

# Inspection of a good school: Pershore High School

Station Road, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 2BX

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Inspection dates:

2 and 3 November 2022

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pershore High is an inclusive and friendly school. Overall, pupils are happy at the school; they say that they feel safe. They told inspectors that if bullying happens, it is quickly dealt with by adults. Pupils say that teachers care about them and want them to do well.

Most pupils are proud of their school and display positive attitudes. The sixth formers are excellent ambassadors for the school. However, these positive attitudes are not shared by all pupils. A significant minority of pupils demonstrate disrespectful behaviour and disrupt some lessons.

Leaders want the very best for pupils at this school. The school's motto of 'proud of our history, confident in our future' is taken seriously. The curriculum is broad. There is a wide range of academic and vocational subjects available for pupils to study at GCSE level and in the sixth form.

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal and wider development. They ensure that learning extends beyond the classroom. Leaders invite professionals from different industries into school to give pupils, including those in the sixth form, an insight into different careers. There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in extra-curricular clubs, such as debating, cookery and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum that they want pupils to learn in most subjects. Staff are increasingly working with local primary schools to make sure that the curriculum builds on what pupils already know. However, in some subjects, such as English, leaders have not thought carefully enough about what they want pupils to know,

do and understand. This means that pupils are not always able to make links with their prior learning to help them move forward.

Leaders are aware that the numbers of pupils entered for the English Baccalaureate range of qualifications is too low. To address this, they are increasing the number of pupils studying a modern foreign language. Leaders have introduced Spanish into the curriculum to broaden pupils' choices.

In some subjects, leaders use assessment more effectively than others. When assessment is used well, teachers build a clear picture of where pupils may need more help. They re-evaluate the sequence of learning and make changes to help pupils know more and remember more.

Leaders know that reading is important, and they promote reading within lessons and form time. They have appointed a new librarian to continue to develop this important area of work.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in the life of the school. Leaders provide teachers with detailed plans and information about pupils' needs, including appropriate strategies to use to support them. However, subject leaders and teachers do not routinely use their subject expertise well enough when planning support for pupils with SEND. This means that pupils with SEND are not always able to make the progress of which they are capable.

Leaders have recognised that the behaviour of some pupils, particularly since the pandemic, is not as good as it should be. While the majority of pupils are polite and courteous, a significant minority of pupils display disrespectful attitudes and disrupt the learning of others in some lessons. Some teachers do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently, and this allows pockets of poor behaviour to persist. Leaders have recently introduced a new behaviour policy to address this, but it is still in its infancy.

There is a well-designed and thoughtful curriculum for personal, social and health education. Pupils learn about the importance of tolerance and respect, healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe online. Important topics are taught through assemblies, tutor time and dedicated lessons. Pupils can talk confidently about the steps the school takes to help them to be ready for life beyond school.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils, including those in the sixth form, to think about their future careers and pathways. Since the pandemic, more visitors are coming into school to give pupils advice on their next steps in education or employment and training. For example, a careers fair is planned with over thirty representatives from a variety of industries.

Governors discharge their duties effectively. They hold leaders to account and know the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors consider the views of staff on key issues, such as their workload and well-being. Staff report that they feel very well supported by leaders and that they are listened to.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders carry out their safeguarding responsibilities diligently. They understand the local risks to pupils' safety, such as an increase in anti-social behaviour. Leaders work hard with the community and the local police to help reduce these risks. They engage a range of services to support families. Leaders provide regular training to staff to increase their awareness of safeguarding issues.

Pupils feel safe in school. They can identify an adult they feel comfortable reporting a concern to. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online.

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

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

- In some subjects, leaders have not thought carefully enough about the order in which certain topics are taught. This means pupils struggle to make connections in their learning. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is consistently well sequenced to help pupils remember more of their learning over time.
- Teachers do not use the information they receive about pupils with SEND consistently well. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not know or remember key parts of the curriculum as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in each subject effectively meets the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Some pupils do not behave well in lessons and around the school site. Poor behaviour is not managed consistently well. As a result, some pupils find it difficult to learn in some lessons. Leaders need to ensure that policies, including the new behaviour policy, are applied consistently to improve pupils' behaviour.

## 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2017.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136925
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240927
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<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>	1192
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	185
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Nick Young
<b>Headteacher</b>	Phil Hanson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.pershore.worcs.sch.uk">www.pershore.worcs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Avonreach Academy Trust, a multi-academy trust.
- The school uses five registered alternative education providers for a small number of secondary-age pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with a selection of governors, including the chair of the local governing body, and held a telephone call with the chief executive officer of the trust. Inspectors also met with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, middle leaders and a range of other staff.

- Inspectors evaluated the quality of education by looking closely at the following subjects: English, mathematics, science and history. Here, inspectors met with the curriculum leaders for each subject, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally, to discuss their views on behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. Inspectors looked at the school's policies relating to safeguarding, met the designated safeguarding lead and the governor responsible for safeguarding.
- Inspectors looked at other information about behaviour, attendance and extra-curricular activities that support pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors considered the 114 responses to Ofsted pupils' survey and 75 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff. Inspectors also considered the views of 88 parents in their responses to the online survey Ofsted Parent View, as well as the 46 free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

Neil Warner, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Steer	Ofsted Inspector
Ant Edkins	Ofsted Inspector

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