

## Summary

- Jersey College for Girls (JCG) provides brilliantly for the needs and aspirations of its students. It is a great place to learn. Parents are understandably very pleased with all aspects of the work of this happy and high-performing school.
- Leaders, staff and governors are committed and highly effective. They constantly reflect on how they can improve and develop the school further. Consequently, JCG is modern thinking, inclusive and welcoming, while carefully upholding its much-valued traditions.
- Students achieve very well at GCSE and at A level. Their learning and their confidence build strongly throughout Years 7–13. They move on confidently to destinations that are appropriate for them, usually at university.
- Teaching is consistently of a very high standard. Staff have excellent subject-specific expertise that they share with students clearly and interestingly, in and out of classes. In the course of any day each student takes part in an exciting sequence of terrific lessons making the most of the excellent equipment and facilities.
- Just as influential is the vast range of other activities in, for example, drama, debating, music, computing, science, sport and residential visits. These develop skills, confidence and character. Students love them and choose them carefully. Participation rates are very high.
- Lessons are consistently and appropriately challenging. Sometimes, however, teachers take too long to get the students started on the main learning activities. This can reduce the time for, and the impact of, these activities. Even when this happens, learning is usually at least good.
- There is some variation in how effectively staff apply the school's policy on giving feedback to students. When this is done less well students are not quite sure how to make their work the absolute best it can be.
- Students' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are exceptionally positive. They are highly self-motivated, courteous and mature. They require very little oversight from staff. They work hard in lessons and help each other without needing to be asked. Students think carefully and ask very astute questions. Many take on a lot of responsibilities, demonstrating leadership alongside the adults.
- Leaders know the school very well. Nevertheless, their evaluations and development plans do not always link well together. Targets to improve the school are sometimes imprecise. In a few cases, staff do not check closely on how well the school's provision is

working. Leaders agree that being more precise and sharp in these matters could help the school sustain its many existing strengths and improve even further.

The school has been asked to take the following actions.

1. Align evaluations and development plans more closely so that the targeting of specific actions is more precise. Check carefully that all planned school provision is happening to the high standards that the school sets itself.
2. Ensure that time is consistently best used in lessons so that the main, very challenging, learning tasks have the highest priority, and students do not have to wait too long to get going on them.
3. Ensure that staff consistently apply the school feedback policy so that students always know how to improve their work.

# Full report

## Achievement

- Students typically leave the school with a valuable set of qualifications and very high grades. Most achieve places in higher education, and many go on to Russell group universities or to Oxford or Cambridge. In 2019 a large number of students went on to study medicine, for example. Many also gained places on aesthetic and creative courses.
- Outcomes at GCSE and A level are impressive and show improvement in recent years. There is scope for some sixth form students to achieve higher A level grades still, even though they do well. The school agrees it can target and check on this better.
- Students usually make rapid progress during lessons. For instance, in a PE lesson visited students' badminton skills notably improved from the start to the end of their time in the sports hall because they received continual high-quality feedback from the teacher and their peers on improving techniques, which they quickly applied.
- Success breeds success. Because students learn so well lower down the school, they rarely have gaps in their learning that could hinder them later. In fact, quite the opposite happens: their strong previous experiences mean that they can learn more advanced content quickly and successfully. Staff prepare students carefully in Years 10 and 11 to make the transition to A-level programmes. Similarly, staff equip sixth form students very well for more independent study and life in university or employment.
- Careers education is of high quality, particularly in the sixth form. Younger students, with some justification, point out that it is more limited in scope in Key Stage 4.
- Students achieve ambitious standards in performing arts, including in drama and music. During the review it was very good to see high standard instrumental playing in assemblies and the successful participation by the orchestra and chamber choir at the Jersey Eisteddfod.
- Students with special educational needs make very good progress. They enjoy well-focused individualised support. Leaders, however, do not always undertake thorough check on the effectiveness of some of the day-to-day provision for these students that would help ensure its consistent excellence.
- Students show a very diverse range of attributes and skills, developed in lessons and other school activities. Many are proficient in music, sport, the use of technology, debating, public speaking, drama and in many other disciplines. Students are typically keen to try all sorts of different activities. They are adept at finding and developing their particular preferences and skills in discussions with staff, their families and each other. The school does not yet analyse participation. As a consequence, it is not completely clear how much every student benefits.
- The school's very effective work on inclusion and in personal, social and health education (PSHE), means that students develop a very good knowledge and understanding of a broad range of issues covering, for instance, disadvantage and poverty, ethnic heritage and nationality, and LGBTQ+ identities. Students give strong examples of how they act on their learning from the PSHE programme and how it enhances the quality of their experience and their behaviour.

