

Inspection of Torquay Girls' Grammar School

30 Shiphay Lane, Torquay, Devon TQ2 7DY

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2023

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	Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Sarah Forster. This school is part of Torquay Girls' Grammar School trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Louisa Brown.

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are encouraged to become the 'history makers' of the future. When planning their future careers, they aspire for professional lives and positions of responsibility. Over half of students in the sixth form go on to study for degrees in 'STEM' subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). Ultimately, pupils live up to the school's exceptionally high expectations of them. The girls are courageous in their choices, often challenging gender stereotypes.

The school's high ambition for what pupils can achieve academically is balanced with a focus on them becoming a well-rounded person. The school is sensitive to pupils' emotional and mental health. Classrooms are supportive environments. Staff show consideration for pupils' needs. Pupils feel safe to air their views. They keep physically healthy by joining sports clubs and are excited to learn new skills, such as coding.

Participation in the school's wide extra-curricular offer is high, especially among disadvantaged pupils. This helps pupils to develop confidence in public speaking, for example. They develop creative interests, for example by taking a role in a school production. The long-established house system is a source of inspiration for younger pupils who aspire to take on the mantle of house leadership once they reach sixth form age.

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

Pupils fulfil their potential at this school. In each subject, ambitious content is carefully selected for pupils to learn. Teaching is highly effective due to the expert subject knowledge of staff. Teachers use their knowledge to inspire pupils. As a result, pupils use subject-specific language fluently. This lends confidence to their work. Sixth-form students produce scholarly writing and lead sophisticated discussions. Across an ambitious curriculum, pupils achieve consistently well.

The school continually strives for excellence. The school reflects intelligently on what works best in different subjects. In each subject, pupils are encouraged to revisit and apply what they have learned in the most effective way. This helps pupils to remember their learning and helps teachers to identify any misconceptions or gaps in knowledge, which they promptly address.

The curriculum is designed to build confidence. Although pupils arrive at the school with high prior attainment, the school recognises that they may require support to achieve the ambitious goals set within each subject. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are rapidly identified. The curriculum is adapted to meet pupils' needs from the outset. Therefore, pupils with SEND learn successfully.

Pupils read widely and eagerly. The reading curriculum is shaped by pupils' views. Pupils told the school that they would welcome a diverse range of voices and

perspectives in reading selections. This has led to the school changing the choices of text for each key stage. Pupils routinely borrow books from teachers and from the school's library. This helps pupils to develop their reading preferences.

Relationships between pupils and staff are highly supportive. Pupils are motivated to attend school. Students in the sixth form appreciate the guidance they receive. They give back to the school by acting as academic tutors. They help younger pupils when they struggle with aspects of the curriculum. Pupils' conduct in lessons and around the school is very positive. Lapses in pupils' behaviour are very rare, but the school is quick to reassert expectations when appropriate.

The school takes a deliberate approach to pupils' moral development and character. Opportunities for pupils to lead and volunteer are exceptional. For example, many pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Sixth-form students support the work of the 'League of Friends', a charity working to support hospitals. Pupils' interest in helping others is underpinned by their strong knowledge of how different groups are protected in law. This leads to well-informed, considerate young people.

The careers programme plays a central role in helping the school to realise its ambitious vision. For example, pupils attend careers events with representation from an impressive range of industries and education providers. This inspires pupils in Year 10 and Year 12 to arrange their own work experience placements, often in specialist settings linked to their ambitious career plans.

At all levels, leaders are driven to provide the highest possible standards, including for disadvantaged pupils. The trust board is committed to widening access to the aspirational culture that the school provides. Trustees visit the school to engage with staff and gather first-hand evidence of how well the school is achieving its aims.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

Unique reference number	136506
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	10267945
Type of school	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	1,008
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	215
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Louisa Brown
Headteacher	Sarah Forster
Website	www.tggsacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 September 2011

Information about this school

- This is a grammar school for girls. The admissions policy is selective. The girls attending the school are predominantly drawn from Torbay and Devon local authorities.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2021. Since then, there have been significant changes to the leadership of the school. Several staff have been appointed to the senior leadership team, including the special educational needs coordinator and the designated safeguarding lead.
- The school is a single academy trust. Several trustees have joined the trust board since the headteacher's appointment in 2021. The chair of the board of trustees was appointed in August 2023.
- The school includes childcare provision before and after school, which is run by the trust.
- The school uses one registered and three unregistered alternative providers.

- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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 discussions with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team and trustees, including the chair of the board of trustees. The lead inspector spoke with the local authority designated officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, art and psychology. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also took into account responses to surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Lydia Pride, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Deborah Wring	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Lovett	Ofsted Inspector
Nic Blunsum	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023