

Inspection of a good school: Sir John Lemman High School

Ringsfield Road, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9PG

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 May 2022

Outcome

Sir John Lemman High School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have created a culture where pupils are celebrated as individuals. Pupils feel safe and say the school community is kind, tolerant and respectful of others. All pupils study religious studies, which helps them to discover more about the world around them. Most pupils want to learn and behave well.

There are clear routines for behaviour, and pupils meet the high expectations that leaders have for how they should behave. Pupils trust staff to sort things out if they have a problem with their friends. They say that bullying is rare. Pupils are happy and many attend well. They are grateful for the support they receive from their teachers.

Leaders offer a rich variety of sporting, social and cultural activities. All pupils have the chance to join in the school trips and clubs, which help develop their interests and widen their experiences.

Many pupils continue their studies at the school's sixth form. Students have highly positive attitudes to their learning. They are given responsibilities to lead and support activities across the school and are excellent role models for younger pupils.

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

The school curriculum is broad and well designed. Leaders offer a wide range of subjects at all key stages to encourage pupils to succeed. This includes the sixth form, where the curriculum ensures students learn what they need to be successful when they leave school.

Leaders have thought about how to order the important information pupils need to learn across year groups. Leaders work with local primary schools to ensure that pupils in year 7 build on what they have previously learned. This is the case across all subjects. Pupils have frequent opportunities to make use of what they already know and can do. For example, in science, pupils revisit subject content regularly so that by key stage 4 they

have a secure depth of understanding. This includes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders develop pupils' understanding of the wider world. At key stage 3, pupils learn Latin and some continue studying it until the sixth form. There are deliberate references to the world of work woven into other subjects, such as mathematics. Equally, pupils learn about other cultures. Pupils are positive about religious studies lessons. They say they are learning about 'how the world works' and can make links to their own experiences.

Leaders have ambition for more pupils to study the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). However, the proportion of pupils studying modern foreign languages at key stage 4 has remained quite low. All pupils in key stage 3 benefit from learning languages. Some pupils lack the confidence to continue their studies further. In response, leaders are providing more relevant opportunities for pupils to practise the languages they are learning.

Teachers use strategies and activities that help pupils to learn well. They regularly check what pupils can remember and have understood. Teachers correct misconceptions effectively as they arise.

Pupils with SEND are well supported in class. Teachers ensure that these pupils take part fully in lessons. Staff carefully adapt the learning for pupils with more complex needs, so these pupils' needs are fully met.

Leaders place great importance on reading. Time is prioritised in the curriculum for pupils to develop their knowledge. The English texts are thought-provoking and help pupils to explore such issues as being a refugee in another country. The weakest readers receive effective support to help them become better readers.

Attendance is now improving following a decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there are a number of pupils who are persistently absent. Leaders provide activities for these pupils to try and ensure they do not fall behind. More still needs to be achieved to regain these pupils' attendance and reduce persistent absenteeism. Most parents have positive views about the standards of behaviour, safety and teaching.

Leaders provide for pupils' wider development through the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) curriculum. There is a clear focus on important issues, such as careers education, health and well-being, and relationships. Students in the sixth form value the lessons they receive and feel well prepared for the next stage of education or employment. However, younger pupils say that some teachers do not explore the topics in sufficient depth to answer all their questions. Sometimes, the teaching time allocated to this learning is not implemented as leaders intend.

Staff are positive about the way that leaders consider their well-being and their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained in keeping pupils safe and they understand their responsibilities. Pupils are identified quickly and receive appropriate help. Leaders consider and provide suitable support for the most vulnerable pupils. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum helps pupils to understand national risks, such as online abuse and knife crime, and learn how to avoid them.

Pupils know that teachers will help them if they need it. They praise the support they receive for their well-being.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The PSHEE curriculum is well planned and is confidently taught in most lessons. Sixth formers enjoy their lessons. However, younger pupils have mixed experiences, especially where the intended curriculum is not given the allocated time and prioritisation. Leaders should continue to develop teachers' expertise so that all pupils secure the knowledge they need to stay safe, be healthy and feel ready for their next stages of development. Leaders should check that the curriculum is implemented as intended.
- Since the pandemic, some pupils do not attend school well enough. Leaders need to continue their drive to support these pupils to attend more often, so that pupils can make progress with their learning.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2016.

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	137055
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10200214
Type of school	Secondary
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	1451
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	250
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Chapman
Headteacher	Michael Taylor
Website	www.sirjohnleman.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 and 13 October 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Waveney Valley Academies Trust.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2016.
- The school roll is growing with a well above average number of pupils joining the school over the past three years, including in the sixth form.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school uses three providers for alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with the chief executive officer and the chair of the trust. They met with governors, the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, science, languages and religious studies as part of this inspection. Inspectors spoke with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at a range of pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils for these subjects. Inspectors looked at provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils, including single-sex groups of pupils. They also observed behaviour in lessons and during breaktime.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents, including those related to curriculum planning and development, safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, suspensions and the school's development plan. They also looked at minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors talked to staff, including some early career teachers.
- Inspectors considered the 171 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the 124 free-text comments from parents. Inspectors also considered 71 responses to the staff survey.

Kathryn Herlock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sebastian Gasse

Ofsted Inspector

Rob James

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