

# St Ivo School

High Leys, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE27 6RR

## Inspection dates

12–13 July 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher has acted quickly to stabilise the school following a period of turbulence. He has resumed the school’s journey of improvement identified in the previous inspection report and built upon successful aspects of what was already in place.
- The achievement of pupils has risen sharply and is now above average.
- The culture of the school is one where relationships between pupils, and between staff and pupils, are very positive and constructive. Pupils feel safe, are polite, well-mannered and cooperate well with one another. Behaviour is usually good in lessons and at break and lunchtimes.
- Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils are tolerant of people from other cultures and with different lifestyles.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. The use of marking to help pupils improve their work is a particular strength, consistently helping pupils know what to do to improve.
- Middle leaders now play an important role in improving the quality of provision in the subjects for which they are responsible, or helping pupils make better progress in the year groups that are their responsibility.
- There is a highly effective governing body. The positive impact of governance is to be found in the school’s recent improvement and the well-informed challenge governors provide to leaders.
- The requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes have been implemented. Improved systems to monitor academic progress and the quality of teaching found in the rest of the school are now raising standards in the sixth form.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils, especially the most able, are not given work that challenges them consistently enough. This is because teachers’ planning sometimes does not reflect high enough expectations of pupils’ capabilities.
- There is inconsistency in the quality of teaching in the sixth form. Most is good, but sometimes there is insufficient challenge and the pace of learning is too slow.
- While many interventions have been put in place to help pupils achieve well, leaders are sometimes not clear enough about how successful the interventions are and therefore where their resources can have maximum impact on the standards pupils reach.

## Full report

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

- Ensure consistency in the quality of teaching in the sixth form through raising the level of challenge and the pace of learning in some lessons.
  
- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning in the main school, by:
  - providing more consistent challenge for the most able pupils
  - monitoring the impact of the school's interventions to more effectively check how well they are improving pupils' progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The governors and the headteacher share a vision for all pupils to fulfil their potential. At the time of the previous inspection, the school was judged to require improvement, but with good leadership and management that was improving the school. Soon after that inspection, there was a considerable turnover of leaders and other staff and the attention of leaders and governors was diverted from focusing on improving the school.
- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2015. He has skilfully and successfully refocused all staff on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching. Staff and pupils appreciate his willingness to listen. He combines a friendly persona with a steely determination to drive forward improvements and get the best outcomes for pupils. The senior leadership team has been strengthened. Leaders want the school to become outstanding and they are doing the right things to achieve this.
- Teaching has improved sharply because of effective leadership and management. There is rigorous performance management and professional development that is valued by staff and has resulted in positive change. Teachers' progress up the salary scale is linked to their performance.