## **Behaviour, personal development and welfare**

- The standard of behaviour and the quality of students' attitudes are, at virtually all times, impeccable. Students are highly mature and sensitive to others. They are polite, kind, positive, caring, and confident without being overconfident. They do not require much supervision as they are constantly self-managing and are self-motivated.
- Older students are excellent role models to younger ones. For example, sixth formers successfully lead school activities. Many are prefects and some have other responsibilities and interests. They are proactive in helping and advising students in lower year groups. The strong house system is a significant factor here.
- Students work very enthusiastically, concentrating closely in lessons and in other activities. They participate superbly in groups and as individuals, rarely needing to be told or directly supervised. They listen to each other carefully, respect each other's ideas, and help each other to learn.
- Attendance is consistently very high. This is not surprising given how much students love their school and want to succeed. Persistent absence is rare. Staff deal with it well when it occurs.
- Staff arrange first-rate, well organised, pastoral support. Students feel secure and receive help and support when needed, and their learning rarely suffers due to worries and concerns. Staff are working to help students to reduce their examination nerves.
- Students like the dome area where they can congregate and eat together at lunch and break times. Behaviour there is excellent, as it is elsewhere. It feels like a forum or a marketplace, where staff and students share ideas, make suggestions to each other, play organised games and enjoy their community.
- Students are expected to be very well behaved, but not simply compliant. Adults encourage them to think and form opinions. In a whole school assembly led by sixth formers, students learned about activism and taking up causes in which they believe.
- Occasionally, students fall out or are a little heedless of other's feelings, as is likely in any school. Often this is unintentional. When it is pointed out, students apologise and move on. Some minor acts of thoughtlessness, stemming from some students feeling there to be a 'pecking order', are hard for staff to detect and sometimes persist. Serious misbehaviour and bullying are very unusual indeed and are well dealt with by staff through careful and caring procedures. Suspensions from school are rare. Students feel very safe and very well looked after.
- Students feel leaders and staff listen carefully to their views. They are right: students' views are welcomed by staff and they influence school decisions. Students are therefore confident to criticise constructively without feeling as though they are compromising their strong loyalty to the school and staff. For example, some students are currently making a well-considered case for more flexibility in options for modern foreign language courses. They have heard the staff's explanation of policy on this but still, very respectfully, hold different opinions. Their views come from their (correct) belief that the school teaches languages very well, and their wish to make the very most of that.

## **Effectiveness of teaching**

- Teachers know their subjects well. They explain the content clearly and enthusiastically. Lessons are interesting and engaging. Students are quick to respond to this stimulating teaching and they learn very well.
- Staff have great expectations of students, who typically have very lively and enquiring minds. Teachers capitalise on this very well to set a very high bar in lessons, and students rise to meet this readily. There is a wealth of interesting conversations about many aspects of learning, amongst students themselves and between staff and students, throughout the day.
- Teachers probe students' understanding of the work very well, with a range of carefully chosen questions. These elicit thoughtful responses and help students to clarify their thinking.
- Staff are thoughtful when choosing which teaching techniques to use in order to suit the expected learning and the age group. Lessons are varied in style. Some are very practical while others usefully require students to listen and focus on the teacher for extended periods. These different approaches each work very well in their own way.
- Teaching is enhanced by the school's excellent facilities and equipment across all subjects. For example, the design studios have excellent, modern facilities. Teachers know how to make the most of the resources available, and how to get students using them. They very successfully help students to become confident and proficient in many different activities and skills. The facilities are also valuable to the programme of activities outside lessons, which adults lead equally successfully. Sixth formers much appreciate the excellent elective programme that gives them many opportunities for interesting and relevant learning, complementing their A-level studies.
- In many respects, teachers and students share responsibility for learning. Staff are interested in students' ideas and preferences. Students are keen to research independently, and staff encourage them to ask, and find the answers to, their own often very good questions.
- In a few lessons, teachers can take some time to get to the key content of the lesson. In these cases, students still learn well but do not have as much time as they otherwise could to study the most important work.
- Students are offered high levels of challenge. In some lessons, however, teachers do not make sure students, as individuals or groups, receive feedback which would enable them to improve their work efficiently.

