

# Inspection of Fortismere School

Southwing, Tetherdown, Muswell Hill, London, N10 1NE

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Inspection dates: 26 to 27 April, and 16 September 2022

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

This school was last inspected eleven years ago and judged 'outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so that there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any time since the last inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders have put an ambitious curriculum in place. Their expectations for pupils' achievement are high, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils work hard and do well in public examinations.

Pupils are safe at school. Pupils generally behave well in class. Between lessons and around the large school site, pupils respond well to staff's reminders to move sensibly and in line with the school's protocol. Nevertheless, these times can become noisy and crowded in some places. Pupils report hearing bad language from some pupils as they move around the school. They are, however, confident that staff will deal swiftly with any derogatory language or bullying behaviour.

Leaders organise a wide range of curriculum enrichment and extra-curricular activities which pupils enjoy. This includes subject outings, sporting competitions and specialist clubs, such as music-bands and drama. The school's personal, social and health education programme is well thought through. Pupils are taught to respect differences and how to stay safe in the local community and online. Leaders develop pupils' understanding of healthy relationships through the teaching of relationships and sex education, and health education.

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

Leaders ensure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, access the school's broad curriculum in Years 7 to 9. All subjects offer additional enrichment opportunities beyond the classroom. For example, pupils who study Mandarin Chinese, French and Spanish are given the opportunity to visit those countries, while all pupils experience theatre trips as part of their English studies.

In Year 9, pupils select the GCSE subjects that they will study in Years 10 and 11 from a wide range of options, including vocational courses. Almost two-thirds choose to study either geography or history, and a modern foreign language, which is a high proportion compared with national figures. Students in the sixth form have a wide range of courses to choose from.

Subject leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to know and remember over time to support their progression. Teachers' knowledge of their subjects is strong. However, some teachers do not routinely check pupils' understanding to identify and correct any misunderstandings. Sometimes, teaching moves on to introduce new content before some pupils have a secure grasp of key concepts that they have studied. This leaves gaps in pupils' learning that are not identified and addressed quickly.

In the sixth form, teachers routinely encourage students to become independent learners. Teachers focus on students' individual needs and engage them in their

learning. This means that students in the sixth form develop detailed knowledge and skills over time.

There is an established culture of reading in the school. The library is well stocked. In Years 7 to 9, pupils have regular opportunities to read in class. Leaders identify pupils who need extra help with reading. They deliver effective reading support to help them to catch up with their peers and develop reading fluency quickly.

Leaders identify pupils with SEND and share useful strategies with staff to help teachers to meet pupils' individual needs. In most classes, teachers use tailored adaptations effectively to help pupils with SEND to keep up with their peers.

Leaders introduced a revised behaviour policy just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff have received training on how to apply this new approach, but a few do not apply it consistently. This means that occasionally pupils' behaviour in class disrupts teaching or pupils do not concentrate fully on their learning.

Many pupils take up leadership opportunities. For example, students in the sixth form have set up an extensive range of clubs and societies. These cover subjects such as feminism and civil rights issues, and include a book club, a debating society and charity work. Leaders have ensured that pupils in Years 9 and 11 receive appropriate levels of support when choosing options. Leaders ensure that pupils from Year 8 onwards receive careers education, though some pupils would like more information about vocational routes and apprenticeships.

The co-headteachers have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors work with leaders to identify the school's key priorities. They are considerate of staff well-being and workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding have set up systems to identify any pupils who may need help. They consider the wider needs of each pupil in depth. They train staff regularly, so that they know how to report concerns and staff do so should the need arise.

Leaders work with local outside agencies to support any pupils who may be at risk from harm. They make referrals when needed. They ensure that appropriate help is given, for example, through provision of counselling and family-outreach support.

Leaders and governors have ensured that pre-employment checks are carried out for those applying to work at the school.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not routinely check pupils' understanding before moving on to new learning. This leaves gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders should ensure that all teachers check pupils' understanding, identify and address any misconceptions and provide feedback to pupils on how to improve their work.
- Some staff do not apply the behaviour policy consistently and poor behaviour occasionally disrupts learning. Leaders should ensure that the behaviour policy is fully embedded in the school community. They should ensure that all staff have the same high expectations of pupils' behaviour and deal with behaviour in a consistent way.

## 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102156
<b>Local authority</b>	Haringey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211950
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1850
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	490
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mark Chapman
<b>Headteachers</b>	Zoe Judge and Jo Davey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.fortismere.haringey.sch.uk">www.fortismere.haringey.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 December 2017, under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, two new co-headteachers have been appointed to lead the school. There have also been substantial changes to the senior leadership team.
- Since the last inspection, the school has opened specially resourced provision for up to ten pupils from Years 7 to 9 who struggle to access the curriculum.
- Currently, the school makes use of seven registered alternative providers, one of which is an online tuition service.
- Careers guidance meets the requirement of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education, qualifications and apprenticeships.
- Since the last inspection, the school has also had three monitoring inspections on 24 September 2013, 12 May 2015 and 14 December 2017.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this 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 met with senior members of the leadership team, and with leaders who have responsibility for curriculum, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, personal development, inclusion and the sixth form.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, modern foreign languages, art and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects: physical education, history and politics, and music. They looked at samples of pupils' work across the school.
- Inspectors also visited lessons in history and science, and visited classes to see how well pupils with SEND were learning.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and teachers across the school, considered the responses to surveys of pupils', parents' and staff views, and spoke to pupil and teacher safeguarding leaders. They also reviewed records of pre-employment checks and examined safeguarding records and case files. They spoke to members of the governing body.
- Following the inspection on 26 and 27 April 2022, inspectors returned to the school on 16 September 2022 to gather further evidence. They met with leaders, pupils and groups of staff. They visited lessons and gathered information about provision for pupils with SEND, behaviour and leadership.

## Inspection team

Alice Clay, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Peter Stumpf	Ofsted Inspector
Luisa Bonelli	Ofsted Inspector
Daniel Coyle	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Adcock	Ofsted Inspector
Gaynor Roberts	His Majesty's Inspector
Sam Hainey	His Majesty's Inspector
Sophie Healey-Welch	His Majesty's Inspector



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