- Most parents recognise the improvements in the school. For example, one told inspectors, 'I feel the school is improving, with better teaching, better leadership and better consultation with parents'. The parental handbook is highly detailed and comprehensive with extensive guidance to encourage parents to help their child's learning at home.
- Senior leaders have developed and effectively introduced systems to track pupils' progress and improve teaching. Senior leaders check teaching and the work of subject leaders. Middle leaders in turn have a good understanding of the quality of provision in their area of responsibility. All staff are now accountable for the effectiveness of their work.
- The promotion of respect and tolerance is embedded in the life of the school. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills through a range of activities, such as sport, music and very high-quality art. There is a multi-faith prayer room. Moral topics are discussed in lessons. For example, inspectors were impressed by the quality of discussion in a physical education (PE) lesson around the impact of the zika virus and the decisions of athletes on whether to attend the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. At key stage 3, religious education introduces all pupils to and develops an understanding of the faiths and cultures found in modern Britain. Ethics is a popular option in key stage 4 and the sixth form, but leaders recognise that pupils in these key stages not choosing the ethics option have insufficient opportunity to get their entitlement to religious education. Plans are in place to address this.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. A wide range of GCSEs are offered that meet the needs and interests of pupils. There are also vocationally relevant courses such as car mechanics that meet the needs of some pupils. A small number of pupils attend alternative provision. Their attendance and progress is monitored. The proportion of pupils achieving the EBacc (the group of subjects favoured by the government) is broadly average. There is also a wide range of very enriching activities such as the regular and varied opportunities to go on school trips abroad or within this country. For example, during the inspection some pupils were on a trip to Berlin and Prague, while others were in Iceland. A parent commented to inspectors, 'The extra-curricular activities offered, particularly music clubs and educational trips, are excellent and well run. My children have benefited enormously from these.'
- In Years 8 to 10, extra curriculum time has been diverted to GCSE subjects at the expense of pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Leaders recognise that the current arrangement for delivery through curriculum enrichment days supplemented by form tutor time is insufficient to provide coverage and progression for PSHE topics including careers advice and guidance. Plans are in place to restore PSHE to the regular curriculum, but in the meantime pupils are missing out.
- Resources are deployed well to give pupils equal opportunities to succeed. Leaders have responded positively to the findings of Ofsted's December 2015 visit that checked the school's work to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. School leaders make effective use of the pupil premium funding to improve the progress of pupils entitled to additional support. Leaders are aware that while the progress of disadvantaged pupils has improved, the gap between their progress and that of other pupils is not closing quickly enough and have rightly identified this as its top priority. For example, all teachers are held accountable for raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. The school's appraisal procedures now include a target whereby all teaching staff select up to five disadvantaged pupils in their classes and identify key actions that they will take to accelerate their progress and raise their achievement.

