

Inspection of a good school: Avonbourne Girls Academy

Harewood Avenue, Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 6NY

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 June 2023

Outcome

Avonbourne Girls Academy 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?

Leaders have very high expectations of pupils. Pupils know that staff expect them to uphold the school's 'REACH' values, which include 'ambition, hard work and determination.' Parents value these high expectations and pupils live up to them.

Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning. They behave well and learn without disruption from others. As a result, classrooms have a purposeful and scholarly atmosphere. Around the school, pupils follow clear routines and move calmly between lessons and social times. Pupils understand the importance of respecting others and treating everyone equally.

Pupils enjoy celebrating each other's achievements. For example, they spoke excitedly about performances such as the spring concert, which included music, drama and dance. Pupils enjoy belonging to their 'houses' and representing them in competitions. They value opportunities to have a voice in the school. For instance, they sit on groups such as the school council and diversity committee.

Pupils and parents value the many clubs and activities on offer. Some are academic, such as debating and 'scholars' lunches,' whilst other develop pupils' talents, such as in sports and music.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for the high quality of education they provide for all pupils. The vision is shared by trustees and local governors. Each body fulfils its roles effectively, holding leaders to account and ensuring resources are well-managed.

Pupils learn an ambitious curriculum. Leaders keep the curriculum under close review, making changes to ensure that it is relevant and rigorous. In the sixth form, study programmes are designed to be ambitious and relevant to students' next steps.

Leaders have planned meticulously the knowledge and skills that pupils learn and the order in which they learn them. For example, in history, pupils learn chronology and about important concepts which feature across periods of history. In the sixth form, leaders identify the subject-specific and technical vocabulary that students should know and use. Pupils, of all ages, build on what they already know and can do. They acquire detailed knowledge over time and, as a result, achieve exceptionally well.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. Leaders ensure that pupils' needs are identified precisely and that teachers know how to adapt the curriculum for them. Pupils and parents have a voice in planning and reviewing their support. Leaders evaluate provision to ensure it has the intended impact. As a result, the needs of pupils with SEND are met well.

Leaders have ensured coherence in the teaching approaches chosen. These are grounded in educational research and teachers use them consistently well. Teachers are subject experts. They present information clearly and check pupils' learning regularly. As a result, teaching quickly identifies and remedies any misconceptions pupils have.

Reading is a prominent feature of school life. Through regular reading sessions, pupils read books which leaders have selected carefully to foster a love of literature. Pupils still learning to read receive timely support. They read books matched to the sounds they are learning. This improves their reading fluency and confidence. Consequently, pupils have a strong foundation for learning across the curriculum.

The curriculum extends beyond pupils' academic learning. Pupils learn about healthy relationships, including important issues such as consent. They learn about online safety and when to ask for help if they are worried about something. Leaders keep the personal and social education programme under review. This helps them to ensure that pupils learn content at the appropriate age.

Pupils, including those in the sixth form, receive useful careers information, education advice and guidance. This includes information about technical education and apprenticeships. Leaders evaluate the careers curriculum carefully and make improvements when required.

Pupils learn how to be active citizens. For example, they raise money for charities and promote causes which they consider important, such as sustainability. Sixth form students help younger pupils in the school and local community. Pupils learn about democracy. For instance, pupils vote to choose class representatives and the names of their houses.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Leaders support them well. Staff say that professional development is meaningful. Those newest to teaching receive the support they need to be successful in the profession.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils are safe and know that there are many ways to ask for help. Leaders make appropriate referrals to safeguarding partners. They are tenacious in escalating their concerns if support is not forthcoming. Where required, leaders work closely with external partners to secure the help that children need.

Staff receive useful safeguarding training. Leaders check that staff know how to identify and report concerns. The school has appropriate policy and practice to manage cases of sexual harassment that may occur in or out of school. Suitable checks are made on adults working in the school.

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 June 2017.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use 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	138193
Local authority	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
Inspection number	10256738
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,002
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	33
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Reena Keeble
Principal	Michelle Dyer
Website	www.avonbourneacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Avonbourne Girls Academy is co-located with Avonbourne Boys Academy. Younger pupils are taught in single sex groups. Older pupils are taught in mixed-sex groups. Pupils share social spaces.
- The school is part of the United Learning multi-academy trust.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers and one unregistered provider.
- 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.

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.
- Inspectors held discussions with the principal, members of the senior leadership team, curriculum leaders, members of the board of trustees and trust executive leadership team and members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, modern foreign languages and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector scrutinised the single central record of adults working in the school. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and examined the school's safeguarding records. Inspectors also spoke with a range of pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

James Oldham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sara Berry

His Majesty's Inspector

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