

Inspection of Nonsuch High School for Girls

Ewell Road, Cheam, Sutton, Surrey, SM3 8AB

Inspection dates: 25–26 May and 8–9 June 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils achieve well and are inspired to learn. The curriculum motivates all pupils to aim high. It also enables them to gain knowledge in a range of subjects. For example, some pupils study astronomy at GCSE. They confidently use the telescope on the school's roof and develop their knowledge.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Teachers set high standards for behaviour. Pupils aim to meet these expectations and manage their own behaviour well. They come to school ready to learn.

Most pupils said that they are happy at school and feel safe. Suitable systems are in place for pupils to raise concerns, including about bullying. Records show that leaders manage these concerns effectively. Many pupils said that bullying rarely occurs. If it did, they know who to tell and that it would be resolved quickly. However, not all pupils share this view, with some reluctant to share their worries with staff. Leaders know about this. They are taking effective steps to ensure that all pupils have complete confidence in the school's response to any issues or concerns that may arise.

Through the well-planned curriculum, pupils learn about well-being, equality and global issues. Leaders encourage pupils to voice their opinions confidently and respectfully. Pupils enjoy sharing ideas and debating different viewpoints.

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

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' learning, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). From Year 7 through to Year 13, the well-planned curriculum mirrors leaders' ambition for all pupils.

Leaders expect pupils to conduct themselves well. The school environment is calm, including in the sixth form. Pupils and teachers focus on learning. Disruption in lessons is uncommon.

Leaders provide a broad and ambitious range of subjects for pupils to study in all year groups. Most subjects are carefully planned. Leaders and teachers know exactly what they want pupils to learn. Subject planning aims to make sure that all pupils know and remember essential knowledge. The needs of pupils with SEND are identified and planned for by well-trained staff.

Pupils are prepared effectively for their future learning. In English, for example, Year 7 pupils explore biblical references and common themes found in myths and legends. This gives pupils the building blocks of knowledge needed for the study of more complex literature in Year 8 onwards. Reading is a whole-school priority. Opportunities for pupils to read and enjoy books are threaded through the school day. For instance, in Years 7 to 9, teachers lead 'drop everything and read' sessions.

Leaders identify pupils who are not reading as well as they should be. They make sure that these pupils receive well-planned extra help.

Teachers check pupils' work regularly. They do this in class and through assessment tests and homework tasks. Teachers use information from their checks to refine plans for pupils' future learning. Sometimes this approach is not as effective as it could be. Some checks on pupils' learning do not identify precisely which subject content pupils need to go over again.

Pupils' personal development is promoted well. The curriculum for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is central to this work. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to look after their mental and physical well-being. They also learn about life in modern Britain, including wider issues in society. However, sometimes staff lack confidence in talking to pupils about these issues, particularly those related to equality and diversity. Training for staff has been prioritised. Staff are developing the knowledge they need to deal confidently with sensitive topics or questions that pupils raise. Nevertheless, this is not fully embedded.

Leaders seek pupils' views on how the PSHE curriculum might be improved further. They are keen to make the PSHE curriculum relevant to pupils' everyday lives. For example, following suggestions from sixth-form students, the curriculum now includes information on learning to drive. Alongside the school council, the school's champions of anti-racism and equality (CARE) group also puts forward ideas for leaders to consider. That said, some pupils feel that leaders and staff could do more to listen to and respond to pupils' views.

This year, leaders' work to promote pupils' personal development has included an increased focus on equality and diversity. Recently, some aspects of this work have not been managed well. Leaders have not shied away from identifying and putting right any mistakes that have been made in this aspect of the school's work. Nevertheless, a small but significant group of pupils and families have lost trust in the school's work to promote equality and diversity. Rebuilding this trust remains a clear priority for leaders.

Starting in Year 7, pupils receive comprehensive careers guidance. They learn about different career options and choices from the school careers department and former students, and by attending careers fairs. Leaders prepare pupils in Year 11 well for the next steps in their future studies. Pupils and their parents are given one-to-one advice ahead of making course choices in the school's sixth form. Currently, pupils in Year 11 are completing online work in their chosen A-level subjects. Sixth-form students receive plentiful guidance with university and apprenticeship applications.

Leaders have positive relationships with staff. Staff said that they can manage their workload and that leaders are considerate of this. Newly qualified teachers receive support for their continued development.

Governors and trustees have a clear vision for the school. They support and challenge leaders and they carry out their role effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders perform the necessary checks on new staff recruited to the school. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They understand risks that pupils may face, including risks outside of school and online. Staff know how to report any concerns that they might have.

Leaders have effective systems to identify pupils in need of additional support. Pupils benefit from the wide range of pastoral care provision, such as mental health champions. Specialist staff provide personalised additional help for pupils who need it. Leaders also work effectively with other outside agencies to secure pupils' welfare.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers regularly check pupils' work. However, in some subjects, teachers' use of assessment is not as helpful as it could be. Assessment tasks sometimes do not focus on measuring pupils' understanding and recall of essential knowledge. Leaders should refine approaches to assessment so that it fully supports the delivery of the curriculum.
- The curriculum for PSHE is well planned and sequenced. However, some staff lack the expertise needed to deliver the programme confidently. Leaders need to strengthen their oversight of pupils' learning about sensitive topics and subject content. Leaders should continue to prioritise training for staff and make sure that all staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to deliver the PSHE curriculum, particularly subject content related to equality, gender and diversity. This will also help leaders to build on their existing work to restore all pupils' confidence in staff's ability to deal with sensitive issues and concerns.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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 [here](#).

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	136795
Local authority	Sutton
Inspection number	10173760
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,426
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	432
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sandy Gillett
Headteacher	Amy Cavilla
Website	www.nonsuchschool.org
Date of previous inspection	18 – 19 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provision, the Sutton Tuition and Re-integration Service.

Information about this inspection

This inspection began on 25 May and 26 May as a no formal designation visit under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005. This inspection was deemed a section 5 under the same Act. As a section 5 inspection requires more inspector time to complete, we returned on 8 and 9 June to complete the full inspection.

- This was the first inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with the chief executive officer of the trust and the chair of the local governing body. Inspectors spoke to the deputy chair of the local governing body on the telephone.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: English, history, mathematics, science and religious education. Inspectors visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with subject leaders and teachers.
- Through discussions with leaders, governors, pupils and staff, inspectors considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. Inspectors also looked at records related to safeguarding, including records of pre-employment checks carried out before staff are appointed.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from all year groups and spoke to pupils during lesson visits. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at playtimes was observed.
- Pupils in Year 11 and Year 13 were not attending on site during the visit on 8 and 9 June. However, leaders arranged for inspectors to speak to groups of pupils from Years 11 and 13 on these days.
- Inspectors spoke to staff about behaviour and about their workload in school. Inspectors looked at 120 staff responses, 243 parent responses and 581 pupil responses to Ofsted's surveys received on 25 and 26 May 2021. The 11 staff responses, 346 parent responses and 447 pupil responses to Ofsted's surveys on 8 and 9 June 2021 were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Mark Smith, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lucy Bruce	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sophie Welch	Her Majesty's Inspector
Noeman Anwar	Her Majesty's Inspector
Janet Hallett	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Radomsky	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lisa Strong	Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children’s social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021