- The school seeks and acts upon external support. For example, it has formed a partnership with Hinchingsbrook School, called The Ouse Valley Partnership, to provide mutual challenge and support. It recently took part in a 'peer assessment and support' exercise known as 'triads'. This involved leaders openly and honestly sharing information on the school and being visited by headteachers and senior leaders from two other Cambridgeshire schools. This was facilitated by the local authority, but there is little other evidence of local authority support or challenge for the school.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Following an external review, there is now a very strong and expert governing body which shares the leadership's vision for the school and governors have a very astute understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development.
  - Governors were able to demonstrate to inspectors how they had a positive impact on school improvement through challenging leaders effectively, based on a clear understanding of information about the progress of different groups of pupils. For example, governors are now effectively challenging the school regarding the performance of pupils supported by the pupil premium.
  - The governing body reviews all policies regularly. It ensures that policies are up to date and comprehensive.
  - Governors scrutinise the arrangements for the management of teachers' performance diligently, including challenging decisions of senior leaders regarding pay progression.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All statutory requirements are met. Staff training is appropriate and systematic. Staff know who to approach if they have concerns about pupils. Pupils feel safe and know who to approach when they have an issue or problem. Staff have received training relating to the government's anti-extremism policy ('Prevent'), female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation. Governors have received safeguarding, child protection and safer recruitment training and are aware of their responsibilities. Security of the premises is assured through regular risk assessments and prompt action to address any potential hazards.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. This is due to effective leadership of this area of work with efficacious systems to monitor and support the impact of teachers' work. A professional development programme that is popular with staff enables teachers to learn from each other and spreads best practice.
- Regular feedback and marking informs pupils about what they have done well and the next steps they need to take. Pupils value this and respond appropriately by improving their work. In addition, the marking information helps teachers plan lessons to meet the different needs of pupils most of the time.
- Pupils and staff show respect for each other and as a result pupils show a positive attitude to learning. They greatly appreciate the dedication of their teachers. Several different groups of pupils told inspectors that the best thing about the school was their teachers. The presentation of work in pupils' books has improved and demonstrates how pupils now have more pride in their work and their learning.
- Additional adults, such as teaching assistants, support pupils' learning well and help teachers make any adjustments needed to ensure that those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.
- Leaders have trained teachers to support the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. These skills are developed across a wide range of subjects.
- There is now more homework set than in the past. The homework set is monitored by leaders and by parents using the school's online system. The setting of homework is not yet consistent across the school.
- Planning for learning identifies different groups of pupils such as those entitled to pupil premium funding or those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, the achievement of these groups is rising.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not adapt their explanations, their questioning and the work set to provide appropriate challenge to pupils of different ability levels. This is particularly the case for high attaining pupils. Sometimes, teachers' planning does not reflect high enough expectations of what pupils are capable of.
- The assessment of pupils' work is a strength. There is a great deal of consistency in the way books are marked and give pupils guidance on how to improve. Pupils understand this. However, the school's information about pupils' overall progress in some subjects in key stage 3 is not presented in a way that is understandable to parents and pupils.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Most pupils are confident and articulate. Their positive views of the school are reflected in their responses to the Ofsted pupil survey which formed part of the inspection.
- Pupils report that they feel safe.
- Pupils mostly take pride in their appearance. They take care of the school environment which is generally tidy and litter free. Standards of presentation of work are good.
- A range of effective programmes are in place to support pupils who are vulnerable, for example the 7Jump, Network 7 and Network 8 initiatives. Some of these are run by external agencies.
- Pastoral leaders are very positive and enthusiastic about changes to the leadership structure, giving them a more coherent overview of pupils' academic progress and well-being. This very positive view is mirrored by many parents. One parent told inspectors, 'Communication with heads of years is very effective. Both of my children are happy at school. I have enjoyed seeing my daughter grow in confidence and work really hard to do her best in all of her subjects and with the varied homework tasks. My son is also very settled and encouraged to work hard'.
- A range of interesting visitors contribute to the 'Learning for Life' programme across Years 8 to 10. All pupils have two weeks of work experience in Year 10. This is a good introduction to the world of work. Pupils have access to impartial careers guidance. Leaders recognise that pupils' opportunities to gain a coherent understanding of careers, enterprise including financial capability and the world of work, and the school's ability to monitor pupils' progress in this are restricted by the current lack of regular PSHE provision.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Lessons start punctually and pupils move around the site purposefully and calmly.
- The great majority of pupils are polite and respectful to each other and to staff. In lessons they listen carefully to each other's views and opinions.
- Pupil behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes around the site is well ordered. Pupils get on well together. Staff on duty are highly visible. Pupils say that behaviour is generally good. For example, inspectors visited the dining hall on both days of the inspection and found that pupils were getting on very well together. Pupils assured the inspector that, while the dining hall is normally much more crowded when all year groups are present, behaviour is still orderly.
- Strategies used to improve attendance have been successful. Attendance is above the national average. Persistent absence is below the national average. The proportion of pupils excluded is also below the national average.
- The use of the reflection room has been effective in promoting good behaviour for learning.
- There has been a marked reduction in low-level disruption so that it is now quite rare. However, pupils and a few parents told inspectors that some lessons are disrupted and not all staff apply the behaviour policy consistently. This is particularly the case for temporary teachers.

