

# Stone Bay School

70 Stone Road, Broadstairs, CT10 1EB

**Inspection dates** 12–13 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- From their generally very low starting points, students make consistently good, and sometimes outstanding, progress.
- The sixth form is good and students are well prepared for their next stage of life after school.
- The headteacher, the governing body and other senior leaders are ambitious for the school and plan well to turn their vision into reality.
- The quality of teaching is monitored rigorously and improvement is supported by good professional development. Teaching is consistently good, with examples of outstanding practice.
- Staff have an excellent understanding of the needs of the students and use their expertise well to meet students' individual requirements.
- The positive impact of the support staff in the classrooms and around the school is a strong feature of the school's provision.
- Students are happy at school and feel safe. This is a result of the extremely good care and support they receive. Their social skills improve considerably while they are at the school.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and they contribute positively to opportunities to give their own views.
- The rich curriculum not only meets the needs of the students well but makes sure that they are not isolated from the world outside the school.
- The governing body has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and is active in planning to meet the challenges facing the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Activities are not always challenging enough to promote outstanding progress.
- Teachers do not always modify activities in lessons when progress slows.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 lesson or parts of lessons, taught by 11 teachers. Some of these were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors conducted two learning walks and attended two assemblies.
- Two meetings were held with groups of pupils from Years 7 to 11 and informal discussions were held with sixth form students.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body, senior leaders and staff.
- The lead inspector had a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) but the inspectors took account of the views of parents and carers from the school's own surveys. The inspectors took account of the views of 35 members of staff who responded to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a wide range of documentation, including policies, the school's self-evaluation and its development plan, documents used by school leaders to check the school's work, progress records, documents relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding and the school's surveys of the views of students, staff and parents and carers.
- The inspectors checked on students' behaviour in lessons, at breaks and at lunchtimes.

## Inspection team

Timothy Feast, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andrew Lyons

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school caters for secondary-aged students, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs relating to autistic spectrum disorder.
- A large proportion of the students are older students, many of them in the sixth form.
- A very large proportion of the students are of White British heritage and there are a very small number of students from other ethnic backgrounds who speak English as an additional language.
- About one fifth of the students are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is above average. Pupil premium funding is intended for the support of students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, in the care of the local authority or from families in the armed forces. There were no students from families in the armed forces and a small proportion of the students were looked after by the local authority at the time of the inspection.
- The school has a boarding section but this was not inspected at this time.
- Since the last inspection the school has opened a children's home on site, which was the subject of a separate inspection at the time of this inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that:
  - all teachers plan and carry out activities in lessons which reflect high expectations of the progress students will make and offer sufficient challenge to speed up the rate of progress so that it is consistently rapid and sustained
  - all teachers consistently assess students' response to lessons to modify activities when the rate of progress slows.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Students enter the school at different ages and different times of the school year. Their attainment on arrival is almost always very low, with nearly all having particularly poor communication skills.
- Students make consistently good progress and some make outstanding progress, not only in developing their communication skills but also their skills in numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). The school has specifically targeted progress in numeracy this year which has resulted in accelerated achievement, but not at the expense of students' progress in other skills.
- Observations in lessons during the inspection confirmed that, throughout the school all groups, including sixth formers and those who speak English as an additional language, make consistently good progress.
- Students make good progress with their signing skills and with their use of technological aids to improve their communication skills, for example, some sixth formers read an adapted version of 'Harry Potter' and answered context questions.
- Students confidently use ICT in a variety of situations, from supporting singing in assembly to demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of concepts on the interactive whiteboards. Students' progress in developing ICT skills is often outstanding.
- Students' good progress is increasingly accredited through the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network while some students are currently studying for GCSE accreditation. Older students go to college one day a week and this helps them prepare well for the next stage in their education. Almost all students go on to further education colleges when they leave at the end of the sixth form.
- The additional funding for students eligible for the pupil premium is targeted very effectively to raise achievement. Additional speech and language support is provided to enhance communication skills and specialised equipment has also been purchased. As a result the progress these students make is similar to that of students generally.
- Parents and carers unanimously agree that their children are achieving well, and enjoy their learning.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching across the school is consistently good and in some classes and subjects, for example music, it is outstanding. This is reflected in the consistently good progress students make.
- The quality of teaching is aided by the adoption of a consistent approach to planning which has resulted generally, but not always, in teachers matching tasks to high expectations of what the students can achieve. Teachers have a good understanding of the challenges to teaching students with significant autistic spectrum disorder difficulties and they use their expertise, especially in teaching communication skills, to good effect in making the most of learning opportunities.
- Good improvement has been made since the last inspection with staff assessing students' progress in lessons but this information is not consistently used to modify and moderate the activities when students' progress slows. In some lessons opportunities are given for students to assess their own work and this they do well.
- Additional support staff are deployed very effectively. They combine well their roles of supporting students' well-being and managing behaviour where necessary, with a clear focus on supporting learning, especially when the class teacher is working individually with another student.
- ICT is well used to engage and motivate students, who respond positively to opportunities to use the interactive whiteboards. Teachers use ICT to identify resources that stimulate the students

who enjoy and respond positively to the range of emotions which may be used in the clips, for example, when looking at aspects of the Hindu religion.

