

Inspection of Paddington Academy

50 Marylands Road, London W9 2DR

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 March 2023

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

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected since October 2011.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and staff have the highest expectations for all pupils. Teachers demand the best from their pupils. The curriculum is highly ambitious. Pupils develop a deep understanding of the subjects they study over time. As a result, pupils achieve exceptionally well. Sixth-form students benefit from a wide range of A-level and vocational courses on offer.

Staff and pupils are very proud of their school. Pupils view school as a welcoming community and they are happy and safe. They know that this is a special place to learn in. The conduct of pupils in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Bullying is rare, and any incidents are quickly addressed by staff.

Pupils are welcoming and polite. They relish the opportunity to discuss their views with adults. Teachers encourage pupils to engage in regular debate, such as in current affairs. Pupils are respectful, and listen to opposing viewpoints.

Students in the sixth form are role models to younger pupils. They are keen to take on roles of responsibility. For example, some sixth-form students volunteer as teaching assistants in classrooms with pupils from Years 7 and 8.

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

Leaders have planned a well-thought-out curriculum which is carefully sequenced. For example, in English, the Year 7 curriculum is grounded in the exploration of character and the conventions of writing. This builds on students' knowledge and understanding of the subject from primary school. Leaders have reviewed the curriculum and made changes so that it suits the local context. In religious studies, for example, pupils study a range of religions. As a result, they have a deep appreciation for the multi-faith community in which they live.

Leaders ensure that staff have the expertise to teach the planned curriculum. Teachers use their subject knowledge well. For example, they emphasise subject-specific vocabulary. Teachers use clear definitions and images to help embed this in pupils' long-term memory. In modern foreign languages, teachers insist on accurate pronunciation. Pupils become increasingly fluent in their spoken language.

Staff use the school's assessment approach consistently. They use a range of strategies to check the learning of pupils. Teachers use insightful questioning to identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge. They address misconceptions when they occur and make sure pupils are ready to move on in their learning.

Behaviour across the school is exceptional. Pupils enjoy positive working relationships with staff. Pupils move around the school in a calm, orderly and purposeful manner. They greet each other, staff and visitors in a professional and courteous manner.

Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support they need. They identify pupils' needs accurately. Staff are well trained to support pupils with SEND in the classroom. Teachers use their detailed knowledge of pupils' needs to adapt teaching. This supports pupils with SEND to access the curriculum alongside their peers.

Leaders have placed a high priority on reading. Pupils read widely and often, including in the sixth form. Pupils like reading books with their form tutors. For example, pupils in Year 10 enjoyed books by George Orwell. Staff identify at an early stage any pupils who struggle with reading. Staff support pupils to help them catch up quickly, including those who need help with phonics.

The careers programme is extensive. Pupils experience a well-sequenced curriculum that includes many opportunities to engage with employers. Leaders ensure that all pupils have equal access to these. For example, all pupils in Year 8 visit a university to learn about different career routes. Pupils enjoy taking part in careers fairs and enterprise days. Former pupils of the school help pupils to develop their creative talents, such as in classical music and dance.

The provision for personal development is exemplary. Staff encourage pupils to understand issues that affect them, such as responsible use of social media. Pupils are taught what it means to be an active citizen in modern Britain. Pupils in all year groups take part in fundraising events throughout the year. For example, pupils in Year 7 take part in an annual sponsored walk. Pupils in Year 9 act as student ambassadors for the event, and offer encouragement throughout the day.

Leaders have high ambition for their pupils and want the best for them. Staff, pupils and parents share this ambition. Leaders consider the workload and well-being of staff. Governors work alongside trustees to provide effective challenge through regular monitoring visits.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have embedded a culture of vigilance across the school. This is supported by ongoing training for staff, who are aware of risks in the local area. Staff follow the clear procedures for reporting concerns. Leaders target resources and support effectively for those who need it. Leaders are prompt to make any referrals, such as to the local authority. They ensure that staff pre-recruitment checks are completed.

Through a well-planned and well-structured curriculum, pupils are encouraged to understand the nature of risk. They are taught how to stay safe in the local area and online. Pupils know whom to go to if they need help.

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	130912
Local authority	Westminster
Inspection number	10267965
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
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	1,234
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	320
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Reena Keeble
Principals	Katie Gillam and Peter Jones
Website	www.paddington-academy.org
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 October 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, two new co-principals have taken up post.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- School leaders use one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics, art, modern foreign languages and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited some lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the co-principals and other senior leaders. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative from the trust and a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors checked safeguarding procedures, including the recruitment checks made on staff. Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, staff and pupils to discuss wider aspects of safeguarding. They scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. They also considered survey responses from staff, parents and pupils on safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of situations, including in corridors, at breaktimes, at lunchtimes and in lessons. They also spoke to pupils about behaviour and bullying.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers and pupils about their programme of wider personal development.
- Inspectors considered the responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments submitted via the free-text facility.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and staff survey.

Inspection team

John Blaney, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Booth	Ofsted Inspector
Annabel Davies	His Majesty's Inspector
Katerina Christodoulou	Ofsted Inspector
Sophie Cavanagh	Ofsted Inspector
Sam Hainey	His 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 2023