## **Effectiveness of leadership and management**

- Senior leaders provide highly effective and stable leadership. The school is led with clear vision. The responsibilities of each leader, and the line management arrangements, are very clear.
- There is a very strong sense of community in the school, actively fostered by leaders. This is encompassed in one of the school's four main values: 'belong'. Leaders, staff and students all contribute to this aim. Everyone is part of a shared endeavour.
- Faculty and year group leaders have developed well in their key roles in recent years. They respond well to the regular external faculty reviews commissioned by senior

leaders. Teachers in each faculty are well supported and they are held accountable for the impact of their work. Appraisals are well managed and useful.

- The school safeguards its students very well. All necessary checks (for instance on adults working in the school) are carried out thoroughly. Staff keep all necessary records meticulously. Risks are properly assessed for all of the school's diverse range of events and activities, on and off site. Staff are well trained in child protection and safeguarding matters and they are clear about what to do in different situations. The site is kept suitably safe and secure.
- Leaders work helpfully with colleagues in other Jersey schools on different projects to enhance the provision across the island. They also link with staff and leaders from mainland schools, and some abroad, sharing good practice and ideas.
- Senior leaders know the school well. They have improved school self-evaluation in the last few years. Many of the school's checks on its own performance are carried out usefully at subject level, with heads of faculty and subjects taking an increasingly vital role.
- Self-evaluation and development planning processes do not always closely match each other. Leaders do not always set precise enough targets for school improvement. This means that, although the school is constantly improving and developing, the process is not always quite as sharp or as clearly focused as it could be. In a review discussion with senior leaders about the impact of aligning evaluations and responses more closely on school improvement, leaders agreed that doing so would 'make it easier'.
- The curriculum is broad and there is a wide range of subject options. Some sixth form courses are offered with other schools. JCG offers a very wide range of well taken up extracurricular activities, visits out, and international links including residential expeditions across the world. Students learn a lot about different countries, various political systems, and other cultures. They benefit from and thoroughly enjoy a multitude of different opportunities.
- The school spends its Jersey Premium funding very well to ensure that students who qualify for it can take a full part in all activities and aspects of school life.
- Newly qualified teachers and other new members of the teaching profession are very well supported and mentored.
- The governing body is well organised and effective. It has an efficient committee structure. Governors are carefully recruited, and they are knowledgeable and committed. Their questioning of, and discussions with, senior staff provide valuable support and accountability for those leaders.

## Recommendations

The school should take the following actions.

1. Link improvement planning, at whole school and subject level, firmly to key findings from self-evaluation, and:
  - ensure that school improvement targets are clear and related to students' outcomes

- check that specific provisions, such as those for students with special educational needs, are monitored carefully, so that any problems that may arise can be identified and stopped quickly.
2. Raise expectations of students even further by:
- ensuring that they get to grips as quickly as possible with the main, deep, learning points and activities in each lesson
  - ensuring that all the feedback given to them is as clear and effective as the best practice in the school and is in line with the assessment policy.

## Information about the school

<b>Age range of students:</b>	11-18
<b>Gender of students:</b>	Girls
<b>Number of students on the school roll:</b>	719
<b>Date of any previous Jersey review:</b>	None

- This is a selective girls' secondary school with a sixth form. Parents pay fees, which cover about half of the school's running costs. Eight percent of pupils receive bursaries.
- The proportion of students with special educational needs is low.
- The proportion of students receiving Jersey Premium funding is well below average.
- A small proportion of students speak English as an additional language, but none is in the early stages of learning English. The school recruits some international students.
- The current head teacher, the Principal, was appointed in 2008.

## Information about the review

- Over a hundred lessons were observed, for different lengths of time.
- A large sample of students' work was scrutinised.
- Discussions were held with many groups of students about their work, the teaching, curriculum, and the way the school ensures their safety and wellbeing.
- A small sample of students read to reviewers and discussed their reading.
- Students were observed, and talked with, during break times and as they moved around the school.
- A tour was made of the school's site to check its security and safety.
- Extended discussions were held with school leaders at various levels.
- The school's published assessment data were analysed and taken into account.
- A wide range of documents was considered.
- The review considered the results of surveys of parents and staff, which had previously been conducted by the school.

## The review team

The review team consisted of eight reviewers and was led by an experienced off-island education consultant. The other reviewers included another two experienced off-island education consultants, a senior adviser from the Education Department and three serving senior staff from other Jersey schools.

Enquiries about this report should be addressed to Director of Standards and Achievement, Children, Young People, Education and Skills, Highlands Campus, PO Box 142, St Saviour, Jersey JE4 8QJ