- The good teaching results in students enjoying many of their lessons, for example, they told inspectors of their enjoyment of physical activities and clearly from the responses of the students in both lessons and assemblies the large majority enjoy the opportunity to make and respond to music.
- Parents and carers were unanimous in thinking that their children are taught well and value highly the expert way in which their child's individual needs are met.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- All parents and carers are positive about the behaviour of the students in the school, indicating their child enjoys school and feels safe. Students told inspectors they are happy at school and enjoy lessons. Most staff are positive about the behaviour of students and how it is managed. School records show clearly how students' behaviour and social skills improve while at the school.
- Students showed good attitudes to learning in lessons and assemblies. They volunteered to answer questions on the interactive whiteboards, volunteered to take part in the display on e-safety in assembly and they collaborated well when playing 'pass the parcel' as part of a numeracy exercise. Students were very pleased and proud of taking part in a football tournament against other schools during the inspection. They are proud of the work they do in raising funds for targeted charities such as Comic Relief and Bake a Wish.
- The attendance of students has improved this year and is now similar to that of secondary students nationally. Most students attend well; absence is often related to medical conditions.
- The school has in place thorough and practical behaviour plans for all students. When students are agitated or distressed, staff handle such incidents with exemplary care in line with the school's guidance while other students in the lesson carry on with their work. This positive approach to behaviour management has resulted in no permanent and only one fixed term exclusion over the last one and a half years.
- Students indicated that they feel safe in the school. They have a developing understanding of how to keep safe, for example, in relation to e-safety. School records indicated that incidents of bullying are infrequent. Parents and carers are confident that staff deal with any incidents very well.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- School leaders including the governing body have a clear and ambitious vision for the future direction of the school. They have clear plans as to how to achieve this and are well aware of the challenges they face in being successful.
- School leaders, including the governing body, have an accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Action plans are based securely on this information.
- The school has seen considerable improvements in key areas identified at the last inspection, including distributing responsibilities to subject and other leaders. The headteacher has been very successful in bringing about change while taking the staff along with her. Changes to the focus on communication have seen additional curriculum time allocated to reading and the adoption of a commercial scheme. Additional time has been allocated to improving numeracy with evident impact. Sixth formers now have the opportunity of a weekly session at college and value this addition to the curriculum.
- Senior leaders systematically monitor the quality of teaching. Their judgements are accurate and their areas for improvement appropriate. They are assisted in this monitoring by visits from the local authority and from governors. Appropriate training is identified to support staff's professional progress and performance management is conducted effectively. As a result the teaching of individual staff has improved over time.

- The school's procedures for assessing and tracking students' progress have greatly improved since the last inspection. There is accurate and detailed information for school leaders to analyse and use to raise achievement. This analysis has informed decisions such as the changing allocation of curriculum time.
- The carefully targeted provision across the whole school and the accurate monitoring of its impact contributes effectively to promoting equal opportunity and tackling discrimination.
- The school uses the pupil premium well, sharing its strategies and success with parents and carers on the website. Governors are well aware of how the pupil premium funding is used and its positive impact.
- The curriculum has developed well since the last inspection and contributes positively to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It helps students to be outward looking and prepares them well for the next stage of their life.
- The local authority has adopted a light-touch approach to this good school and this is appropriate.
- The safety and well-being of the students are of paramount concern to the school. Statutory requirements in respect of safeguarding are fully met.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is knowledgeable about the school and this enables it to provide good support and challenge to school leaders. Its knowledge of teaching and students' performance is enhanced by first-hand evidence acquired through regular visits and the Chair of Governing Body's regular meetings with the headteacher.
  - Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching linked to students' achievement and through their sub-committee are appropriately involved in managing performance and decisions which arise from it. They know what is being done to reward good teaching and to tackle any underperformance. Their involvement underpins the school's growing capacity for improvement.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119056
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	401801

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	60
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	30
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Farr
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Dando
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24–25 February 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01843 863421
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