

Inspection of Gospel Oak School

Bilston Road, Gospel Oak, Tipton, West Midlands DY4 0BZ

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Sixth-form provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

A significant minority of pupils do not meet leaders' expectations of behaviour. Staff do not manage behaviour consistently well. Pupils' learning is often disrupted in lessons. Some behaviour around the school site is poor. This leads to a chaotic atmosphere, particularly at breaktimes.

Some pupils use discriminatory language. Staff do challenge pupils, but this does not always lead to a change in their behaviour. Pupils can be disrespectful towards each other. Bullying is not common. Pupils learn about different types of bullying and what they need to do if this happens.

Some pupils report that they feel scared in certain areas of the school. Stairwells are very busy and some pupils give little thought to others. For example, they run and push in crowded areas and are overly physical with each other.

Some, but not all, pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum that includes opportunities to promote their wider personal development. They are able to learn a range of relevant subjects. In addition, pupils can take part in lots of extra activities. Many pupils participate in sport. Some also engage in Combined Cadet Force and work towards the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. However, pupils' experiences of school life are affected by the poor behaviour of some of their peers.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Leaders have ensured that pupils study a wide range of subjects in key stage 3. At key stage 4, pupils can choose from relevant vocational and academic options.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They know the key knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn. They regularly prompt pupils to recall previous learning before moving on to new things. This helps them to develop secure understanding over time. However, assessment is not as effective as it could be. Leaders ask teachers to regularly check pupils' work. This happens in some subjects, but it is not consistent across the school. Currently, some pupils have work missing from their books. This is not always noticed by teachers and leads to some gaps in what pupils know.

The sixth-form curriculum is relevant and appropriate. Students can choose from a wide variety of subjects. They concentrate well in lessons. When planning their next steps after they leave school, students benefit from strong support from leaders. However, a substantial minority of students in the sixth form do not complete their courses. Additionally, too many students do not attend school often enough. Indeed, across the school, too many pupils are persistently absent.

Leaders have identified that not all pupils have the reading skills they need to succeed. In response, they have introduced reading lessons to the key stage 3

curriculum. The school provides relevant, interesting texts and pupils are expected to read regularly. This is helping to improve their ability to read across the curriculum.

Misbehaviour in lessons is common. Teachers frequently have to challenge disruption. This slows learning for all pupils. Some pupils are openly defiant and do not follow teachers' instructions. The school's behaviour management approach does not work effectively. Too many pupils continue to behave poorly even when challenged by staff.

Some pupils say they do not report issues such as foul language or discriminatory behaviour and sexual harassment. Instead, they try to resolve problems by themselves because they say that leaders do not tackle the issues effectively.

The number of pupils suspended from school is high. Leaders do not ensure that these pupils have appropriate work to do when they are not attending school. Pupils fall behind and lose valuable learning time.

Many pupils are late to lessons. They wander around the corridors and require staff's guidance to get to the right place. Their late arrival to lessons disrupts the learning of other pupils.

Leaders identify the specific needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, some pupils with SEND do not receive the help they need to be able to follow the curriculum. For example, teachers do not adapt the way they teach to meet specific needs. Leaders do not check that pupils with SEND are being adequately supported. Those with an education, health and care plan do not consistently receive the support they need.

The school provides a range of extra opportunities for pupils. Pupils learn about fundamental British values. Pupils recognise that this knowledge is useful for them. However, a significant minority of pupils' behaviour and conduct does not reflect the school's values.

The careers programme is well planned. Pupils and students undertake work experience and learn about future careers opportunities.

Leaders understand the significant issues facing the school. They have set clear improvement priorities. However, they have not successfully tackled the behavioural problems. This hampers pupils' learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

When pupils are in school, too many report that they feel scared and unsafe. Some girls also report that they suffer from sexual harassment. Leaders have not done

enough to ensure everyone understands the importance of respectful behaviour. Consequently, poor behaviour leaves some pupils feeling unsafe in school.

Leaders have given careful thought to significant risks in the local community. Pupils are taught how to keep safe and how they can avoid harm. For example, they have recently learned about gang culture and county lines.

The record of employment checks is accurate and comprehensive. Leaders ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children.

Staff receive regular training. They know how to report issues that concern them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders and teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour well. There are too many instances of poor behaviour in lessons. Pupils' conduct around the school site is frequently unacceptable. As a result, some pupils feel unsafe. Learning is also disrupted. Leaders should ensure that all staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour so that pupils feel safe and can learn in lessons and that behaviour around the school site is calm.
- Pupils lack confidence in the ability of teachers and leaders to respond to their concerns about foul and discriminatory language. Pupils feel they either have to ignore the issue or seek to resolve problems on their own. Leaders should ensure that effective systems and structures are in place for pupils to report their concerns. Leaders should take swift and effective action to deal with unacceptable language and discriminatory behaviour.
- Pupils with SEND are not consistently given the support they need by teachers to help them learn the curriculum. This means they do not make sufficient progress. School leaders should support all teachers to ensure that these pupils have their specific needs met.
- Too many pupils are absent from school. This means that they miss out on vital education and there is disruption to their learning. Leaders should ensure that all pupils, particularly those with SEND, attend school regularly and are punctual to lessons.

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.

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	135599
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10227016
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
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	1244
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	73
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Acting chair of governing body	Simon Foley
Principal	Helen Tanner
Website	https://gospeloakschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 July 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has been part of the Central Region Schools Trust since 2017.
- The principal took up the permanent post in May 2021, having previously been the acting principal.
- 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.
- The school uses six registered alternative providers for a small number of its pupils and one unregistered provider.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His 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 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, geography, art, health and social care. For each of these subjects, inspectors met with subject leaders, carried out visits to lessons, spoke to pupils and considered their work.
- Inspectors met with members of staff with different roles in the school. They also spoke to pupils formally and informally.
- Inspectors considered the responses of staff, pupils and parents who completed Ofsted's surveys.
- Inspectors held discussions with the principal, other leaders, the chief executive officer of the trust, trustees and members of the local governing body.
- Records relating to bullying, behaviour, attendance, punctuality and safeguarding were scrutinised.
- An inspector visited the school's 're-focus' room and discussed with pupils why they were there and what they were learning.
- Inspectors observed pupils' arrival and departure from school, tutor time, breaktimes and lunchtimes.

Inspection team

Thomas Walton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Feldman	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Smith	Ofsted Inspector
Sultanat Yunus	His Majesty's Inspector
John Parr	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