

Inspection of school: The Stonehenge School

Holders Road, Amesbury, Wiltshire SP4 7PW

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2022

Outcome

The Stonehenge School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like coming to school. They wear their uniform with pride. The new headteacher sets a clear vision for the school's next steps. Leaders are ambitious. They have heightened expectations of pupils and staff. Pupils respond well to these firm boundaries. They are respectful and polite. They respond quickly to staff requests.

Leaders have created a safe environment for pupils. Staff consider pupils' emotional health and well-being, recognising that the pandemic years have been a turbulent and disruptive time. Leaders' work to improve the rate of pupils' attendance is starting to make a difference.

The behaviour of some pupils does not meet the school's high expectations. Leaders are taking positive steps to re-establish routines and the consistent application of strengthened behaviour policies. Bullying is uncommon. When bullying takes place, staff deal with it promptly. However, pupils are not always well informed about the steps that have been taken.

The school's rapid growth has offered some challenges. Staff provide a variety of extra-curricular activities that cater for many talents and interests. There is a strong sports offer despite a lack of outdoor spaces. The physical education (PE) staff support a full programme of competitive fixtures.

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

Leaders have put a broad curriculum in place for every pupil. They have identified what pupils need to learn to be ready for their next steps. However, in some subjects such as languages, the implementation of the curriculum is not as effective as in the others. Leaders are ambitious to increase the number of pupils who study a language in key stage 4 and so increase the uptake in the English Baccalaureate.

Subject leaders have planned the concepts that pupils need to learn over time. They understand how knowledge needs to deepen and build on prior learning. In most subjects, teachers implement the curriculum well.

A significant number of pupils arrive in Year 7 with reading ages that are well below their chronological age. As a result, they find it difficult to follow the full curriculum. Skilled teachers provide appropriate support through a well-devised approach to the teaching of phonics. Pupils speak proudly of their improved learning in reading since arriving at the school. In English, pupils read literary heritage texts, such as Shakespeare. Leaders prioritise reading. They are encouraging pupils to read challenging texts for pleasure.

Assessment is used effectively in order to help teachers check pupils' understanding. Written assessments are used well in most subjects to help pupils recognise the knowledge they have gained as well as areas for improvement. In some subjects, leaders are still developing their use of assessment to help pupils improve their learning.

The special educational needs coordinator ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive adapted curriculums when necessary. Leaders have devoted time to providing training and support for teachers in this area. Pupils with SEND are well supported in lessons so that they follow the same curriculum as other pupils.

There is little disruption to learning. However, when it happens, teachers deal with it well. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect in classrooms. There are, though, a few pupils who lack motivation in their learning. Most pupils are happy and feel safe. However, a few pupils use inappropriate language with their peers.

Pupils benefit from a recently improved personal, social, health, citizenship, and economic education programme. Pupils receive effective careers advice. Staff track the destinations of pupils when they leave. This has led to leaders changing the options that pupils can choose to better meet their needs. Through the curriculum, pupils develop their character and confidence well over time.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff receive regular and appropriate training. They know how to identify and report any concerns about pupils at risk of harm. Leaders make appropriate and timely referrals to other agencies in order to secure the help that pupils need.

All relevant recruitment checks are made to ensure that those who work in the school are suitable.

The curriculum helps pupils to understand the safeguarding risks they may face. School systems encourage pupils to seek help if they are at risk.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are strengthening the key stage 4 curriculum. However, there are still some inconsistencies in the implementation of the curriculum in different subjects. Leaders need to ensure that improvement work strengthens the implementation of the curriculum across subjects in key stage 4.
- A few pupils do not understand when the language they use is inappropriate. These pupils use this language when speaking to their peers without understanding why they should not do so. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils understand what language is and is not appropriate.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2014.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	126458
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10240112
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1017
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kelly Godwin
Headteacher	Carole Dean
Website	www.stonehenge.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 April 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection. The new headteacher was co-leader with the previous headteacher last year and took over in September 2022.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a selection of lessons, met teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- Inspectors met with staff to discuss support for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with a range of other staff, including early career teachers, support staff and site staff.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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