

The Grey Coat Hospital

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101151
Local Authority	Westminster
Inspection number	276462
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2005
Reporting inspector	Scott Harrison HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lady Laws Mrs R Allard
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Greycoat Place London SW1P 2DY
Telephone number	02079691998
Fax number	02078282697

Age group	11–18
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The Grey Coat Hospital was established as a school in 1698 on the site of an Elizabethan workhouse and became a day school for girls in 1874. It has strong traditions, including its Christian foundation and ethos, but also aims to equip its pupils to 'meet the challenges of the twenty-first century'; it became a specialist language school in 2002. The school is of average size and has a diverse intake, with half of the pupils from minority ethnic groups and one fifth whose first language is not English. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is around average. The school has a fully comprehensive intake, but attainment on entry is above average and there are lower than average numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Recent changes to the admission policy provide more places for pupils from the local community and for the admission of more from faiths other than Christian.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

* Extend the use of ICT. In doing so develop pupils' ICT capability across the curriculum and using it more regularly to enhance learning in all subjects* Expand the vocational curriculum as an attractive alternative for pupils in Key Stage 4 and sixth formers* Develop the citizenship curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Inspectors agree with the school that the overall quality of teaching is very high; several outstanding lessons were observed. Pupils experience a wide range of learning styles which makes them think and builds their understanding; they have a very high level of engagement in their lessons. In Key Stage 4 and the sixth form there is an appropriate but not excessive focus on the needs of examination courses. Teachers demonstrate great enthusiasm for and expertise in their subject and this helps to promote the strong motivation in the pupils. The teachers know the pupils well so most of the work is well matched to their differing needs. The recent focus of the school on aspects of teaching is bearing fruit: learning objectives are clear and questioning takes pupils forward by exploring ideas in depth. Some good use is being made of interactive whiteboards, and increasingly teachers are using ICT well to prepare for and support their teaching. Homework is currently a school priority and is generally regular and purposeful. In a minority of lessons the teaching does not reach these high standards because, for example, there is a lack of clarity about the purpose of the lesson, more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged or the available time is not used to the optimum. The quality of assessment is very high. On a day to day basis, pupils receive very good feedback on their work and a clear indication of what they need to do to improve. The school's procedures provide pupils, teachers and parents with detailed data on progress and targets which are used well by the school to identify individual issues or trends.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The school has a very good curriculum that provides a broad range of subjects and activities matched to the needs and interests of all its pupils, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language. The school is taking positive steps to increase the range of vocational opportunities available, and to capitalise upon its specialist language school status, for example through the introduction of Mandarin. Students in the sixth form benefit significantly from an extensive range of subjects available through consortium arrangements with local partner schools. The school provides an extensive and imaginative

range of activities that extend and enrich pupils' learning experiences, at school and within the local community. These are extremely popular with pupils and contribute significantly to their overall achievement and personal development. Pupils are actively encouraged to stay healthy and safe. Very good provision is made for work-related learning through work experience and enterprise activities, and through links with the financial sector of the City of London. Together these provide an effective preparation for pupils' future economic well-being. Good provision is made to develop the literacy and numeracy skills of pupils. For ICT this is satisfactory, but needs further development. The school has taken steps to introduce a programme of work for the National Curriculum in citizenship, but more remains to be done, particularly at Key Stage 4.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

The care, guidance and support the school provides are outstanding, and reflect the particular ethos of the school. Assemblies are used very well to support this ethos and to celebrate pupils' achievement. Pupils feel safe and secure because staff know them very well. There are rigorous procedures to ensure their welfare and safety and regular risk assessments are carried out. Child protection procedures are clear and understood. Robust support systems which help pupils who are new to the school to settle in quickly are in place. A travel club developed by students in the sixth form helps new pupils arrive at school safely and on time. Pupils are set challenging learning targets and know what they need to do to achieve them. Their progress is monitored rigorously so that those who need further support are identified. They understand how they can get help and support if needed; and appreciate the practical support given to them in preparation for higher education and the world of work.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for taking the time to talk to us during the recent inspection of your school. We appreciated your views very much as well as the mature and responsible way in which you conducted yourselves. We would like to use this opportunity to share with you our views of your school.

The school has many significant strengths, and overall we think it is outstanding.* The headteacher and staff work very hard to provide you with a high quality education. We were impressed by the quality of teaching and the way they assess your work.* You receive extremely good care and support.* The sixth form is very well organised and you benefit from a broad curriculum that opens up many opportunities.

You play a very important part in the success of the school. You are highly motivated and seize the opportunities available to you. You work hard in lessons, enjoy your work and take part in a wide range of extra curricular activities. We know that you attend school regularly and we think that you behave very well. During the inspection we were told by pupils or parents of a few instances of misbehaviour. Where this occurs, we think that the school deals with it rapidly and fairly. We have said to the school that some aspects of the curriculum need further development. Specifically, we think you should use computers more across the range of subjects; there should be more vocational courses that are attractive to you, irrespective of your levels of attainment; and more work needs to be done to establish citizenship as a subject in the curriculum. We enjoyed speaking with members of the school council. We think that they are doing a good job, but an agenda item for the future could be to consider the rules and procedures to make it properly democratic and to raise its profile in the school. With all good wishes