

# Inspection of Stoke High School - Ormiston Academy

Maidenhall Approach, Ipswich, Suffolk IP2 8PL

---

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 March 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud to be part of Stoke High School's vibrant, diverse community. As one pupil noted, 'Everyone treats each other equally and respects each other.' Pupils who join the school mid-year quickly settle into the school ethos of 'respect, inspire and achieve'.

It is okay to be different in the school. Pupils understand that while they are different from each other, it is important to get on well together. Prejudicial language or hurtful comments are not tolerated by anyone. Pupils trust adults to sort out bullying or disagreements when they occur.

The strong ethos of respect continues into the classroom. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers. Learning is rarely disrupted. If any poor behaviour occurs staff deal with it consistently and fairly. Adults use a range of effective support to help pupils get their behaviour back on track, so pupils do not miss out on learning.

There is a wide range of clubs, trips and experiences available for pupils of all ages and backgrounds. Younger pupils value the 'Stoke awards'. Pupils are rewarded for doing something different, like taking up new sports or visiting places like art galleries. Older pupils join different societies. They work with leaders to make the school better for everyone.

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

Leaders, with the support of the trust, have made swift and effective changes to the curriculum and culture of the school. All pupils, regardless of need, access an ambitious curriculum that covers a range of academic and technical subjects. The number of pupils taking the English Baccalaureate is growing. The academic curriculum is well supported by wider activities and experiences that promote a positive school culture where everyone gets on well with each other.

In each subject, curriculum plans outline clearly what pupils need to know. This important knowledge is laid out in a logical order, from Year 7 to Year 11. In English, for example, Year 8 pupils use what they remember from Year 7 to discuss plays like 'The Tempest' in detail. Curriculum leaders adjust the plans effectively to recover from missed learning due to the pandemic or if a pupil is new to the school.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan interesting activities that help pupils learn new knowledge. Teachers use assessment consistently well. Gaps in pupils' knowledge are spotted quickly. Teachers identify misunderstandings and then take time to go through them carefully, so pupils' knowledge is not muddled.

Leaders recognise that reading is a barrier to the curriculum for some pupils. A range of strategies are in place to support pupils who find reading tricky. Some of the support is very new and has not had time to be established. Additionally, there is still more work to do to improve opportunities for pupils to read across different

subjects. Leaders have not evaluated what works well in supporting reading across the school.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same curriculum as everyone else. Teachers make clear adaptations to their lessons, so learning is accessible for pupils with SEND. As a result, many achieve as well as their peers.

There is a high-quality personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. Pupils value these sessions, particularly as they teach them about how others are different from themselves. Pupils said that this is one of the reasons why everyone gets on so well together. PSHE supports the evident culture of mutual respect. Additionally, the PSHE sessions cover a range of other areas, for example how to build positive relationships, finance and careers. This important, independent advice and guidance prepares pupils well for their daily lives outside school.

Staff use the behaviour systems consistently and fairly. As a result, pupils behave well both in and out of class. If behavioural issues do occur, leaders take thoughtful and intelligent action to support pupils to behave in the right way. Attendance has improved. Prior to the pandemic, persistent absence had begun to improve. This improvement has now slowed. A small number of pupils are still persistently absent.

Leaders, governors and the trust have improved the school. Staff say that the pace of improvement has added to their workload. Leaders recognise this issue and have taken positive steps to address staff concerns.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff, across the school, are well-trained to spot if a pupil is at risk of harm. The school has clear processes in place to report safeguarding concerns. These processes are used well by staff and pupils alike. Detailed safeguarding records show that pupils quickly receive the support they need.

Strong links with the local authority enable the school to diligently follow up concerns about pupils who are missing from education.

Pupils are well taught about keeping themselves safe. Pupils have good knowledge about risks in their local community and know what to do if they are worried about themselves or a friend.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While leaders have prioritised support for the weakest readers, many of the systems to support these pupils have not had time to become well established. Additionally, opportunities to read across the curriculum are still very new and not embedded in all curriculum areas. Consequently, some weak readers may not always have the best support to quickly improve their reading ability. Leaders need to evaluate what is working well and adjust their reading curriculum and subject curriculums so that all weak readers are supported effectively.
- Leaders' work to improve attendance has been recently hampered by the pandemic. For some key groups, like pupils with SEND, persistent absence remains high. These pupils are missing school life. Leaders need to work closely with pupils, parents and external agencies to ensure that persistent absence reduces, and that all pupils attend school regularly.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140032
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211661
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	698
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Paul Hann
<b>Principal</b>	Andrew Robinson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stokehighoa.co.uk/">www.stokehighoa.co.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Stoke High School is a smaller-than-average secondary school.
- The school has been part of the Ormiston Academies Trust since September 2013.
- The principal joined the school in January 2019.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- A number of pupils regularly join the school mid-year.
- A very small number of pupils attend registered alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

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 carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also viewed curriculum plans in history and computer science.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors met with safeguarding leaders. They looked closely at safeguarding processes and procedures. Inspectors sampled a range of safeguarding records. They talked to governors, trust representatives, other staff and pupils about safeguarding in the school.
- Across both days, inspectors met with a wide range of pupils from different age groups to talk about their experiences of the school.
- Inspectors met with the trust's regional director and members of the local governing body.
- The lead inspector held a phone call with the local authority to discuss the school's approach to reporting children missing from education.
- Inspectors considered the 88 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 13 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the 48 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Carole Herman	Ofsted Inspector
Kathryn Herlock	Ofsted Inspector
John Mitcheson	Her Majesty's 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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022