

Inspection of Skegness Grammar School

Vernon Road, Skegness, Lincolnshire PE25 2QS

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils enjoy coming to school and want to learn. They know that staff have high expectations of what they can achieve. Many pupils aspire to attend university or to gain an apprenticeship when they leave school.

Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and adults. They know how to behave well and understand why good behaviour is important. They conduct themselves very well in lessons and during social times. Low-level disruption in lessons is not tolerated, allowing pupils to focus on their learning. However, some pupils and parents and carers think that the behaviour rules are too strict and are not always applied consistently.

Pupils feel safe and happy. Most pupils say they have someone to talk to if they have a concern. Should bullying occur, pupils are confident that staff will deal with it quickly and effectively.

Relationships between pupils are positive. They enjoy taking on extra responsibilities. Some pupils benefit from participating in extra-curricular activities, including music and sport, and community events such as a local beach clean. However, not all pupils take advantage of the activities offered. Sixth-form students value the chance to be role models for younger pupils through house and community activities.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for providing a high quality of education. They have high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. Staff are supportive of leaders and proud to work at the school. Leaders, staff and those responsible for governance work together effectively, with a common purpose to keep improving all aspects of the school.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including in the sixth form. Curriculum leaders have used their specialist subject knowledge to consider carefully what they want pupils to know. Curriculum plans are well structured so that pupils learn new knowledge in a logical order and build on what they know already. In modern foreign languages (MFL), for example, the curriculum is planned so that pupils learn increasingly complex vocabulary, phonics and grammar.

Most teachers deliver the curriculum effectively. They choose strategies that help pupils learn new content well. They revisit this content often to help pupils remember what they have learned before they move to the next stage. In some subjects, particularly English, pupils have opportunities to discuss and debate their learning. However, in other areas of the curriculum teachers do not encourage discussion of the subject matter.

The science curriculum is not taught consistently well. Teachers do not think carefully enough about how to introduce new subject content so that pupils understand it. They do not always check whether pupils have understood the learning. Pupils' written work shows that they have not always securely understood the key concepts. The trust's science lead is working closely with the department to bring about improvements.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the same curriculum as their peers. Some teachers do not make effective use of these pupils' profiles when planning and delivering the curriculum. Some of these pupils' needs are not being met sufficiently well.

Leaders have raised the profile of reading, for example through dedicated time for pupils to read each day. New books of different genres and cultures have encouraged pupils to borrow books from the library. Leaders have plans to improve pupils' reading skills and love of reading further, but they have not been able to put all of these plans in place yet.

Pupils' attendance has been affected by COVID-19 (coronavirus). Levels of anxiety among some pupils have increased. Leaders are providing these pupils with close support, including through external agencies. The attendance of these pupils is improving.

Teachers help pupils to understand risks and how to keep themselves safe. Opportunities for pupils to consider what it means to be British are threaded through the curriculum. Pupils receive appropriate careers advice and guidance about their next steps. The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. However, many pupils lack the confidence to engage readily with discussion and debate about issues that may affect them.

Sixth-form students find their studies stimulating and challenging. They show increasing independence and maturity. Students play an active part in the life of the school, leading house and charity events, and volunteering. They are well supported in achieving their career aspirations.

Trust leaders provide extensive support to develop the curriculum, including ongoing training for staff. Those responsible for governance are ambitious for the school and the community it serves.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are well trained. They know the local safeguarding risks well and understand how these risks affect pupils, including in response to COVID-19. Leaders seek prompt support from external agencies when necessary to keep pupils safe. Mental health specialists provide on-site support each week for pupils who need extra help.

Staff understand their responsibilities well. They know how to raise a safeguarding concern with leaders. Leaders keep detailed records of the actions they take in response.

The trust has a close oversight of safeguarding. Trust leaders provide the designated safeguarding leader (DSL) with effective support to carry out the role.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that the science curriculum is implemented consistently well. Some teachers do not always make appropriate pedagogical choices when delivering the science curriculum. They do not always check carefully that pupils have secured the important scientific knowledge before they move on. Leaders must ensure that teachers of science have the training and support they need to implement the curriculum effectively.
- In some subjects, teachers do not use the profiles of pupils with SEND well enough when planning and delivering the curriculum. These pupils do not always get the help they need to access the curriculum. Leaders need to ensure that all staff use the information available about these pupils to provide them with effective support so that these pupils achieve as well as they should.
- Leaders have set out clear expectations of behaviour. While pupils are compliant, and act within these guidelines, many do not demonstrate the confidence to express their views, beliefs and opinions and engage with those of others. Leaders must develop strategies and opportunities through the curriculum and the school's wider work to enable pupils to have the confidence to express their views, discuss and debate opinions and flourish as individuals.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	138757
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10199943
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
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	637
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	135
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Ross
Principal	Jude Hunton
Website	www.skegnessgrammar.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	26 and 27 September 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the school's previous inspection, there have been significant senior leadership changes. The headmaster took up the post in August 2020. A new deputy principal and three new assistant principals have been appointed. One of these assistant principals has been the DSL since September 2020.
- A new special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) was appointed to the post full time in September 2020.
- The school uses The Pilgrim School to provide an alternative education for a very small number of pupils.

Information about this inspection

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus)

pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headmaster, the head of sixth form and other senior leaders. At the time of the inspection, the SENDCo was absent from school due to reasons related to COVID-19.
- The lead inspector met with the DSL to discuss safeguarding, looked at documentation relating to safeguarding, the school's system for recruiting staff and the school's single central register. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors did deep dives in four subjects: English, science, history and MFL. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' workbooks, spoke with pupils and met with teachers of the lessons we visited. On the second day of the inspection, inspectors visited lessons and reviewed curriculum plans in a wider range of subjects. Inspectors spoke with some Year 7 pupils about reading and listened to them read.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from Years 9, 10 and 11 and with some pupils with SEND. Inspectors spoke with a group of sixth-form students. They spoke with pupils informally and observed the behaviour of pupils during social times.
- The lead inspector met with a trustee and spoke with another trustee on the telephone. Inspectors met with other trust representatives, including the deputy chief executive officer and a regional director. The lead inspector also met with the chair of the academy scrutiny committee.
- An inspector spoke on the telephone to a representative of the school's alternative provider.
- Inspectors took into account the 78 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 55 free-text responses. They also considered the 33 responses to the survey for staff and 106 responses to the pupils' survey.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, curriculum plans and information about pupils' attendance, behaviour and exclusions.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jackie Thornalley	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Long	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Stevens	Her Majesty's Inspector

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