

Inspection of school: Chestnut Grove Academy

Chestnut Grove, Balham, 45 Chestnut Grove, London SW12 8JZ

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 March 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Christian Kingsley. This school is part of Wandle Learning Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the joint chief executive officers, Christian Kingsley and Mark Siswick, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sian Mathias.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Chestnut Grove are happy and appreciate being part of this innovative, outward looking school. They enjoy the opportunities to develop their talents across the curriculum, as well as through the wider enrichment programme. The school helps pupils to develop positivity, resilience, open-mindedness, unity and determination. These values are captured in the word 'PROUD', which aptly describes their feelings about Chestnut Grove. Pupils are kept safe at school, and they trust staff to care for them, challenge them and widen their horizons.

Leaders have high expectations of learning and behaviour. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, study an ambitious curriculum and achieve highly, responding well to leaders' high expectations. Many go on to Russell Group universities, and others to fulfilling careers, which are often in creative industries. Pupils behave respectfully and with courtesy. This is a kind school, where diversity is celebrated. Bullying and derogatory behaviour is rare and is quickly addressed by staff should it occur. Pupils and students are well prepared for adult life and responsible citizenship as well as the next stage of their education, employment or training.

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

The recently revised curriculum is knowledge-rich and exceeds the content of what is expected nationally. Its vision is global, incorporating a variety of cultural traditions. Topics are well sequenced to help pupils build on prior learning. Teachers' strong subject

knowledge ensures that new ideas and concepts are introduced and explained with precision. Assessment is used effectively to check pupils' understanding and to address any misconceptions. This helps to ensure that pupils typically develop a depth of knowledge across the curriculum they learn.

Teachers make appropriate adaptations so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can access the same curriculum as their peers. These pupils enjoy learning, and they achieve well from their different starting points. Staff help promote self-confidence and emotional well-being as well as academic success. Pupils, including those with SEND, are effusive about the way the school has helped them develop.

The school has put reading and the acquisition of vocabulary at the heart of its work. The curriculum is designed to help pupils learn about where words come from and how they have developed over time. Leaders expect all teachers to develop pupils' fluency, confidence and enjoyment in reading. Phonics is well taught to groups of children who are new to, or struggle with, reading. A consistent approach ensures that these pupils catch up quickly and read with increasing accuracy and fluency. As a result, pupils read widely and often.

Pupils understand and embody the high standards of behaviour expected. Any rare incidents of low-level disruption in lessons is swiftly dealt with. Behaviour around the site and outside in the playground is calm. The school uses a plethora of strategies to promote and improve attendance. Staff work closely with external agencies to bring pupils into school. This work is having success with many individuals.

The provision for pupils' personal development is very strong. The curriculum is designed to help pupils learn about keeping healthy and safe and important issues, such as respectful relationships, human rights and democracy. All pupils benefit from a very effective programme of careers education, advice and guidance. There is a wide range of extracurricular opportunities, including chess, Manga, netball, football and film, which are well attended. Pupils with SEND participate fully in school journeys to London, as well as further afield to Iceland, Paris and Dorset.

Leaders, governors and trustees communicate well with the local community and stakeholders. They understand and fulfil their statutory obligations. They engage positively with staff and take a proactive approach in supporting their well-being, employing effective strategies to reduce workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 Chestnut Grove Academy to be good in January 2019.

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	136883
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	10313893
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,330
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	307
Appropriate authority	Board of Trustees
Chair of trust	Sian Mathias
Headteacher	Christian Kingsley
Website	www.chestnutgrove.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	29 and 30 January 2019

Information about this school

- The school has specialisms in art and design and modern foreign languages.
- The school is a hub for the Wandle teaching school alliance.
- The school makes use of four registered alternative providers.
- 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, the joint chief executive officers of the Wandle Learning Trust, the trust-wide safeguarding lead and the governance professional. Meetings were also held with the deputy and assistant headteachers, the chair of the local academy committee and three other local academy governors as well as the local authority school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in art, design and technology, modern foreign languages, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Other subjects were considered as part of the inspection.
- 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.
- The views of pupils, parents and carers and staff were gathered through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Anne Hudson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Booth	Ofsted Inspector
Juliette Claro	Ofsted Inspector

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