

Inspection of SGS Forest High School

Causeway Road, Cinderford, Gloucestershire GL14 2AZ

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

The quality of education pupils receive is not good enough. Staff have low expectations of pupils, particularly pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL).

The new headteacher has the support of many parents, pupils and staff. He has made some improvements, for example with behaviour, around the school. However, there is still a long way to go. Learning is, too often, disrupted by poor behaviour. This is because pupils' needs are not always met well enough.

Pupils are keen to learn about a broader range of subjects and they want to do well. However, the organisation of the curriculum does not help pupils to know more or to remember more. Teaching does not help pupils to learn as well as they could. Therefore, pupils' knowledge across many subjects is not secure.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and most say that there is someone they can talk to if they have worries. Nonetheless, pupils are not always respectful of people who are different from themselves. Some pupils experience derogatory language used by their peers. When bullying occurs, although it is dealt with, it sometimes continues for too long.

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

The new headteacher knows where the weaknesses are and he is determined to improve the school. However, a weak leadership structure means there is limited expertise and capacity to lead improvements. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, fail to ensure that pupils receive an acceptable quality of education.

The school's curriculum is not ambitious. It is not broad or balanced. The range of subjects that pupils learn is too narrow. Pupils do not get the opportunity to learn subjects such as music, drama, or design and technology. This does not prepare pupils fully for opportunities beyond school.

Curriculum leaders do not understand what makes a strong curriculum. This means the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn is not explicit or well-sequenced. Leaders are unclear how content links back to prior learning or how it will support future learning. As a result, pupils' learning is not secure, which means they cannot move on to more complex work.

Teaching does not expect enough of pupils. Teachers do not use approaches that help pupils to learn the curriculum effectively. Therefore, pupils do not always complete their work or stall because the following steps have not been planned well. This means that pupils' experiences in lessons contribute weakly to how they learn the intended curriculum.

Assessment is not used effectively. Teaching does not routinely check what pupils know and can do. Where pupils have gaps in their learning, these go unchecked and grow over time.

The curriculum does not meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Although leaders have accurately identified the needs of pupils with SEND and have shared this information with staff, many staff do not use it. This means that staff have low expectations of such pupils. Therefore, pupils with SEND produce work of poor quality that is often incomplete. When pupils with SEND become frustrated, this sometimes leads to poor behaviour.

Staff do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons. Sometimes poor behaviour is ignored by staff, including the use of derogatory language. It is common for learning to be affected by some pupils' persistent disruption. Pupils are frustrated when poor behaviour contributes to reduced learning in lessons.

The personal development programme includes a newly structured curriculum for personal, social, and health education (PSHE). However, this is not yet fully implemented, so pupils have gaps in their knowledge. For example, they have not been taught essential content such as sex education and an understanding of diversity. Careers advice and guidance is helping pupils to select their next steps. 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 apprenticeship.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The headteacher is clear that safeguarding is a priority. Leaders ensure that necessary checks are made on newly appointed staff before they start work in school. Leaders make sure that staff know how to report concerns. Staff receive training that keeps them up to date with safeguarding practices. Teachers early in their career say they would appreciate additional support.

Leaders of safeguarding have a clear understanding of local risks. They seek advice and support from external agencies. They work closely with families to provide help when it is needed.

Leaders have recently introduced a pupil survey to help them understand pupils' school experience and check on their well-being.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders and those responsible for governance have not acted effectively to identify and tackle the failings at the school. As a result, pupils are not receiving an adequate education. The new headteacher knows where the weaknesses lie. However, he is limited by the weak leadership structure. Those responsible for governance should ensure that leadership capacity and expertise is quickly developed.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that is not ambitious enough for pupils. The curriculum structure is too narrow. This means pupils do not have the opportunity to learn a broad range of subjects. Leaders should broaden the curriculum so that pupils are better prepared for opportunities beyond school.
- Curriculum leaders do not understand what makes a strong curriculum. This means the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn is not clear or well sequenced. Pupils do not build knowledge over time in a way that helps them to remember it. Leaders need to develop curriculum expertise so that pupils achieve as well as they could.
- Sometimes pupils experience derogatory language used by their peers. They do not always feel that staff deal with this. Leaders must ensure that the behaviour policy is applied consistently across the school and that all staff instil a culture of respect and tolerance.
- The PSHE curriculum does not adequately support pupils' learning. For example, older pupils cannot recall being taught sex education. Other pupils lack an understanding of diversity. This means that pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that the PSHE curriculum has in-depth, age-appropriate opportunities to learn about relationships and sex education, diversity, tolerance and the appropriate use of language.
- Staff expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. This is particularly evident for pupils who speak EAL or pupils with SEND. Leaders have not ensured that the needs of these pupils are being met fully. Therefore, many pupils do not receive the support that they need to learn well. Leaders must make sure that teachers are better trained to meet all pupils' needs and use the information leaders provide to adapt the curriculum effectively.
- Staff do not always deal with poor behaviour in lessons successfully. This means that pupils' learning is often interrupted. Leaders need to ensure that all staff apply the behaviour policy consistently and with effect.

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	138496
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10227355
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	295
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nigel Johnson
Headteacher	Alan Dane
Website	www.foresthigh.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 July 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in January 2022.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders and representatives of the trust. Meetings were also held with class teachers and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: art, geography, modern foreign languages and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 23 free-text responses from parents. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire and staff survey.

Inspection team

Tracey Reynolds, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Teresa Hill

Ofsted Inspector

David Simons

Ofsted 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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022