

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Maiden Erlegh School

Silverdale Rd, Earley, Reading, Berkshire RG6 7HS

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 April 2025

Outcome

Maiden Erlegh School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Steve Jump. The school is part of the Maiden Erlegh Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Jonathon Peck and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nick Jones.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this friendly, inclusive school, which promotes the highest standards in all areas of its work. Pupils rise consistently to meet and exceed these expectations. Attendance is high. Pupils achieve very well academically by the time they leave the school. Students in the sixth form move on successfully to an impressive range of university destinations. The school values of 'integrity, tolerance, aspiration, respect, kindness and perseverance' pervade all aspects of school life.

Pupils are highly courteous and respectful towards one another and with staff and visitors. They have warm relationships with adults and feel supported and cared for. Pupils display very positive behaviour throughout the school. They move around the building in a calm and orderly manner and are keen to learn in lessons.

The school provides a broad range of enrichment opportunities. These enhance the academic curriculum and develop pupils' talents and interests. Pupils take part in a variety of activities, including sports and music clubs, eco-club and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Sixth-form students are excellent role models for younger pupils. They organise a number of the school's enrichment activities. They have leadership roles on the school council and act as subject mentors for pupils in lower year groups.

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

The school has high academic expectations for its pupils. From Year 7 to Year 13, pupils follow a carefully designed and ambitious curriculum that equips them with the knowledge and skills they need to excel. The curriculum matches, and often exceeds, the scope of what is expected nationally. Most pupils study the suite of subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate in key stage 4. Pupils and sixth-form students achieve highly in national tests.

Consistently high-quality teaching from staff who are experts in their subjects means pupils develop a deep understanding of subject content. Staff have set out precisely the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn in each subject. Learning is sequenced logically so that it builds on what pupils already know.

Teachers carefully check pupils' understanding of what has been taught, picking up on and addressing misconceptions swiftly. They use their expertise to introduce and model new knowledge and techniques. Pupils practise using this new knowledge. They use the feedback and guidance that teachers provide to further improve their work. Pupils value learning and take pride in their work. They work hard and are keen to develop and deepen their understanding and skills.

Students in the sixth form excel. Highly appropriate programmes of study offer a broad range of subjects. Many students stay on at the school after Year 11. High levels of staff expertise carry through to the sixth form. The quality of discussion and debate in sixth-form lessons is exceptional. Students are mature and articulate. They talk with confidence and insight about their learning.

Teachers identify the needs of pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and make adaptations to their learning when they need it to secure their understanding. These strategies are thoroughly embedded in lessons. This ensures all pupils learn the ambitious content of the curriculum. The school has an on-site, specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. This resource provision is fully integrated into the school and successfully supports the whole school's ambition that every pupil is a valued member of the school community.

Reading is promoted very well. Weaker readers are quickly identified. Appropriate interventions are put in place to help them become confident and fluent readers. Pupils at the earlier stages of speaking English as an additional language also receive well-targeted support to read with increasing accuracy.

The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is carefully designed. Themed assemblies support taught sessions and tutorials, for example, through topics linked to inclusion and equality. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and consent in an age-appropriate way. Pupils enjoy debating and exploring their own views on spiritual and moral issues. An effective programme of careers information, education, advice and guidance helps pupils understand the full range of opportunities available to them when they leave the school. Sixth-form students speak positively of their participation in work

experience. They value the support and guidance that they receive in applying to further education, apprenticeship or employment.

The trust plays a key role in helping the school achieve its ambition for pupils. Governors and trustees have a thorough understanding of the school. They work well together to provide direction, challenge and support. Leaders support staff well and consider their workload and well-being. Staff are rightly proud and happy to work at this school.

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 outstanding 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in February 2020.

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	136637
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10379851
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	1840
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	458
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nick Jones
CEO of the trust	Jonathon Peck
Headteacher	Steve Jump
Website	http://maidenerleghschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 February 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- 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.
- The school has a specially resourced provision, Indigo Resource Base, for pupils with autistic spectrum conditions.
- The school uses four registered and ten unregistered provisions for pupils.

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 held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, a range of staff, pupils, the CEO of the trust and two trust members.
- An inspector held a telephone discussion with a member of staff at two providers of alternative provision.
- An inspector visited the special resourced provision, Indigo Resource Base. They had discussions with staff, visited lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils and observed their behaviour at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke to staff, including early career teachers, about behaviour and their workload in school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey. They took account of the responses to the online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text comments. Inspectors considered the views of pupils shared in Ofsted's online pupil survey and through discussions held with pupils throughout the school.

Inspection team

Ann Fearon, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Cartwright	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Hanlon	Ofsted Inspector

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