

Inspection of Farmor's School

The Park, Fairford, Gloucestershire, GL7 4JQ

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Farmor's is a happy school. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy their time here. They say that their teachers are kind and thoughtful and that they enjoy their lessons. Pupils are courteous, polite and have a strong self-belief and confidence.

Pupils behave very well. They conduct themselves well in lessons, and at social times. Pupils say that bullying is very rare, but if it does happen staff manage it well. Pupils feel that staff listen to their voice, and they feel well respected. As a result, pupils feel safe and able to speak to staff of any concerns that they might have.

Pupils say that 'you can be who you are without judgement'. They describe a community in which pupils of all year groups work together, support each other and that is very tolerant.

There are many opportunities for the pupils to take part in activities beyond the school day and there is a very good take-up of these. There are many, diverse activities, such as chess, horse riding, and drama that pupils really enjoy.

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders have improved the content and structure of the curriculum markedly in many subjects. As a result, the quality of education is good.

The curriculum is sufficiently demanding in most subjects. In English, for example, the analysis of classic and complex texts provides pupils with rich learning opportunities. The focus on the development of vocabulary further supports pupils' language development. Staff have high expectations of pupils in class and, as a result, they work hard. Pupils read regularly, the school library is well used and those who need to improve their reading are given the help they need to catch up.

Most teachers make precise checks on what pupils know and can do. They adapt their teaching plans accordingly and use their assessments to ensure that sequences of work provide pupils with the essential knowledge they should gain.

Many middle leaders carry out their roles and responsibilities very well. However, a few middle leaders are still developing their roles. For example, a few do not assure themselves of the content and sequencing of curriculum plans and how well pupils are learning the curriculum. As such, in a few areas of the curriculum, notably languages, the curriculum is not so well planned. Some key content is not as clearly identified to support pupils developing deeper knowledge and skills.

Leaders and teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Their social, emotional, and academic needs are met well. As a result, these pupils make good progress across the curriculum.

Pupils make many contributions to the wider life of the school. For example, in sixth form, students take part in a shadow leadership group. They make strong contributions to the improvement of the school in their work as ambassadors for bullying and buddy prefects.

Students in the sixth form appreciate the depth of subject knowledge that their teachers bring to the classroom. This supports in-depth discussions, using complex subject specific vocabulary. The sixth form prides itself on meeting the needs of its students, who follow a wide range of academic courses. The option to study for three years supports students' access to the sixth form.

Careers education and guidance are strong and used well by pupils. The school provides good quality, meaningful opportunities for pupils to encounter the world of work. Pupils have unlimited access to a professional to talk through and explore pathways to careers. The school's careers programme meets the Gatsby Benchmarks and the requirements of the Baker Clause.

The school has effective systems in place to support pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning. Pupils behave well and take pride in their work.

The school is strongly committed to the personal development of its pupils. Leaders have sequenced an extensive personal, social health and economic education curriculum that meets the statutory relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education requirements. It is designed so that areas such as healthy relationships are revisited frequently, and pupils can build on prior knowledge.

Governors fulfil their duties well. Staff feel well supported by leaders, who manage staff workload effectively. Staff training and development are well organised, aligned with the school's priorities and staff say it is valuable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is very well led and managed at the school, students feel safe and able to speak about concerns to a member of staff. As a result, the school identifies those pupils who need help and secure it promptly. The school has responded with considerable sensitivity to the recent publication on sexual harassment in schools and this is informing ongoing improvements in its provision for safeguarding. Safeguarding principles are effectively woven into the curriculum. This enables pupils to recognise online and offline risks to their well-being and makes them aware of the support available to them.

Leaders' recruitment of staff follows recommendations on safer recruitment.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not yet secured a foreign languages curriculum that is well structured and ambitious for all pupils. As a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding are less secure than in other subjects. Leaders need to secure a strong curriculum that ensures pupils gain all the knowledge they should, so they achieve well in foreign languages.
- Some heads of department are developing their roles. They do not assure themselves of how well the curriculum is implemented and learned. As such, in some subjects, leaders do not identify when curriculum plans are not well sequenced, or they are not sufficiently demanding. Leaders must ensure that all middle leaders have the expertise to carry out their roles effectively so that they assure themselves that pupils gain all the knowledge they should in every subject.

How can I feedback 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	137097
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Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10200945
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1020
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	211
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Sam Bartholomew
Headteacher	Matthew Evans
Website	www.farmors.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 November 2017

Information about this school

- Farmor's School is an average sized secondary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This inspection was the first that the school had received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors considered the impact of the pandemic upon the school, leaders responses and took these into account within the inspection.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, members of the trust, and governors, including the chair of governors.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, and foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors

met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and considered samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other subjects.

- Meetings were held with the designated safeguarding leader to gather evidence on the school's work to safeguard pupils.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms and around school. Inspectors also met with leaders to consider aspects of pupils' personal development, including careers education.
- An inspector met with early career teachers to consider how leaders support their professional development.
- Inspectors considered 56 responses to the Ofsted staff survey, alongside 15 responses to the survey for pupils and 150 responses to the online questionnaire Ofsted Parent View, including 99 free-text responses from parents.

Inspection team

Malcolm Willis, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Hill	Ofsted Inspector
Tonya Hill	Ofsted Inspector
Jenny Maraspin	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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