such as Pride Week and International Women's Day. In Year 9 'inter-disciplinary lessons', pupils work together to undertake projects. A broad range of enrichment outings, such as theatre visits, outdoors adventure activities and residential journeys abroad, enhance pupils' learning.

The school has ensured that the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are met.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	149569
DfE registration number	212/6006
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	10322616
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Thomas's London Day Schools
Chair	Ben Thomas
Headteacher	Therese Andrews and Emma Oliver (Co-Headteachers)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£25,425 to £28,248
Telephone number	020 7978 0901
Website	www.thomas-s.co.uk/thomass-putney-vale
Email address	putneyvale@thomas-s.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school was originally an extension of Thomas's Battersea School and shared the same premises.
- In September 2023, Thomas's Putney Vale opened as a new school and has exclusive use of its premises.
- The two co-headteachers have been in post since the school opened.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its pupils.
- This was the school's first standard inspection.
- In September 2025, the school plans to relocate to a site in Richmond-upon-Thames and change its name to Thomas's College. The school intends to offer boarding provision and education to pupils aged 11 to 18. These proposed changes have not been considered as part of this inspection.

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.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- 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 any impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the co-headteachers and other school leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of the proprietor body, the safeguarding governor and the compliance manager for all schools in the Thomas's group.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, modern foreign languages and PSHE education. 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 considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- 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.

- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Parent View, and responses to the online staff and pupil surveys. Inspectors also met with groups of pupils and staff, including non-teaching staff.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Katerina Christodoulou

Ofsted Inspector

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