

# Inspection of a good school: Poole High School

Wimborne Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 2BW

---

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 September 2022

## **Outcome**

Poole High School continues to be a good school.

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

Leaders have high expectations of pupils. They expect pupils to be committed to their education and behave well. Pupils consistently rise to these expectations. Parents speak positively of the education and care their children receive. They are grateful for leaders' high expectations.

Pupils are happy and safe. When bullying occurs, the school takes swift and effective action. However, a small minority of pupils are not confident to raise concerns about themselves or others or to talk about things that worry them.

Pupils enjoy their learning and are proud of the work they produce. They are motivated to learn the ambitious curriculum which leaders have planned. The absence of low-level disruption makes a strong contribution to effective teaching across the curriculum. Pupils receive effective careers information, advice and guidance. This, too, develops pupils' motivation and aspirations for the future.

Staff provide an extensive extra-curricular programme. For example, pupils can learn about journalism and robotics, improve their rock-climbing skills or play in a jazz band. Pupils and parents appreciate the wide range of opportunities available.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. A high proportion of key stage 4 pupils study the suite of subjects known as the English Baccalaureate. In the sixth form, leaders have constructed ambitious programmes of study. These are relevant to local and regional employment and training opportunities. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the future.

Leaders have sequenced meticulously the curriculum that pupils learn. Effective teaching enables pupils to learn this curriculum successfully. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those pupils who are disadvantaged.

Leaders provide useful information for teachers about pupils with SEND. This supports teachers to meet pupils' needs effectively.

Teachers are subject experts. Teaching presents information clearly and pupils readily engage in discussion. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of the most important ideas and vocabulary and rehearse this in speech and in writing. As a result, pupils embed detailed subject knowledge and use it fluently. Leaders ensure assessment is used purposefully to correct misconceptions and inform future planning.

Leaders have constructed a professional development programme which is grounded in educational research. This ensures that teachers continuously enhance their subject knowledge and reflect on how best to teach the curriculum. Leaders have provided training on how to help pupils to read fluently and accurately. However, the curriculum for pupils in the early stages of reading is not focused enough on building phonic knowledge. A new programme is in place to support weaker readers, but it is not currently as effective as it could be.

The curriculum helps pupils to learn about important issues in society. Pupils learn about the importance of respecting people from other backgrounds and treating people equally. They learn how to engage with views, beliefs and opinions that are different from their own. Pupils discuss and debate these ideas in a considered way.

Pupils receive a high-quality careers education programme. Leaders engage with a wide range of education and training providers and employers. This means they can tailor experiences to pupils' needs and interests. Pupils, including sixth-form students, take part in meaningful work experience opportunities. The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Leaders manage staff workload diligently and staff feel that leaders support their well-being. Governors, in turn, support the well-being of leaders. Governors ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties and that resources are well managed. However, governors do not always ensure that leaders are sufficiently challenged.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make timely referrals to safeguarding partners. Leaders work with external agencies to secure the help children need. Leaders escalate their concerns if children do not receive the right support quickly enough.

Leaders have put in place a curriculum to develop pupils' understanding of safeguarding risks. Pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of keeping themselves and others safe. For example, pupils learn about the risks associated with mobile technology and social media.

Leaders are raising pupils' awareness of sexual harassment, sexual abuse and sexual violence. Leaders encourage pupils to report concerns about themselves or others.

Leaders make effective arrangements for the safe recruitment of adults working in the school.

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

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

- The curriculum for pupils in the early stages of reading is not focused enough on building phonic knowledge. As a result, some pupils do not learn to read accurately and fluently as quickly as they could. Leaders should ensure an effective reading curriculum is in place to support pupils in the early stages of reading.
- Governors do not always provide robust enough challenge to leaders. They are sometimes too reliant on what leaders tell them. Governors should ensure that they provide an appropriate balance of support and challenge to fulfil their roles more effectively.

## **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 November 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.

## **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>	113907
<b>Local authority</b>	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211037
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<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>	1,895
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	280
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jeff Hart
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Gray
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.poolehigh.co.uk">www.poolehigh.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	23 – 24 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provider and one unregistered provider.
- 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.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 held discussions with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, curriculum leaders and members of the governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, history and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record of adults working in the school. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and examined the school's safeguarding records. Inspectors also spoke with a range of pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- The lead inspector met representatives from the local authority about the alternative provision used by the school. The lead inspector also spoke to an alternative provider used by the school.

### **Inspection team**

James Oldham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jenny Maraspin

Ofsted Inspector

Colin Logan

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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022