## Outcomes for pupils are good

- In 2015 there was a sharp rise in the proportion of pupils gaining five GCSE passes at grades A\* to C including English and mathematics. This rise would have been even sharper if there had not been a falling back in GCSE English language results. This was due to a downgrading by the examination board of marks in the internally assessed elements of the course. A lot of work has been done to ensure that this year, pupils' achievement in English is much more secure. The school's pupil progress information indicates much improved English language results this summer and a continued rise in overall attainment.
- Pupils' progress from their starting points is above average. This is demonstrated through the school's progress information on pupils, supported by inspectors' observation of pupils' progress in lessons and the work seen in books.
- Leaders are using the pupil premium grant to put into place bespoke interventions for individual pupils in all year groups. The school's monitoring information shows that disadvantaged pupils are making better than average progress, but leaders recognise that while the gap between the attainment of these pupils and others is closing, it remains large.

- In 2015, pupils made expected progress from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4 in English and better than expected progress in mathematics. The proportion of pupils making more than expected progress was below average in English, but above average in mathematics. The school's monitoring information shows a very clear improvement in the proportions making expected and more than expected progress in English in 2016. The most able pupils in particular are expected to make much better progress in English and mathematics this summer than this group has done in the past.
- The needs and academic progress of the small number of pupils who are in the care of the local authority are monitored rigorously. They make similar progress to other pupils.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is being used effectively to support pupils who need it. Extra support is given to help these pupils catch up in English and mathematics through the 7Jump programme, for example.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making progress at least in line with, and in places above, their peers.
- The 'reading challenge' supports children to read often and widely. A 'literary festival' takes place in school, which engenders a passion for writing and reading.
- Interventions are not always evaluated well enough to give leaders clear information on which ones are most successful at raising achievement.

### 16 to 19 study programmes

### are good

- The sixth form meets the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes.
- Students' achievement is good. In 2015, learners' progress from their starting points was broadly in line with the national average. The small number of students following vocational courses did less well than the large majority following academic A levels. The school's monitoring information, supported by inspectors' first hand observation of lessons and work in books, indicates that for current students there has been an upwards step change in the achievement of current students. Retention on courses is strong.
- The new leadership has high expectations and is making a positive difference to improving the achievement of students in the sixth form.
- Students without GCSE A\* to C passes in English and mathematics are supported to improve their grades. Results from the winter 2015 examinations show the school's approach to be successful.
- Careers advice and guidance is wide ranging. Year 12 students are already working on their personal statements for university applications. Students are given good support for direct entry to apprenticeships and employment, but students told inspectors that they felt that the needs of university applicants were prioritised. The large majority of students go to university each year, the remainder going to work or apprenticeships. The school has developed links with local businesses that provide work experience and non-qualification activities in order to enhance employability. For example, nine Year 12 students completed the Coca-Cola Preparation for Apprenticeship Scheme and one gained a job as a result.
- Students feel well supported by teachers. They appreciate the time teachers give out of lessons to help students make progress.
- Students have good attitudes to their studies. Punctuality and attendance are good. The sixth form is a friendly and engaging area. Students feel safe and secure. Many choose to stay in school to study well after the end of the school day.
- The quality of teaching is good and improving, as systems bringing about improvement in the main school have recently been imported to the sixth form. In a few lessons, students progress is not rapid enough, because the teachers' expectations of what students can do is insufficiently challenging and tasks lack a sense of urgency.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137305
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10011860

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,748
<b>Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes</b>	330
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Charles Glanville
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sam Griffin
<b>Telephone number</b>	01480 375400
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://stivoschool.org">stivoschool.org</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office@stivoschool.org">office@stivoschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 May 2014

## Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized secondary school.
- The large majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average while the proportion supported through a statement of special educational needs or the new education, health and care plan is above average.
- A smaller-than-average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding in this school for pupils who are looked after by the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement.
- The school converted to become an academy school in August 2011. At its previous inspection in May 2014 the school was judged to require improvement. There have been leadership and staff changes since then.
- A small group of pupils attend alternative provision at Huntingdon Regional College or Peterborough Alternative Curriculum Education Centre.
- The headteacher took up his post in September 2015.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- At the time of the inspection, students in Year 13 and pupils in Year 11 had left the school. Pupils in Year 10 were out of school on work experience. Some pupils in other year groups were away on trips.
- The inspectors visited 46 lessons, including 15 in the sixth form, to observe behaviour, teaching and learning. Additionally, inspectors completed four tours of the school, making short visits to lessons. Two of these tours and several lesson observations were carried out jointly with leaders.
- Inspectors met with pupils and students formally and informally to discuss their behaviour and lessons, and reviewed their work.
- Meetings were held with the chair and members of the governing body, the headteacher and other leaders, staff, pupils and students.
- Inspectors took account of 142 questionnaire responses to the online Ofsted parent questionnaire, Parent View.
- Questionnaire responses from 139 staff and 116 pupils were examined.
- Inspectors looked carefully at school information on pupils' and students' attainment and progress, the school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, procedures for managing the performance of teachers, and the school's development plan.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined by inspectors.

## Inspection team

Adrian Lyons, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Constable	Ofsted Inspector
Daniel Leonard	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Smith	Ofsted Inspector
John Wilson	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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