

'Rapid improvement' at school

Pupils are pushed 'to be the best they can be' by teachers

By OLIVIA CARTER

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A Brentwood secondary school that pushes pupils "to be the best they can be" has been inspected following recent Ofsted changes.

The education standards watchdog has released its report following an inspection of St Martin's School in Hanging Hill Lane, Hutton.

A school inspection was conducted on September 24, with the findings being made available to the public on November 13.

It comes after the government announced in September that single word judgements would be removed from inspection reports of state schools.

Schools continue to be rated across four sub-categories including the quality of education, outstanding behaviour and attitudes, outstanding personal development, and outstanding leadership and management.

St Martin's School was found to be 'outstanding' in its leadership and management and 'good' in all other areas.

Inspectors noted that "rapid improvements" have been made at the school following "considerable changes to the leadership".

Executive headteacher Jamie Foster took over the leadership of the school

in September 2023, bringing with him a new senior leadership team.

Culture at St Martin's has been described as "very supportive", with pupils across key stages including sixth form working in "a friendly and calm environment".

The school's ethos 'to be the best you can be' has been well established across year groups, Ofsted found. Pupils also received high praise in the report after inspectors noted they are "incredibly well mannered and polite".

"Pupils know that they will be challenged and supported to be successful," the report said.

"They appreciate that their teachers push them to achieve well."

The school curriculum has been described as "ambitious" and Ofsted have advised that "leaders must ensure that all teachers give all pupils appropriate opportunities to meet the intended ambition of the curriculum".

Inspectors also noted that pupils who struggle to read with confidence do not "consistently receive the most appropriate support to help them catch up".

Executive headteacher Mr Foster told this paper: "Having great teachers delivering consistently good lessons is vital, but equally the opportunities at the school for wider personal development are truly exceptional."



The school has improved since undergoing a change of leadership

Image: St Martin's School

Eight new homes rejected

A planning proposal for the creation of eight homes in Romford has been refused after being called "unduly cramped".

It follows an application submitted to Havering Council in August seeking permission to redevelop a site in Noak Hill Road into new homes.

The documents submitted by J. Dunne Associates on behalf of Havering Development Associates Ltd detailed hopes to demolish existing outbuildings and barns on the land.

They claimed some of the buildings are "dilapidated" and would be knocked down to make way for the detached three-bed homes.

After a delay in the decision relating to the proposal, the council has now released the reasoning behind its refusal.

According to the council feedback, the development would "form an unwanted urbanisation of the site which would have a profound and material impact on the openness of the green belt".

Havering Council highlighted the contrast of the build, stating that it would "appear dominant and visually intrusive in the streetscene".

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