

Inspection of a school judged Good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Holy Cross RC School

Basuto Road, London SW6 4BL

Inspection dates:

26 and 27 November 2024

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils receive an excellent education at this school. This begins in early years where strong foundations are built. The school provides an ambitious curriculum alongside a strong enrichment programme. Pupils achieve high outcomes and thrive because the school has high academic ambitions for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils enjoy their learning and are highly motivated in class.

This is a three-form entry school, with two forms attending at Holy Cross and one form attending the Fulham Bilingual site. Pupils at the Fulham Bilingual site learn both the French and English National Curriculum: one week learning in French, the next English. Leaders have mapped out the two curriculums in depth and have strong oversight of the provision.

Pupils across the sites are mature and confident. They are polite and courteous. Pupils are proud of their school and embody the values taught. They take part in charity work and numerous trips, events and workshops. Pupils are happy at the school and safe. Attendance is high and leaders work effectively with families to create a strong community. Pupils are known and nurtured at this school. Both staff and parents and carers speak highly of the school and feel there is a strong sense of community.

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

Pupils follow a broad and rich curriculum. The school has identified the knowledge that pupils will learn with precision, across all year groups. This is set out coherently, so that

pupils repeat and practise key concepts and develop strong understanding. Teachers use activities that are designed to deepen and consolidate what pupils have learned. Pupils, including those with SEND, develop a secure body of knowledge and skills in different subjects. For example, pupils can recall mathematical methods of reasoning to solve different problems and apply their knowledge of forces and electricity to design their own projects in design and technology lessons.

Teachers have strong subject expertise and consistently build on pupils' prior knowledge. The same high-quality teaching approaches are used across both sites. Teachers ensure new vocabulary is understood and use 'talk' to explore new ideas through discussion and drama activities. Where possible, enrichment opportunities help make learning memorable. For example, pupils listen to authors and local historians or visit museums, farms and theatres. As a result, pupils remember their learning well and make connections between their visits and the work they have completed in class.

Teachers model and explain new concepts clearly. They ensure that activities build in difficulty with careful guidance. This methodical approach supports the learning of all pupils. Pupils with SEND are quickly identified and are consistently fully included in ambitious learning within the classroom. They make strong progress through the curriculum alongside their peers.

There is a culture of reading firmly embedded in the school. Pupils love reading and talk about books with enthusiasm. The curriculum revolves around ambitious choices of books and stories, with children from the early years taking great delight in re-enacting stories during storytime. The phonics programme is sequenced in a logical way to build knowledge gradually and securely. Both phonics and reading sessions are delivered well. Pupils who need additional support are given effective help so that they gain fluency quickly.

The provision for personal development is excellent. A wide variety of enrichment activities is available. Pupils take part in a range of clubs including chess, gymnastics, choir and karate. They also perform at a theatre to bring together their own learning about Shakespeare's plays and further develop their confidence. Pupils typically exhibit great maturity and kindness for one another. In this way, the school lives out its mission for pupils to 'journey to fullness of life' and to encourage pupils 'to take risks and aim high.' Pupils are reflective and can talk about sensitive topics with consideration. They take an active role in the school community and are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Personal, social, health and economic education is organised thoughtfully. Pupils know how to stay healthy and safe, including online.

Children learn and play cooperatively in the early years. They learn how to concentrate and listen to their peers well. Older pupils demonstrate high levels of respect. They want to learn and attend school very well. The school provides strong pastoral support and parents recognise the high levels of care afforded to their child.

Leaders and governors are knowledgeable about the different contexts of the two sites and work across the two sites to share high-quality professional development and expertise. They are committed to a united culture of ambition.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in September 2015.

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	100345
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10345642
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	615
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Seana Bengtsson
Headteacher	Kathleen Williams (executive headteacher) Claude Gauci (head of school) Camille Grace (head of school at the Fulham Bilingual site)
Website	www.holycrossfulham.org.uk www.fulhambilingual.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 June 2019

Information about this school

- This is a three-form entry primary school. However, two forms of entry attend Holy Cross RC Primary school and one form attends Fulham Bilingual. Both are overseen by the same governing body and the same executive headteacher. However, they have separate admissions criteria, both of which go through the local authority.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school has a Roman Catholic religious character and is in the Archdiocese of Westminster. The school's most recent section 48 inspection was carried out in September 2021. The site at Fulham Bilingual does not have a religious character.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 senior leaders, governors, a representative from the local authority, teachers and support staff across both sites.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning, spoke to teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work across both sites.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for school improvement.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also spoke to pupils, parents and staff and took into consideration the online staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors checked the school's policies and records, including those related to behaviour and pupils' wider development.
- Inspectors held meetings with staff and spoke with pupils during social times. They observed pupils' behaviour across the school, including as they arrived and left the school.
- 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.

Inspection team

Sarah Saunders, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alan McDougall

Ofsted Inspector

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