

Inspection of a good school: Anglo European School

Willow Green, Ingatestone, Essex CM4 0DJ

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 October 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like the school's focus on international values. They enthuse about the diverse pupil community and how well they welcome people from different backgrounds. The wide curriculum choices and the many opportunities to understand different cultures are appreciated. Pupils attend regularly, achieve well and leave with a unique understanding of their world. Many pupils flourish because of their learning experiences. This is especially the case for students in the sixth form.

Most pupils feel safe at school. Most pupils respond well to leaders' high expectations of behaviour and respect for others. However, not all pupils are clear enough about how to behave and act respectfully. There is disruption to learning in some lessons. Corridors are sometimes noisy and disorderly. While incidents of bullying are not common, some pupils are treated disrespectfully by their peers. Where this happens, pupils feel uncomfortable about what they might see or hear. They are frustrated because they feel that staff react in different ways. Pupils are not always confident that leaders will make the right changes when they report concerns. As a result, some pupils do not enjoy school.

Students in the sixth form enjoy school very much. Many new students join the sixth form from other schools.

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

Leaders, supported by governors, make sure that a well-considered curriculum is in place. The curriculum for languages is particularly broad, offering eight languages. Pupils enjoy the chance to deepen their knowledge of languages, supported by an extensive programme of exchange visits.

Pupils achieve well over a wide range of subjects. This ambition continues into the sixth form through four academic and vocational pathways. Parents feel that their children are lucky to have such a large choice.

Teachers have planned each curriculum area effectively, giving thought to how knowledge is built logically step by step. Links to the real world are built into the curriculum, such as how interest rates affect personal debt. While this is the case, the curriculum in a few subjects is still developing.

Reading is encouraged as an important part of pupils' life. Pupils read widely in lessons and in form time. Pupils enjoy reading in school and at home. Leaders identify those pupils who struggle with reading. They prioritise this because they know pupils need to read well to achieve throughout the curriculum. Effective catch-up support is in place to ensure pupils learn to read fluently.

Leaders share information about pupils so that teachers know how to best support them in class. For pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), teachers across subjects share the strategies that work well with the pupils they teach. Pupils with SEND are well supported and their needs accurately identified. As a result, the achievement of pupils with SEND is improving.

Teachers enhance the curriculum offer in many subjects, through clubs, activities and competitions, such as the 'Tycoon Enterprise Challenge'. Pupils enjoy the many festivals and events, such as international day and Eisteddfod. However, many pupils want the celebrations to be equally balanced and to better reflect their cultural backgrounds. They say that staff need to better understand these backgrounds so that they do not offend pupils unintentionally. Leaders do not always make sure that pupils understand the actions taken when concerns are reported.

Leaders have improved pupils' behaviour, following a decline after the partial closures due to the pandemic. Staff have responded to leaders' reset of expectations this year. However, staff are inconsistent in applying sanctions linked to the behaviour policy.

Leaders ensure that pupils know how to respect others with particular characteristics, such as from a different background or from the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. However, too many pupils do not show respect for others of a different gender. Others say unkind words to pupils who do not conform to their stereotypes of body image.

Sixth-form students feel well supported in planning their next and future steps. They value the opportunity for extended work experience in other countries. However, there are gaps in the careers programme for Years 7 to 11. This means that pupils do not get thorough preparation for their future working life. While the school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, Year 11 pupils would like more careers information about going to college, apprenticeships and employment.

Staff are proud to work in such a distinctive school. They say that leaders, including governors, are approachable and that they have made their workload more manageable. However, for some, staff workload is a concern.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a culture of safeguarding the most vulnerable pupils. Staff receive regular training so that they know how to spot and report concerns.

Leaders engage suitably with external agencies and internal expertise. While leaders ensure that pupils are safe, occasionally referrals to external agencies are too slow. Leaders regularly inform staff what they need to know to help vulnerable pupils continue to learn in school.

Safer recruitment is managed securely. Leaders work closely with the local authority to make sure any allegations are suitably managed. Governors have ensured that external audits have been undertaken to quality assure procedures.

Leaders know local risks, such as vaping. They work with appropriate agencies and other schools to teach staff and pupils to understand and recognise these.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, some do not live up to the high standards expected. This results in disruption to learning and some disrespectful behaviour towards others. Leaders need to continue the work they have started in order to make sure they have the full picture of pupils' misbehaviour and disrespect, so they can plan more precisely for further improvements. Leaders should provide further training for staff so that they apply the behaviour policy consistently and fairly.
- Pupils do not start their careers education programme early enough and there are gaps in what they learn. This means that pupils are not fully prepared for their working life. Year 11 pupils are concerned that they won't get the information they need to make decisions about their next step. The careers education programme needs to teach pupils how to understand and research the labour market and how to improve their own employment skills. Leaders need to act to ensure that Year 11 pupils are reassured that they will get the information they need.
- Despite governors' monitoring of workload and leaders' efforts to reduce it, some staff still have concerns about workload. Leaders need to understand these concerns and find further opportunities to consider how to support staff with managing the workload.

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 March 2017.

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	137727
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10211553
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1501
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	328
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nicola Maher
Headteacher	Jody Gee
Website	www.aesessex.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Anglo European School converted to an academy in February 2012.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provider.
- 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.

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 meetings with senior leaders, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, staff, pupils, and governors, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, art and design, business, citizenship and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class, at breaktime and lunchtime, in the library and at other times during the day.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the school's single central record, considered its safeguarding policy and procedures, viewed a range of safeguarding records and spoke to leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed the 295 responses that were submitted from this academic year by parents to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and 150 free-text responses submitted during the inspection. Inspectors considered the 59 responses to the staff survey, and the 728 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Georgina Atkinson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Sutton	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Smith	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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