School report

Inspection of Wirral Grammar School for Girls

Heath Road, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside CH63 3AF

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2022

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

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

What is it like to attend this school?

At Wirral Grammar School for Girls, pupils and students thrive. They feel an immense sense of pride in belonging to a warm and welcoming school community.

Pupils and students embrace the high expectations that leaders have of them, and they flourish both personally and academically. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve remarkably well. Pupils and students are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education, employment and/or training.

Pupils and students behave impeccably. They are extremely courteous, polite and helpful to others. For instance, they engage confidently and maturely with visitors to the school. They do this with humility.

Pupils and students value the sense of togetherness in the school. Older pupils and students support their younger peers. For example, they keenly lead clubs, act as mentors and run tutoring sessions. Kindness permeates the school. This helps pupils to feel safe. When incidents of bullying occur, leaders deal with these quickly and effectively.

There is an impressive range of extra-curricular opportunities available. All pupils and students benefit from these. For instance, pupils can enjoy activities such as robot Olympics, jazz ensemble and 'ready, steady, cook'. In the sixth form, enrichment activities enhance the taught curriculum, with opportunities such as first-aid training and interior design clubs.

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

Leaders have designed a highly ambitious and broad curriculum. They have carefully considered what pupils and students need to learn to succeed. The curriculum, including in the sixth form, is structured logically so that pupils and students can build securely on what they already know. This helps pupils and students to acquire a vast body of knowledge and deepen their understanding of subjects over time.

Teachers are experts in their subjects. They deliver new concepts confidently and with clarity so that pupils and students secure the knowledge that they need. Pupils learn deeply, well beyond the requirements of the national curriculum.

Pupils and students have a profound thirst for learning. Their exceptional behaviour during lessons allows teachers to focus on what needs to be taught. Teachers encourage independence as well as debate and discussion. This propels pupils and students to secure a deeper level of understanding of concepts. Pupils use subject-specific vocabulary confidently in these discussions as a matter of routine.

Teachers make regular checks on how well pupils and students are learning. They address swiftly any misunderstandings that pupils may have. This ensures that pupils and students have a solid foundation for subsequent learning.

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, read avidly. They spoke with enthusiasm about the merits of authors whose work they enjoy. Leaders have ensured that there is a rich breadth of texts woven through the curriculum. This helps to expand pupils' and students' learning. Leaders foster a culture of reading for pleasure, for example through reading activities in form time, author visits and frequent reading competitions.

Leaders are quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff have a comprehensive understanding of the needs of these pupils. Pupils with SEND have access to the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. They, and their parents and carers, spoke favourably of the support that staff provide to meet their academic and pastoral needs. Leaders ensure that these pupils are fully included in every aspect of school life.

Leaders are passionate about their commitment to the personal development of each pupil and student. They have meticulously considered the content and the order of this curriculum. This ensures that pupils and students are prepared fully to take their place in a modern and diverse society.

Pupils' and students' understanding and enactment of their responsibilities as respectful citizens are commendable. They are equipped splendidly for future success. Staff ensure that careers advice and guidance are suitably tailored to pupils' and students' individual needs. For example, students in the sixth form receive excellent support with their university applications. This helps them to secure their place on competitive courses. Added to this, there is an abundance of opportunities for pupils to engage meaningfully with employers. All pupils in Year 11 and almost all students in Year 13 secure appropriate destinations.

Staff morale is high. Staff reported that leaders listen to them and make every effort to make their workload manageable. Staff feel valued and trusted. They told inspectors that they are proud to work at the school.

Governors are highly committed to the school, and they are suitably knowledgeable. They have a strong understanding of the quality of education that pupils and students receive. They provide highly effective challenge and support to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created effective procedures to safeguard pupils and students. All staff are well trained to identify any potential safeguarding concerns. Records are clear and well managed.

Leaders work effectively with external agencies to secure timely support and advice for vulnerable pupils and their families.

Pupils and students are taught how to keep themselves safe. All pupils and students know whom to go to if they have any concerns. The personal development curriculum is suitably adapted to take into consideration any local issues that might affect their personal safety. For example, pupils and students are taught how to protect themselves from the negative impact of social media and to look after their own mental health.

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	137171
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10211852
Type of school	Secondary grammar (selective)
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	1,194
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	282
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Geoff Dougherty
Headteacher	Jennifer Ogunmyiwa
Website	www.wirralgirls.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Wirral Grammar School for Girls converted to become an academy in February 2012. When its predecessor school, Wirral Grammar School for Girls, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The current headteacher was appointed on 1 September 2022.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- Leaders make use of three registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.

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 spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, curriculum leaders, staff and governors.
- Inspectors spoke to many pupils and students about their experience of school life and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' and students' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the school's single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, governors, staff and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school. An inspector held telephone conversations with representatives from alternative providers.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, leaders' behaviour and attendance records, self-evaluation documents and minutes of meetings held by those responsible for governance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: languages, geography, mathematics, science, history, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to curriculum leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with pupils and students about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' and students' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Jenny Jones, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Gil Bourgade	Ofsted Inspector
Kevin Sexton	Ofsted Inspector
Sheldon Logue	Ofsted Inspector
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