

Inspection of Sir Thomas Boughey Academy

Station Road, Halmer End, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST7 8AP

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to come to this welcoming, inclusive school. They are enthusiastic about their learning, and are kind and considerate to one another. They are polite and courteous to visitors. Pupils know they are well cared for. Staff get to know individual pupils and their families well. Leaders have high expectations for what they want pupils to achieve.

Pupils behave well. They are respectful in lessons, and listen carefully to their teachers. Pupils said that they feel safe. At social times, pupils generally play together sensibly and move around the building in a calm manner. Pupils said that if bullying does occur, this is dealt with quickly by staff.

Pupils can study a range of different subjects at key stage 4. However, despite improvements in the teaching of French, most pupils do not study a modern foreign language. Leaders are aware of this and are working hard to ensure that more pupils study a modern foreign language at key stage 4.

Extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school have restarted now after the national lockdowns. Pupils enjoy these and sometimes lead them, for example in dodgeball.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for the curriculum. Leaders have recently moved from a two-year to a three-year key stage 3. They have put in place comprehensive 'curriculum journeys' for many subjects. Curriculum leaders have identified carefully the key knowledge that they want pupils to have in their subject. These 'journeys' show the sequence in which knowledge is to be taught.

Teachers use different strategies to help pupils know more and remember more. For example, lessons begin with an activity to recap on previously taught content. Pupils like this, and said that it helps them to remember more. The curriculum is ambitious, but some subject leaders are trying to make it more so. For example, in English, leaders recognise that they need pupils to read more whole texts at key stage 3. They are putting in place plans to do this.

The support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. These pupils study the same curriculum as their peers. Teachers use up-to-date plans for the needs of individual pupils, to ensure that learning meets their needs. Education, health and care plans are helpful and used well by teachers.

Historically, the curriculum in languages has not been good enough. Leaders have recently addressed this, and the curriculum and teaching of French are now greatly improved. Leaders are working hard to ensure that more pupils understand the importance of studying a modern foreign language at key stage 4.

Leaders have thought carefully about the school's pastoral curriculum. It is well planned and well sequenced. The work on relationships and sex education develops pupils' knowledge in an age-appropriate way. The school makes effective use of outside agencies to help deliver sensitive topics. For example, a specialist agency delivers information about contraception to Year 10 pupils. Pupils discuss topics openly and sensibly. Differences are celebrated, and pupils feel valued. One pupil said that it 'is fine to be different here'.

Leaders have put in place a comprehensive careers programme. Discussions about careers are threaded through different subjects, such as science. However, pupils in key stage 3 do not always see the opportunities available to them in relation to their future careers.

Leaders are resolute in their efforts to promote good levels of attendance. Even though attendance has remained broadly in line with the national average, they are determined to increase it back to the levels it was at before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Governors and trustees know the school extremely well. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths, and the areas that still require further work. They are relentless in ensuring that 'the lived experience of a Sir Thomas Boughey pupil is positive'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out on staff. Staff and governors receive regular and timely training on a range of safeguarding issues. These are followed up with regular 'bulletins'. Leaders ensure that safeguarding remains a high priority.

Leaders are fully aware of pupils' concerns about their health and welfare due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They work hard to support pupils' mental health and well-being. Pupils said that they feel safe in school. They know how to keep themselves safe, including when on the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and well sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about, and are making any necessary amendments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

- The proportion of pupils opting to study a modern foreign language at key stage 4 is low. This is because, historically, the quality of teaching in French has not been good enough. Leaders should ensure that they embed the recent improvements in French, and encourage more pupils to study a modern foreign language at key stage 4.
- Not all pupils at key stage 3 understand how the school is preparing them for their future in education and employment. This means that some pupils do not fully exploit the opportunities offered to them. Leaders should ensure that all pupils are able to understand how the school supports their future plans.

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	145047
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10212189
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	577
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Donna Wilcox
Executive Principal/Associate Principal	Jamie Henshaw/Jane Hingley
Website	www.stb.academy
Date of previous inspection	7 and 8 February 2017

Information about this school

- Sir Thomas Boughy Academy is part of the United Endeavour Trust.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this 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 executive principal and the associate principal. They also met with members of the governing body, the trust board and the chief executive officer.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, history technology and modern foreign languages. Inspectors visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with subject leaders and teachers.
- Through discussions with leaders, governors, pupils and staff, inspectors considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. Inspectors also looked at records related to safeguarding, including the single central record.
- Inspectors met with pupils from different year groups, and spoke to pupils during lesson visits. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in school and at breaktimes. The inspection team spoke to staff about behaviour and their workload in the school. The responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils, staff and parents were also considered.

Inspection team

Neil Warner, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Huw Bishop	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Spoor	Ofsted Inspector

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