

Inspection of a good school: Davison Church of England High School for Girls, Worthing

Selborne Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 2JX

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 March 2023

Outcome

Davison Church of England High School for Girls, Worthing continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are extremely proud to be a 'Davison Girl'. They value how the school 'shapes their character' and provides a strong moral compass for the way pupils conduct themselves. Pupils are identifiable, not just because of their distinctive poppy red hats, but their mature conduct and compassion for all. Pupils behave extremely well because staff insist on the highest expectations of them. Pupils benefit from a nurturing relationship with staff built upon respect. Adults support pupils to flourish when facing adversity. Bullying is not common because staff quickly resolve any issues.

All members of this school hold learning in the highest regard. Pupils consistently benefit from a high-quality education in all subjects. Pupils who need additional help to learn, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are quickly identified. Leaders ensure that all staff know how to meet the needs of pupils so they can achieve well. Leaders promote a thirst for scholarly learning. For example, they provide extra-curricular GCSEs in further mathematics, statistics and astronomy. These are in addition to the bountiful clubs and enrichment opportunities which further develop pupils' interests and many talents.

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

In response to the disruption caused by COVID-19, leaders have placed a keen emphasis on pupils securing the numeracy and literacy skills needed to achieve well. There is a rigorous approach to developing pupils' reading skills. Important texts have been selected for pupils to consider across the curriculum. These help pupils explore complex societal issues such as inequality. Those that need additional help to read or apply their mathematical knowledge receive effective support to catch up.

In every subject, leaders have meticulously ordered the ambitious knowledge that pupils will learn. In key stage 4, pupils can follow two pathways. Staff provide expert advice while working with parents to make sure the curriculum is right for all. Leaders know that uptake of modern foreign languages previously limited how many pupils studied the English Baccalaureate pathway. They have adapted curriculum approaches in this subject, meaning pupils in key stage 3 are becoming more confident linguists. Consequently, there is an increasing uptake of pupils choosing a language at key stage 4. Leaders recognise that some pupils require additional support to realise their full potential following the COVID-19 pandemic. Extra subject 'boosters' alongside a well-developed tutoring programme support pupils to achieve highly across the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that all staff have the expertise they need to teach with clarity and precision. Teachers break learning down into smaller manageable chunks. They systematically check that pupils master learning. Teachers use this information to go back and revisit topics to develop pupils' long-term memory. Pupils engage well with the assessment information provided. They know exactly what teachers expect of them and in most subjects act sharply upon precise feedback.

Pupils are very well prepared for the future. A thoughtful personal development programme teaches pupils the important knowledge they need to be successful, safe and happy. Pupils benefit from an extensive and ambitious careers programme. It is supportive of pupils' future aspirations. Pupils' leadership opportunities are abundant. For example, they can become a library ambassador, run singing workshops in local primary schools or be a member of the school student leadership team. Pupils are proud to belong to their 'Colour families'. They compete to raise money for local charities or unite to design inspirational displays of their famous heroes.

Governors provide helpful challenge to and support for the senior leadership team. Leaders ensure that every staff member has the training they need to contribute purposefully to the life of the school. Staff feel that the 'Christian ethos of the school permeates the staff body'. Through leaders' acts of thankfulness and trust, they feel they have a 'job for life'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding in this school. Leaders build on their own expertise and that of governors to ensure that they are acutely aware of the risks that pupils face. They provide regular training to ensure every member of staff knows how to spot if pupils are vulnerable to risk. Leaders routinely review their own processes. They ensure that records precisely articulate the swift steps that they take to resolve concerns. Leaders maintain robust working relationships with external professionals supporting pupils and their families. They are relentless in ensuring that pupils who need help receive it.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2014.

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](#)' 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	126093
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10256430
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,299
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Caroline Cooper
Headteacher	Chris Keating
Website	www.davison.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	31 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Chichester. The previous section 48 inspection took place on 19 September 2016.
- The school uses five registered alternative providers to provide education and support for a small number of pupils. The school also uses three unregistered providers of alternative education.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history and modern foreign languages. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with

subject leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector spoke with governors, including the chair of governors, and representatives of the local authority and the Diocese of Chichester.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including additional free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors viewed the school's website and policies, met with the designated safeguarding lead, spoke with pupils and staff, checked school records of safeguarding checks carried out on adults working at the school and spoke with members of the governing board.

Inspection team

Michelle Lower, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Owen McColgan

Ofsted Inspector

Dave Euridge

Ofsted Inspector

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