

Inspection of a good school: Ringwood School Academy

Parsonage Barn Lane, Ringwood, Hampshire BH24 1SE

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 November 2022

Outcome

Ringwood School Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders at Ringwood School Academy provide a high quality of education for all. Pupils are at the centre of the school's vision. They are 'inspired to learn' and 'supported to succeed'. Pupils who have special educational needs/and or disabilities (SEND) access the curriculum with the appropriate support. High standards and expectations and strong relationships with teachers enable all pupils to achieve well. Many stay on to the sixth form. They are joined by pupils from other schools, who recognise the broad subject choice, knowledgeable teaching and positive examination results.

Pupils are proud of their house system through which they take on ambassador roles and support younger pupils. They like the way that leaders listen to their views and enhance facilities and opportunities as a result. The diverse sporting, artistic and dramatic opportunities develop pupils' confidence and enrich their overall learning experiences.

Pupils are happy and feel safe. Behaviour is good and pupils are respectful and supportive of each other. The school takes bullying seriously. However, some pupils, parents and carers feel that it is not always dealt with effectively.

Overall, this is a happy school. As one parent said, 'Ringwood School is a fantastic school, my children are thriving and progressing significantly academically and socially.'

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

The curriculum is a strength of the school. It is ambitious, inclusive, broad and balanced, offering a wide choice of subjects at key stages 4 and 5. Leaders have created a curriculum that is well sequenced, builds pupils' knowledge and skills and creates a strong foundation for examination courses and future learning. Pupils enjoy lessons and like the way that teachers use examples that are relevant and challenge pupils' thinking. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are proud to explain their learning and can see how they are securing their knowledge.

Staff are consistent in their use of routine assessment. This contributes well to pupils' learning. Teachers skilfully use recall tasks that allow them to provide instant advice to help pupils as needed. Teachers also use assessment to inform their future planning and to make sure that any gaps or misconceptions are addressed quickly. Teachers know how to identify pupils' needs quickly. They make effective use of information provided about pupils with SEND. The needs of these pupils are met well in and out of class. They, along with their peers, make good progress through the planned curriculum and attain well in external examinations. Leaders are addressing the small number of pupils whose lower attendance is hindering their progress.

Leaders have high ambition to create a love of reading across the school. They support pupils who struggle with reading although this has not yet had the desired impact, particularly with a small group of disadvantaged pupils. The new approach to further develop reading, literacy and oracy across the curriculum is in its infancy.

Students in the sixth form perform very well. The sixth-form students speak highly of the subject choice and the high-quality teaching and learning they receive. Sixth-form students appreciate the individual tuition and quality careers advice that they receive. Leaders ensure that each student is supported well to progress to their next step, be it university, apprenticeship or employment. Leaders make sure that students can use their learning from their extended project to help them to speak with confidence at interviews. Students appreciate this aspect of their wider learning programme.

Pupils across the school recognise the strength of the careers programme and the way in which teachers refer to different career paths within lessons. The successful careers fair gives pupils and parents comprehensive information about different pathways, including technical and vocational options alongside inputs from local business and the armed forces.

Leaders and teachers are enthusiastic and committed to enrich pupils' learning with many diverse and cultural extra-curricular opportunities, including trips abroad. These opportunities enhance pupils' social and cultural development very well. They help pupils to learn about wider British society and to develop an understanding of the world outside their own experience. Pupils relish the many opportunities they have to research and debate current issues.

Leaders, including governors, consider staff workload carefully. There is a collaborative ethos and staff recognise that they are also responsible. There is a strong team ethos which provides effective support. Staff appreciate the ways leaders consult them, for example, when making changes to the timetable that have lessened workload. Staff are positive about the school, enjoy their work and are grateful for the well-being support and counselling available. New staff and early career teachers speak highly of the support they receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a strong ethos for safeguarding. The systems and clear lines of leadership and management ensure that pupils receive support and help that enables them to be safe. Staff listen carefully to pupils' concerns. Staff liaise well with local authorities across three county boundaries to secure appropriate support for pupils and their families.

The expanded safeguarding team supports and raises awareness among the wider pupil population as to the risks that pupils may encounter. This includes cyber-safety, bullying, child-on-child abuse and sexual violence and harm. Leaders manage staff recruitment and any safeguarding concerns effectively, following statutory guidance closely.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A minority of pupils and parents do not think that bullying is dealt with properly. This weakens the confidence that these stakeholders have in the work of staff. Leaders must ensure that they communicate fully and effectively so that all pupils and parents are confident that any worry is addressed appropriately and successfully.
- Leaders' work to support all pupils to develop strong reading skills is not yet fully embedded. A small group of pupils are hampered by their poor reading knowledge and fluency. Leaders should ensure that their new approach to promoting pupils' literacy and oracy is implemented as they intend and embedded fully.

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 March 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

Unique reference number	136657
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10226947
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	1,561
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	270
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tim Williamson
Headteacher	Leanne Symonds
Website	www.ringwood.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently uses two registered alternative providers.
- 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 spoke to the headteacher, other senior leaders, a wide range of staff, governors, the school improvement partner and alternative providers.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: science, geography, mathematics, modern foreign languages and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils about the learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. This included lessons in the sixth form. They also looked at leaders' work to promote reading and oracy across the school.
- Inspectors looked at the results from the parent, student and staff surveys. They spoke to pupils and staff in formal groups and around the school.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke to the designated safeguarding lead and staff and looked at the single central register and the school's website.

Inspection team

Julie Summerfield, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Eliot Hodges	Ofsted Inspector
Neil Strowger	Ofsted Inspector

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