

Inspection of Windsor Girls' School

Imperial Road, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 3RT

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
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| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Requires improvement |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Requires improvement |
| Sixth-form provision | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

The school has two headteachers who are Peter Griffiths and Eimear O'Carroll. This school is part of The Windsor Learning Partnership trust, which means other people in the trust also have a responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Gavin Henderson and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Cash.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Windsor Girls' School as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are welcome into this inclusive and friendly school. They celebrate each other's identity and individuality. The school promotes equality and diversity. Pupils celebrate world culture day and national recognition days. These wider opportunities help pupils prepare for modern life in Britain.

The school has begun to raise its expectations of pupils' conduct. Pupils recognise that behaviour is better than it was previously. Relationships between pupils and staff are becoming more positive due to the 'respect' approach that staff use. Pupils enjoy collecting reward points for demonstrating the school's values.

However, there are inconsistencies in pupils' attitudes to their learning and how well some pupils focus during lessons. This is having an impact on how effectively pupils learn. Pupils know that staff want them to work hard, but not all pupils get the help they need to meet the school's raised expectations for behaviour. In addition, too many pupils are often absent from school, meaning they miss out on their important education.

Many pupils enjoy their learning and appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer. Some pupils participate in the performing arts, such as musicals, dance and choir as well as sporting clubs. Responsibilities, such as being school councillors and ambassadors, help pupils play an active role in the life of the school.

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

The school has ensured that the curriculum offered is both broad and ambitious. It has been well thought out in many subjects so that it is clear what pupils need to learn and when. However, in other subjects, the curriculum is still in the process of being developed. In these subjects, the key knowledge and skills pupils will learn is not always identified precisely. This means that teachers are not always clear on what should be taught and when to ensure pupils learn and remember the intended curriculum. School and trust leaders share a keen determination to continue to make the necessary subject improvements. To support this, they recognise the need to develop the expertise of curriculum leaders. This will help them prioritise the most important improvements that need to be implemented to help pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

Most teachers are subject specialists. They present new information clearly to help pupils understand important ideas. However, some activities in lessons do not always help pupils learn as much as they could. As part of this, improvements to the identification of pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and ensuring these needs are met in lessons has been prioritised. Many pupils are beginning to benefit from appropriate support. When needed, the 'nurture' groups are particularly effective in offering bespoke support for pupils with SEND. This is

helping them to learn how to regulate their emotions and develop increasing levels of independence and confidence.

Pupils benefit from opportunities to read with staff. Pupils who need extra support with their reading are beginning to get some help. However, this support has only recently been introduced and, therefore, the impact of this is not yet fully evident.

Sixth-form students demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning. Teachers ensure that students are well supported to help them learn and achieve well. Attendance, punctuality and engagement in the sixth form are high. Students learn how to work independently and produce high-quality work.

The positive attitudes seen in the sixth form are not seen consistently across the rest of the school. Some pupils do not show a positive attitude to their learning. Staff do not consistently challenge this behaviour, meaning pupils are not consistently learning well. The attendance and punctuality of some pupils is also too low. Leaders have systems established to support pupils in attending regularly. However, these are not always effective, meaning too many pupils continue to miss too much of their education.

The personal development curriculum is comprehensive. It covers topics to help pupils learn how to look after themselves and stay safe. Strong community links are helping pupils to become responsible and active citizens. Pupils benefit from quality careers education and guidance and the majority move on to suitable education or training when they leave school.

Most staff are proud to work at the school and feel well supported. Staff morale is high. They appreciate the many opportunities that they have to develop their knowledge and skills to help pupils learn. Leaders' approach to school development, however, is not yet consistent enough. They do not always follow up on plans with the rigour and precision needed to support improvements. Committed trustees and governors continue to help leaders evaluate what is working well and what needs to get better.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is planned and implemented, across different subjects and key stages. These inconsistencies mean that pupils do not always achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that the curriculum is planned and delivered consistently well in every subject.

- Pupils across the school are not yet attending school as regularly as they should. The rates of absence remain persistently high for some pupils. As a result, they are missing out on vital learning. The school and trust should maintain a sharp focus on reducing rates of absence. They must continue to devise and persist with effective strategies that secure sustained improvement in pupils' attendance.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are not yet consistently positive across the school. Some pupils lack confidence in what they can achieve and in their ability to do well. They do not always engage as well as they should in learning in lessons. The school should ensure that there is a consistent and coherent approach to ensure pupils have a positive attitude to their learning.

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

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| Unique reference number | 141852 |
| Local authority | Windsor and Maidenhead |
| Inspection number | 10321998 |
| Type of school | Secondary Comprehensive |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 13 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Girls |
| Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 778 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 162 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Paul Cash |
| CEO of the trust | Gavin Henderson |
| Headteachers | Peter Griffiths and Eimear O'Carroll |
| Website | www.windsorgirls.net |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected. |

Information about this school

- The school became a member of the Windsor Learning Partnership Trust in March 2015.
- The academy 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 educational qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school currently uses two registered and two unregistered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection the inspector held meetings with the headteachers, senior leadership team, teachers, support staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of trustees and other members of the trust board.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: science, mathematics, English, modern foreign languages, art and design and history. In each subject, the inspector met with subject leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other aspects of the school's curriculum were also considered.
- 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.
- The inspector took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and trustees' minutes.
- The inspector considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the free-text comments that were submitted. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

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|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Numera Anwar, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Louise Agle | Ofsted Inspector |
| Harry Kutty | Ofsted Inspector |
| Simon Potten | Ofsted Inspector |

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