

# Inspection of Sir William Ramsay School

Rose Avenue, Hazlemere, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP15 7UB

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Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Sixth-form provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

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

Pupils at this school are not always protected from bullying and harassment. Sometimes pupils experience physical and verbal conflict when moving around the school site. Some pupils in key stages 3 and 4 do not report bullying as they are not confident it will be dealt with effectively. Pupils and staff told inspectors that the new headteacher has taken actions to reduce poor behaviour. However, these have not yet had a strong enough impact.

Some pupils across the school want to learn but, in key stage 3 in particular, they are not always able to do so because of disruption to lessons. Students in the sixth form are respectful and polite. They enjoy the well-resourced and cheerful common room that the school has provided for them.

The school's personal development programme does not yet ensure that all pupils show tolerance and respect for one another. As a result, some pupils use inappropriate and discriminatory language. They do not fully understand its impact on others. Leaders know that improvements are needed and are reviewing personal, social and health education (PSHE) for the new school year.

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

The curriculum is designed to ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. However, in some subjects, the planned curriculum does not always ensure that pupils know and can do more. For example, in some mathematics lessons, pupils do not know some of the key vocabulary. This means that they find it difficult to move on in their learning. In other subjects, particularly in the sixth form, pupils explain their work with confidence and accuracy. For example, in design and technology, pupils talk in depth about the process they follow to make high-quality products, such as speakers and chairs.

Where assessment is good, pupils are challenged and gaps in learning are closed. However, in some lessons misconceptions go unchallenged. Those who have lower attainment in reading are not assessed as frequently as they could be. Therefore, leaders are not certain that these pupils receive the most appropriate support to ensure that they can read fluently. The needs of some pupils with SEND are not identified swiftly. This means that they are not fully supported in accessing the curriculum as successfully as their peers. One pupil with SEND told inspectors that he wished his views were listened to more.

Pupils study a broad range of subjects in key stages 3 and 4. However, few pupils achieve the English Baccalaureate as many do not study a language. Leaders assert that this will increase in the future, although plans for how it will happen are not yet complete. Students in the sixth form undertake an appropriate programme of study and have opportunities to study a range of qualifications. They enrich their sixth-

form experiences further by completing other qualifications such as the extended project qualification, or sports leadership award.

Leaders know that behaviour, especially when moving between lessons, is not good enough. New routines and expectations for arriving on time to lessons have been introduced. However, there are still improvements to be made. Some pupils do not attend regularly enough, which means they miss out on key aspects of their education. Students in the sixth form have good attendance. They enjoy coming to school and understand the consequences of being absent.

The PSHE programme needs further development so that pupils fully understand the meaning of inclusivity. For example, some pupils do not always show respect for each other's differences. Instead, they use homophobic and racist language. Leaders have already taken steps to tackle this. For example, pupil action groups, to raise awareness and challenge discrimination, have been introduced.

There is work to do to reinstate clubs and visits, following the earlier restrictions of pandemic. However, some key stage 3 pupils take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Leaders ensure that pupils receive effective and unbiased careers advice. Pupils told inspectors that they are fully prepared for the next stage of their education and/or the workplace. Pupils with hearing impairments and physical disabilities take part in specialist physical education lessons of their choice. They enjoy school trips planned for their specific needs. For example, sporting events at Stoke Mandeville Hospital.

There has been much change to the senior leadership team in the last year. This has impacted on the school's ability to ensure that systems and expectations are fully embedded. Leaders' actions in the past have not always been effective enough to address poor behaviour and attitudes in the school. Governors and many members of staff have confidence in the new headteacher to make rapid improvements. However, recent actions taken by the new headteacher have not yet had enough impact so that all pupils can learn in a calm and safe environment.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

There is a high incidence of serious behaviour incidents. Despite recent actions taken by leaders, pupils are at risk of discrimination and physical harm. Staff are inconsistent in addressing poor behaviour when it occurs. Some pupils do not respond to staff who do act. As a result, routines and high expectations are not fully embedded, meaning pupils are not deterred from behaving poorly. Pupils, particularly in key stage 3, do not report bullying as they lack confidence in the ability of adults to stop it. Therefore, some pupils in the school remain at risk of harm.

Safeguarding records are well kept and leaders follow up on concerns swiftly. Staff, including governors, know and understand statutory guidance for safeguarding.

Leaders seek appropriate support from external agencies to ensure specialist provision is sought for the most vulnerable pupils.

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

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

- The school's personal development programme does not help pupils understand the importance of behaving in a positive and respectful way. This means that some pupils experience bullying and harassment in school. Leaders need to swiftly implement and embed their plans for improvement, so that pupils fully understand the consequences of their behaviour, and the impact it has on others.
- Expectations and behaviour strategies are not fully embedded and consistently applied by staff. Some pupils do not respond to adults who try to deal with poor behaviour. As a result, learning is disrupted in some lessons, and some pupils and staff are not safe from the impact of those who do not behave well. Leaders need to ensure that staff receive sufficient training and support to manage challenging behaviours, so that the school is a safe environment for all.
- The curriculum in some subjects is not always delivered well. As a result, pupils do not always know and remember more across all subjects. Leaders need to ensure that staff have access to the careers professional development they need to increase the quality of teaching across the school.
- Support for pupils with SEND does not always allow pupils with SEND to fully access the curriculum as they should. Leaders need to ensure that effective adaptations to resources are made so that they can experience the full curriculum in line with their peers.

## **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>	137256
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10238338
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,015
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	88
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trustees</b>	Keith Ian Deane
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christine McLintock (Executive Headteacher) Paul Ramsay (Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.swr.school">www.swr.school</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has an executive headteacher and a headteacher.
- The school is a single academy trust.
- The school has a resource provision for pupils with hearing impairment or physical disabilities.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 11 with information about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses a range of alternative provision from a registered alternative provider.

## Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team completed deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics, geography, design and technology, and science. To do this, they met with subject leaders, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited a range of sixth form lessons, including vocational subjects.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, a selection of subject leaders, teachers, and support staff.
- Inspectors met with the local authority school improvement partner. They also met with trustees, including the chair of the trust.
- The inspection team reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records and through discussions with staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents, and staff were considered through discussions and a review of Ofsted's surveys.

## Inspection team

Zoë Harris, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Nick Simmonds	Ofsted Inspector
Michelle Lower	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tom Neave	Ofsted Inspector

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