

Inspection of a good school: The Crestwood School

Bromley Lane, Kingswinford, Dudley, West Midlands DY6 8QG

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 March 2023

Outcome

The Crestwood School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils learn well at this vibrant and spirited school. Staff expect pupils to work hard, behave well and participate in school life. Most pupils rise to these expectations. Pupils concentrate in lessons and play an active part in class discussions. The new headteacher is keen to raise standards and expectations further. A small number of pupils, staff and parents are yet to buy into this vision.

Pupils feel happy and safe at school. They are keen to learn and want to do well. Leaders listen to pupils' views and act on them, for example introducing a construction club for pupils.

Pupils behave well in and out of lessons. Most are polite and courteous. Pupils say that if bullying happens, they will report it because they know staff will stop it happening again. Pupils appreciate the recognition they receive through the school's rewards system. All members of the school come together to celebrate pupils who behave exceptionally well.

Pupils can take part in a vast range of extra-curricular clubs. These include a school performance, volleyball and sign language. These are attended well by pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There is something for everyone.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum that is well planned and sequenced. Teachers make regular and effective checks on pupils' learning. This helps them to understand what pupils already know. This information is then used to recap prior learning or to deepen pupils' understanding. All of this means that pupils remember more and know more. The number of pupils studying a language is rising. This means that more pupils are now studying a range of English Baccalaureate subjects.

Leaders have prioritised reading. This helps all pupils to access the full curriculum. Pupils have regular opportunities to read or to be read to. Leaders have ensured that pupils who struggle with reading get the help they need to read fluently. These pupils are quickly becoming confident readers who enjoy reading for pleasure.

The provision for pupils with SEND is a particular strength. Staff identify needs accurately and adapt their practice accordingly. The 'listen and learn centre' is a SEND resource base for pupils who have a hearing impairment. Staff who work here know their pupils well and ensure they get the right help at the right time. Pupils with SEND participate in all aspects of school life.

Pupils are respectful and follow staff's instructions. When pupils' behaviour falls short of what is expected, staff sanction pupils appropriately and help them learn how to behave more appropriately next time. However, a small minority of pupils are repeatedly sanctioned for the same poor behaviours. Leaders recognise that more work needs to be done to establish the cause of these behaviours, and to give pupils the guidance and help that they need to improve.

Personal, social, health and economic education includes topics such as healthy relationships, consent and mental health. Leaders adapt the curriculum to reflect issues in the local area and in current affairs. For example, leaders recently taught pupils about the negative impact of misogyny and racism. This curriculum gives pupils the information they need to make informed and responsible decisions about their lives.

Leaders provide pupils with impartial and unbiased careers advice. This includes interviews with a careers adviser and work experience in Year 10 to help pupils understand life in the workplace. Teachers often make links to careers during lessons so that pupils can connect subjects to life beyond school.

Those responsible for governance have a clear oversight of the school's strengths and development areas. Staff feel that leaders are mindful of their workload. The new headteacher is raising expectations and standards. Since taking up post, many initiatives have been introduced. These are already having a positive impact. For example, there is a focus on rewards and praise. Pupils value this. However, some pupils, parents and staff do not fully welcome all the changes because they do not understand why they are being implemented.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff act in the best interests of pupils. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. Staff know how to report any concerns and leaders ensure that pupils get the right help at the right time. However, some school records do not always reflect this information.

Leaders have carried out appropriate recruitment checks on their staff to ensure they are suitable to work at the school. Pupils know how to stay safe online and offline. Pupils know whom to speak to if they have any worries about themselves or their peers.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that sanctions and support have the desired impact for all pupils. There are a small minority of pupils for whom sanctions are not working, and these pupils continue to repeat unwanted behaviours without there being a demonstrable improvement in their conduct. Leaders should analyse the information they gather about pupils' behaviour carefully and use this to help them to provide the most effective forms of support and intervention.
- Some pupils, parents and staff do not understand the rationale for the changes that are being made under the new leadership. As a result, they have a negative view of the changes that are being made. Leaders should ensure that they engage all pupils, parents and staff so that they have a better understanding of the school's vision and values.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2018.

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	141325
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10269135
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	975
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Bob Dimmock
Headteacher	Philip Sutton
Website	www.crestwoodschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	27 and 28 February 2018, 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 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses four registered alternative providers for pupils from Year 8 to Year 11.
- Some students from Invictus Sixth Form attend lessons at The Crestwood School.
- The school has a SEND resource base on site, which is commissioned by Dudley Council for pupils who have a hearing impairment. This provision is attended by pupils from The Crestwood School. All these pupils have an education, health and care plan.

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.
- During the inspection, inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, trust leaders, other senior and middle leaders, the SEND coordinator, the designated safeguarding

lead (DSL), the careers leader, early career teachers, the vice-chair of governors and the chair of trustees.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in history, languages and mathematics. For each of these subjects, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to pupils, looked at some of their work and spoke to subject teachers.
- Inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to pupils formally and informally at various points in the inspection. Inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted's parent, staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors looked at records and spoke to staff about behaviour, bullying and safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking the school's approach to staff recruitment, scrutinising policy documents and meeting with the DSL.

Inspection team

Sultanat Yunus, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nicola Walters

Ofsted Inspector

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