

Inspection of Idsall School

Coppice Green Lane, Shifnal, Shropshire TF11 8PD

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Sixth-form provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Too many pupils do not feel safe at Idsall School. Some say that they experience frequent sexual harassment or discriminatory behaviour from their peers. They are not confident that teachers will deal with their concerns, so they do not report the incidents that occur.

Leaders have not made sure that all teachers have had the training they require to be able to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly in key stage 3. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not receive the help that they need in lessons. These pupils also receive a high number of suspensions, and leaders have not done enough to find out why this happens. Pupils who cannot read well when they join the school do not receive the help they need to improve.

Students in the sixth form benefit from a broad curriculum. As well as A-level subjects, some students study technical qualifications in construction in the 'Skills Centre'. Leaders have made sure that students have a range of experiences outside their lessons, including work experience and the extended project qualification. Students value these opportunities.

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

When the headteacher was appointed in 2019, she identified aspects of the school's work that needed to improve. However, changes have not been put in place quickly enough. In some cases, leaders' plans have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, overall, senior leaders have not made sure that all staff have the skills and knowledge that they need to perform their roles effectively.

Leaders do not check sufficiently well the impact of their own work. This means that they do not identify what is not working well enough to help them decide what they should do next. Governors understand their responsibilities. However, they rely too much on the information that leaders give them and have not taken the right steps to verify this information. As a result, they have not always made sure that appropriate actions have been taken to improve the performance of the school.

Pupils say that they have to tolerate frequent sexual harassment and discriminatory behaviour. Leaders have not recognised these issues and so have not taken action to tackle them. Pupils learn about healthy relationships in weekly 'ID' lessons. However, the curriculum is not planned well enough and teachers are not trained to teach its important content. Students in the sixth form say that what they learn is not age-appropriate, so does not meet their needs.

Leaders have begun to review the curriculum. Subject leaders have useful information to help them to plan pupils' learning well. However, at key stage 3, the curriculum is not planned effectively and pupils do not benefit from well-sequenced series of lessons. This prevents them from building their learning over time. At key

stage 4 and in the sixth form, leaders have planned the curriculum more effectively. Students in the sixth form enjoy their lessons and engage well with learning. As a result, they do well.

Leaders have only just begun to pay attention to pupils who do not read sufficiently well. They have identified pupils who need help with their reading but they have not yet put support in place to make sure that these pupils become confident readers. Leaders have not made sure that teachers have the training they need in SEND. As a result, teachers do not support pupils with SEND well enough in lessons. This limits the progress that these pupils make.

Leaders have introduced a new behaviour system. Pupils are positive about this. Most teachers manage behaviour in lessons well, although there are times when pupils' learning is disrupted. Leaders give help to some pupils who misbehave, to try to improve their behaviour. However, too often this help is not based on any analysis, so is not targeted well enough to have sufficient impact. Students in the sixth form show good attitudes to their studies. They work hard and are good role models for younger pupils.

Careers education is well planned and delivered. Pupils in key stage 4 and students in the sixth form receive independent careers advice. Leaders have established useful links with universities, employers and apprenticeships. Pupils value the information that they receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Pupils are not kept safe from sexual harassment. Too many pupils say that they do not feel safe in school and leaders are not aware of this. Leaders have not been vigilant about recording pre-employment checks accurately on the single central record. In addition, leaders do not monitor or check the records well enough to make sure the right information is in place. As a result, there are omissions in the recording of statutory information.

Safeguarding leaders work well with other agencies to identify the pupils who may be at risk of harm and to secure the help that they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils report that sexual harassment occurs frequently in school. They do not report it when it happens as they say they are not confident that teachers will deal with it effectively. This means that pupils do not feel safe in school. Leaders should ensure that they develop an appropriate curriculum and implement effective policies and practices to address sexual harassment between pupils.

- Leaders do not have a systematic approach to ensuring that all pre-recruitment checks are conducted. There are gaps and omissions in the information that is recorded. This makes it difficult for leaders to assure themselves that the right checks have been completed on the right members of staff. Leaders should make sure that they implement clear systems to monitor that all checks have taken place.
- The curriculum is not clearly planned and sequenced, especially at key stage 3. This means that pupils are not taught the important knowledge they need to remember and so they cannot make useful links in their learning. Leaders should make sure that all subjects are well planned and sequenced.
- Pupils with SEND do not experience a good enough education. Teachers do not adapt learning to meet the needs of pupils with SEND and these pupils receive frequent sanctions and suspensions. Leaders should improve the provision for pupils with SEND by accurately identifying their needs, ensuring that teachers know how best to support them in lessons, and implementing appropriate strategies to help them to improve their behaviour when needed.
- Some pupils are not able to read fluently. Leaders have not made sure that these pupils receive the help they need to learn to read well. This hampers their ability to make good progress in their different subjects. Leaders should make sure that appropriate provision is put in place so that pupils at the early stages of reading learn to read fluently and are able to access the curriculum fully.
- Leaders do not systematically monitor and evaluate all aspects of their work. This means that they are not able to spot useful trends that would help them to make changes to their plans, and that those responsible for governance do not receive the accurate information that they need. Leaders should develop thorough systems to check all aspects of their work.

Having considered the evidence, we strongly recommend that leaders and those responsible for governance do not seek to appoint early career teachers.

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	140922
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10242006
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	1331
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	216
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Robert Peters
Headteacher	Michelle King
Website	http://www.idsallschool.org/
Date of previous inspection	7 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in September 2019.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause and provides pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His 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.

- 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other senior and middle leaders, including curriculum and pastoral leaders.
- Inspectors held discussions with teachers and with some governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, history, geography and languages. For each of these subjects, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with members of staff individually and in groups and spoke to pupils at various points during the inspection. Inspectors took account of responses to pupil and staff surveys, as well as Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at records relating to behaviour, bullying, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking the school's approach to staff recruitment, scrutinising policy documents and meeting with the designated safeguarding lead.

Inspection team

Claire Price, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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