

Manchester High School for Girls' Inspection Report

April 2024



ISI

Inspection Report
Highlights 2024



“Most pleasing of all was the recognition that Manchester High School for Girls is a school that empowers the girls within its walls and enables them to flourish. The ethos that underpinned the School’s foundation in 1874 is still reflected in its provision today and will continue to do so well into the future.”

Helen Jeys, Head Mistress

**I am delighted to share with you
Manchester High School for Girls’
report after our recent inspection in
April 2024.**

We were inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate under their new framework, with eight inspectors visiting the School over three days. The new framework provides no qualitative judgements and, therefore, the style of report is very different to what we are used to. No longer are there comments relating to provision being ‘excellent’ or ‘outstanding’; rather, the report focuses on child-centred, holistic summaries of the school’s provision. Under the new framework, schools are rarely described as having a ‘significant strength.’ We are, therefore, delighted that not only have we met all standards required of us as an independent school but, furthermore, the following significant strength of the School was noted:

“Leaders have high aspirations and have firmly established core values that underpin the school. This results in a caring, inclusive and diverse community. Staff are ambitious for the pupils and thread the values of learning, innovation, compassion, wellbeing and individuality through every aspect of school life. This results in empowered and dynamic pupils who flourish.”

Preparing for an inspection and welcoming eight staff into school to review our provision is a huge undertaking – for all members of the school community. However, I cannot think of a better conclusion than for the inspectors to have appreciated the true value of this school and that its provision produces ‘*empowered and dynamic pupils who flourish*’. This is certainly something to celebrate in this, our 150th year of empowering girls.

Helen F Jeys
Head Mistress



Significant Strength

Inspectors recognised the high aspirations of leaders and the firmly established values which result in empowered and dynamic pupils.





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“Staff are ambitious for the pupils and thread the values of learning, innovation, compassion, wellbeing and individuality through every aspect of school life.”



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Summary



“Governors have a thorough oversight of the school. Together with leaders who are visible and welcoming, they have established a well-maintained environment where pupils feel happy, safe and secure. Leaders articulate the values of the school with consistency and curriculum planning is underpinned by an ethos which places value on hard work, resilience and individual responsibility.”

“An enriching curriculum combined with highly effective teaching, generates intellectual interest and ambition amongst pupils who respond well to the high expectations set by their teachers. This results in pupils of all ages being engaged in lessons, learning at pace and achieving well, evidenced by academic outcomes which are well above national attainment levels.”



“The curriculum supports pupils’ overall personal development. Pupils are consistently challenged to demonstrate empathy and kindness and in turn develop a strong individual identity.”



“The early years is a happy and inclusive learning environment. Adults encourage children to talk about their activities which supports the effective development of their communication skills. Through a programme that has a wellbeing focus, children begin to develop resilience and a sense of right and wrong, which matures into a secure sense of self by the time they reach the senior school.”

Section 1:

Leadership and management, and governance.



“Leaders in the early years actively promote children’s wellbeing, ensuring that the school values, such as innovation and compassion, are to the fore. Highly skilled teachers and teaching assistants deliver engaging activities and leaders are diligent in ensuring that children have a range of opportunities, in well-equipped areas both indoors and outside. As a result, children settle and progress in a secure, and purposeful environment within an atmosphere of happy engagement.”



“Governors and leaders use robust and ongoing analysis of the effectiveness of the school’s work to identify priorities for improvement.”

“Leaders have established effective relationships with the wider community. Opportunities are provided to work closely with local schools including from the nearby school for male pupils. A recent joint venture involved pupils in the prep being involved in a combined culture day. Pupils commented how such opportunities enable them to develop self-confidence and feel better prepared for life.”

“The assiduous maintenance of a comprehensive risk assessment matrix ensures that risks are recognised, assessed and reviewed in a timely fashion, with external agencies employed to support this process, as necessary.”

“Leaders are clear that their integrity depends on everyone working towards the common aims and objectives of the school and adhering to stated policies and procedures.”

Section 2:

Quality of education, training and recreation.



“Leaders regularly review the curriculum to ensure there is a diverse offering of subjects and plenty of opportunities for academic enrichment.”

“Leaders prioritise the development of essential language, independent and critical thinking skills.”



“Teaching is consistently well-planned by knowledgeable teachers. Teachers challenge pupils to be creative thinkers.”

“Pupils receive an education that is wide-ranging, appropriately challenging and prepares them effectively for life beyond school. Pupils of all ages and aptitudes make good progress, reflected in their consistently high attainment in external examinations. Pupils’ attainment at GCSE and A level, including for those pupils who have SEND and those who speak EAL, is well above national averages.”



“Pupils are engaged in lessons and are confident speakers and listeners.”

Section 3:

Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing.

“Pupils learn the importance of respect. Pupils recognise their uniqueness, and their differences, learning to listen and to understand tolerance. Pupils grow in self-knowledge and self-esteem. Staff and pupils role model the school values of compassion and individuality. Relationships between pupils and staff are respectful and highly positive.”



“Pupils live up to the high expectations that adults have of them. Dedicated tutors are adept at identifying issues and concerns. Pupils are confident in talking to teachers about their worries and concerns. Teachers are positive role models and highlighting good behaviour traits is commonplace as a result.”



“Pupils appreciate the many leadership opportunities, displaying pride in how they enable them to positively influence the development of their school community.”

“Staff encourage pupils to be active and promote pupils’ physical health through a programme of physical education and extensive sporting extra-curricular activities. Leaders place high importance on healthy eating and the pupils benefit from a range of healthy foods available in the day. The promotion of fitness and dance enables pupils to develop physically within a healthy lifestyle.”



Section 4:

Pupils' Social and economic education and contribution to society.



“Leaders have created a strong focus on economic wellbeing which helps ensure that by the time they leave, pupils are financially aware.”

“Leaders do much to celebrate a diverse and inclusive community, with a range of events and initiatives to endorse this and embrace individuality. Pupils are positive about these opportunities, including visits by different faith leaders and a recent ‘individuality day’. These provide pupils with high-quality opportunities, in an environment where they feel safe to express themselves as an individual.”

“Pupils from an early age can successfully articulate their understanding of the society in which they live, such as those of the rule of law, appreciating the need for a system of rules to be in place that everyone follows. Pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong and take responsibility for their behaviour.”



“There is a clear focus on charitable endeavours with leaders instilling a desire for pupils to do good and enrich the communities within which they live.”

Safeguarding

“There are a variety of methods by which pupils can share any worries in confidence. They are aware there is someone to talk to if they have a problem and are confident that adults will respond appropriately.”



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Read the full ISI Report here



Empowering Girls
since 1874

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