

Inspection of Lady Margaret School

Parson's Green, London SW6 4UN

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 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

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Elisabeth Stevenson. This school is a single academy, the Lady Margaret School Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Arabella MacIntyre.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Lady Margaret School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Lady Margaret School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, are exceptionally well supported to succeed at Lady Margaret School. Leaders have set out a clear strategic vision, which is embodied in the school motto 'I have a goodly heritage.' The school takes a nurturing and caring approach, which leads to pupils feeling and being kept secure and safe. Staff have very high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and foster a sense of belonging and pride in the school.

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum, where pupils achieve exceptional outcomes in a wide range of GCSE and A-level subjects. Pupils are encouraged to develop confidence and resilience and, as a result, they are fully prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary and bullying is rare. There is a palpable sense of passion and purpose in the way that teachers inspire pupils with a love of their subject.

Students in the sixth form quickly develop as independent learners. They are encouraged to take on leadership responsibility and to act as role models, for example, by acting as mentors for younger pupils and running their own extra-curricular activities.

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

Subject leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum content and the order in which it is taught. They are clear about what they want pupils to know and remember. The curriculum demonstrates high ambition for all pupils. For example, in art, pupils and students in the sixth form are encouraged to research artists that link to their own passions and interests. Over time, pupils develop their knowledge of the different elements of art and artistic movements. This enables them to analyse and critique their own work, as well as the work of their peers. Similarly, in mathematics, the curriculum has been designed, so that any gaps in knowledge are swiftly identified and addressed. The curriculum increases in complexity and high expectations are evident. For example, Pythagoras' theorem is introduced in Year 8 and revisited. This helps pupils to explain confidently its application.

Teachers have excellent knowledge of the subjects that they deliver. Assessment is used well to identify any misconceptions, so that they do not persist in pupils' understanding. Debate and critical thinking are a feature of many lessons. Teachers routinely help pupils to draw on previous learning when tackling new ideas. This ensures that pupils, and students in the sixth form, develop a deep understanding in different subjects and achieve highly.

Leaders identify pupils with SEND accurately and detailed plans are put in place to support pupils' learning. Teachers understand the specific needs of their pupils and

are well trained to adapt their teaching to ensure that pupils access the full curriculum, wherever this is possible. Leaders have placed a high priority on reading. For example, all Year 7 pupils receive weekly reading lessons, which are supported by sixth-form reading mentors. Appropriate specialist support is put in place for weaker readers.

Behaviour across the school is excellent. Leaders have developed a clear and simple behaviour policy that is well understood and consistently implemented. It prioritises pupils being ready, responsible and respectful. Pupils consistently rise to these expectations, demonstrating a very positive attitude to their education. They are focused, settle to and complete tasks quickly, taking great pride in their work. Teachers have positive working relationships with pupils and, as a result, they are willing to answer questions and to take risks. They listen carefully to their teachers and each other, asking interesting questions that demonstrate their curiosity to learn. For example, discussing what the verb 'hacer' means in Spanish and why this is used to describe the weather.

An early help system has been created, supported by external counselling services, the school chaplain, school nurse and police liaison officer. This provides support and guidance to pupils that need extra support. Attendance is high and systems for improving this further are well established. Pupils are punctual and persistent absence is low.

There is a comprehensive careers programme that starts from Year 7, which provides advice and guidance about different pathways. The talents and interests of pupils are developed through a very wide range of extra-curricular activities. For example, Year 10 pupils can develop their character and resilience by working towards the Duke of Edinburgh award. Pupils are taught what it means to be an active citizen by taking part in charity fundraising activities.

Pupils learn about physical and online safety and the school has a proactive approach to mental health. For example, in the sixth form, students have weekly well-being lessons, where they are actively encouraged to challenge themselves, as well as helping them develop self-confidence.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils academically and in terms of their wider personal development. There are many opportunities for staff professional development, for example, through research and development groups. Leaders consider the workload and well-being of staff. Knowledgeable governors provide highly effective challenge and support to school leaders through regular monitoring visits.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	138607
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10267950
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
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	760
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	161
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Arabella MacIntyre
Headteacher	Elisabeth Stevenson
Website	http://www.ladymargaret.lbhf.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is a single academy, The Lady Margaret School Academy Trust and part of the London Diocesan Board for Schools. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in October 2023.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school currently makes no use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with the chair of governors and other members of the governing body. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and art. For each deep dive, inspectors visited a sample of lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning, and met with subject leaders and teachers to discuss the curriculum. Inspectors also considered the curriculum and pupils' learning in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about the school's work, including about safeguarding and behaviour. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Robert Grice, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Bruce Goddard	Ofsted Inspector
David Bromfield	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Smith	His Majesty's Inspector

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