

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: George Abbot School

Woodruff Avenue, Guildford, Surrey GU1 1XX

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Inspection dates:

4 and 5 February 2025

## Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Kate Carriett. This school is part of the Learning Partners Academy Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Jack Mayhew, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andrew Isherwood.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Staff and pupils work hard together in this strong school community. Staff are approachable, listen to pupils' views, take them seriously and provide any help they need.

The school is a calm, safe, purposeful place. Pupils are exceptionally courteous and polite. They treat each other with respect and care. They are quick to support one another, for example by contacting their friends to update them about what they have missed when absent from school.

The school is highly ambitious for its pupils. Staff provide high-quality teaching and support which takes account of pupils' starting points and needs. Pupils receive detailed information about careers. They are well informed to make confident decisions about their next steps. Pupils are highly motivated in their studies. The school enables pupils to achieve exceptionally well, including students in the sixth form.

Pupils are routinely encouraged to participate in experiences which develop their confidence, deepen their knowledge and encourage them to work together. For example, all pupils participate in a mini-musical when they enter Year 7. In Year 12, pupils extend their study of psychology by observing courtroom proceedings from the public gallery. In the sixth form, geography students deepen their knowledge of plate tectonics on a visit to Iceland.

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

The school's broad curriculum is ambitious and well designed to support pupils' next steps. Pupils are well prepared with secure foundations across their study of the curriculum in Years 7 to 9. This prepares them to choose from a wide range of subjects for further study at GCSE level and in the sixth form. Pupils achieve extremely well in a broad range of quality qualifications.

Leaders have carefully designed the curriculum to extend and deepen pupils' thinking. In music, for example, pupils in Year 7 learn how to identify minor and major scales when singing and playing instruments. In Year 8, pupils use their knowledge of major, minor and diminished chords to compose their own music. The curriculum builds well on this knowledge so that by Year 13, students can make sophisticated evaluations of the differences in the structure and melody of two songs.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and use highly effective approaches to deliver the curriculum. Pupils are motivated and engaged by their teachers' high level of expertise. Teachers promote important language and ideas. They make rigorous checks on pupils' understanding, draw out prior learning and challenge their thinking. This helps pupils to develop their understanding and deepen their knowledge step by step.

Teachers are swift to provide extra support where required. Across the school, teachers skilfully support pupils' development in reading, writing and oracy. Pupils confidently explain complex ideas using specialist vocabulary, both in writing and in discussion.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are precisely identified. Teachers use this information effectively to support pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND are given additional, carefully focused careers guidance. Consequently, they learn and achieve successfully alongside their peers.

The school provides an excellent programme of personal development experiences for pupils. Pupils take up responsibility through leadership roles. They help the school to ensure that the wide range of extra-curricular activities reflects pupils' interests. Pupils are taught about how to stay safe in relationships and online. They are provided with useful information, such as about the risks of drugs and alcohol, and road traffic dangers. Pupils develop a detailed knowledge of different characteristics people may have, and about how and why these are protected in law. The school actively promotes mental health by teaching pupils to recognise their feelings, develop coping strategies and understand when to seek help. Pupils have a wide range of staff to talk with, if needed. These staff have high levels of expertise to support them.

Behaviour in lessons and around school is exemplary. Students in the sixth form exemplify this in their conscientious attitudes to their studies. Leaders have set out very clear behaviour expectations that are understood by all. Pupils rise to the school's high expectations. They work hard in lessons and are respectful towards each other. This means that pupils can learn free from disruption. When needed, the school provides

effective support for pupils' behaviour. Pupils typically attend well. Where needed, the school provides sophisticated and effective support to help pupils improve their attendance.

Leaders have designed strong systems to evaluate the impact of the school's work. Governors and the trust know the school exceptionally well. Together, they focus precisely on making continual improvements to pupils' experiences at the school. Staff are very positive about the support that they receive.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **Background**

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in 2019.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136906
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10362396
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<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>	1938
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	435
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Andrew Isherwood
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Jack Mayhew
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Carriett
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk">www.georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 December 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Learning Partners Multi Academy Trust.
- The school makes use of seven alternative providers of education, three of which are unregistered.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and trust leaders. Inspectors also met with leaders with responsibility for the school's pupil premium strategy, SEND, behaviour and attendance, and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the local governing body and the board of trustees.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils. Inspectors also took account of correspondence provided by parents.
- 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.

### **Inspection team**

Rebecca Iles-Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Owen McColgan

Ofsted Inspector

Ian Cooksey

Ofsted Inspector

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