

Inspection of Stafford Manor High School

Wolverhampton Road, Stafford, Staffordshire ST17 9DJ

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a caring, inclusive school at the heart of its community. Staff know pupils and their families well. They want the best for every pupil. The majority of pupils feel happy and safe in the school. They are clear that there are strong support systems in place if they have a problem. Most pupils say that bullying is rare. They feel that staff resolve issues well. However, some pupils feel that bullying could be dealt with more swiftly on occasions.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the school faced significant challenges. Leaders saw a downturn in academic progress, behaviour and attendance. Leaders are determined to address this downturn. They have significantly increased their levels of support for pupils. At the same time, they have raised expectations in all areas. Most pupils increasingly live up to these expectations. However, the behaviour and attendance of some pupils still need to improve.

The school offers a range of extra-curricular opportunities. These include clubs for sports, singing, art, coding and computer-aided design. There are also an increasing number of trips on offer, such as the recent textiles trip to a local marine life attraction. Pupils appreciate and enjoy participating in these additional opportunities.

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

The headteacher has inspired significant improvement in the school since arriving at the start of the academic year. Alongside senior leaders and governors, he has quickly established an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders are working determinedly on the areas identified. As a result, improvements in several areas are well underway.

The intended curriculum is suitable for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Key stage 3 is broad and balanced. At key stage 4, pupils study an academic core of subjects alongside a range of GCSEs and vocational qualifications. Improved language provision is leading to increasing uptake of the English Baccalaureate.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Leaders give careful thought to the sequencing of the curriculum in some subjects. They pinpoint the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn and they use assessment to check pupils' understanding. However, this approach is not consistent. In some subjects, curriculum planning and assessment processes are underdeveloped. Where this is the case, pupils have gaps in their knowledge. This limits their progress.

Sixth-form provision gives students access to a well-rounded experience in Years 12 and 13. Academic studies are supplemented by a range of personal development and enrichment activities. Students receive support when considering their next steps in education or employment.

Leaders ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are identified swiftly. Information on how best to support pupils in lessons is shared with staff. Staff make use of this information to adapt lessons effectively. This enables pupils with SEND to access the full curriculum.

Most pupils enjoy the opportunity to read regularly during tutor-time reading sessions. Leaders are aware that the low reading age of some pupils is limiting their progress in a range of subjects. They have introduced a support programme for these pupils. This programme is well planned and delivered. As a result, pupils are developing a wider vocabulary and reading with increasing fluency.

Leaders have recognised the need to re-establish positive behaviour routines across the school. They introduced a new behaviour policy in September 2022. This focuses on 'The 4 Rs', encouraging pupils to be ready, respectful, responsible and resilient. The policy has worked well for many pupils, who are polite, open and honest. Behaviour is improving, evidenced by the reducing number of behaviour incidents and suspensions. However, the behaviour policy is not applied consistently by all staff, and some pupils are still adjusting to raised expectations. As a result, occasional poor behaviour interrupts learning and has an impact on wider school life.

Absence rates are reducing but remain high for some pupils. This limits pupils' progress and their access to the wider opportunities offered by the school.

Staff deliver the school's personal development curriculum through social and emotional learning and philosophy and ethics lessons. These are supplemented by work done during tutor periods and assemblies. The curriculum plan covers an appropriate range of issues, such as healthy relationships, British values, keeping safe, understanding other cultures and careers education. However, not all teachers give the same priority to the delivery of these lessons. This has resulted in gaps in knowledge for some pupils.

Staff are proud to work here. They feel that the school is well led and managed. They say that leaders trust them and take their workload into account when planning improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. They know how to recognise when a pupil may be at risk of harm and how to report concerns.

Leaders ensure that any concerns are followed up promptly. They work closely with a range of agencies to ensure that pupils and families receive additional support when it is needed.

Pupils are taught how to keep safe. They know who to talk to if they have a concern and are confident that they will get support if it is needed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not clearly identified the knowledge that pupils will learn and the order this will be taught in. This prevents pupils from building effectively on what they already know. Leaders should ensure that all subjects clearly identify the key knowledge that pupils should learn and how this will be sequenced.
- Some subjects do not plan the use of assessment effectively to check pupils' learning. As a result, gaps in pupils' knowledge are not always identified. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders plan the use of assessment effectively to ensure pupils are learning the planned curriculum.
- The new behaviour policy is not applied consistently by all staff, and not all pupils adhere to the raised expectations. As a result, the behaviour of a small number of pupils has a negative impact on learning and wider school life. Leaders should ensure that their high expectations for pupils' behaviour are implemented fully and consistently.
- Although attendance is improving, too many pupils still miss too much school time. This has a negative impact on their achievement and personal development. Leaders should intensify their efforts to reduce levels of absence further.
- The personal development curriculum is planned to include an appropriate range of topics. However, inconsistent delivery means that not all pupils access the full programme. Leaders should ensure that the programme is delivered consistently to ensure that all pupils get full access.

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	124467
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10278833
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	470
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	7
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Warren Dix
Headteacher	Rhys Adams
Website	http://www.staffordmanorhighschool.com
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average-size secondary school.
- The school uses full- and part-time alternative provision for a small number of pupils at two providers.
- The school's sixth form is a part of the 'Stafford 14-19 Partnership'. This brings together students from five local schools. A small number of Year 12 students attend this provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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 and other senior leaders. Meetings were held with curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors also met with a range of other staff and governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, considered curriculum guidance, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited lessons, spoke to pupils, and looked at pupils' work in a number of other subject areas. They visited form periods and observed pupils working in 'The Hub'.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, when moving between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. Many pupils were spoken to formally and informally regarding their experiences of the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of safeguarding information, including the school's safeguarding policy, spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding and looked at how pupils learn about keeping themselves safe. The lead inspector spoke to the designated safeguarding lead about the reporting and recording of any safeguarding incidents.
- Inspectors took account of the free-text comments and the responses on Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online inspection questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff surveys.

Inspection team

Eddie Wilkes, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Godden	Ofsted Inspector
David Hermitt	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