

Inspection of an outstanding school: Sir Henry Floyd Grammar School

Oxford Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP21 8PE

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding 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. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a very happy and welcoming school. The 'Floydian Scholar' values permeate every aspect of school life and unite the community. Pupils embody these in their conduct. Behaviour is excellent and relationships are respectful. Bullying occasionally happens but staff deal with it swiftly and effectively. Pupils feel safe in school. Staff enjoy working at the school. Parents and carers feel that their children flourish, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils feel supported and encouraged to be the best they can be. Many older pupils value what the school has done for them. They enthusiastically 'give back' by leading activities and supporting others.

Leaders have a broad vision for what they want pupils to experience at school. Leaders are aspirational for pupils academically and personally. Pupils achieve very well in public examinations. Leaders also offer an extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities so that pupils can leave the school as well-rounded and confident young adults. Leaders are determined that the programme of activities be inclusive. They constantly review it with pupils, so that there is something on offer for everyone. Pupils can explore and discover different interests and talents, both at home and abroad.

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

Leaders' ambition is that pupils succeed in the subjects they take. Leaders also want the curriculum to do more than merely prepare pupils for examinations. For example, staff have used their collective expertise to review diversity in the curriculum, develop the use of technology to enhance learning and to establish a coherent reading strategy. As part of this strategy, any pupils who need additional help with reading receive targeted support. This is based on a careful analysis of their individual needs.

Leaders have thoughtfully sequenced what pupils must learn and remember in each subject. Subject teams work collaboratively to ensure that new learning is presented

clearly. Teachers select appropriate activities so that pupils can practise applying their learning. They regularly check pupils' understanding before moving on. Pupils value the regular feedback they receive. They can remember and apply what they have learned with increasing confidence. Staff are equally ambitious for all pupils. Pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as their peers. Teaching is adapted thoughtfully based on clear information about pupils' needs. Pupils, including those with SEND, produce work of a good quality. If necessary, pupils receive a more personalised approach, either in school or through external partners.

However, senior leaders have not looked closely enough at the effectiveness of the curriculum in terms of breadth or quality of academic learning. Consequently, some pupils could achieve even more. At key stage 4, leaders' expectations for what pupils are capable of studying are not as high as they could be. The range of subjects on offer could be wider. Also, too many pupils can choose to take only one science or no modern foreign language to GCSE. Trust and school leaders recognise this and are taking steps to address it.

Leaders are highly ambitious for pupils' wider development. Pupils have contributed to the programme's content and design. They value it highly. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is very well sequenced from Years 7 to 13. Leaders have worked proactively with external organisations to enhance the delivery of themes such as racism and harmful sexual behaviour. Pupils enjoy the discussion and debate in class. They refer to lessons as 'safe spaces' for discussion. This approach to PSHE, along with the school's values and consistent behaviour systems, means that staff and pupils share high and clear expectations for behaviour and relationships. Behaviour in lessons and outside is excellent. Pupils are respectful and polite. Staff tackle any poor behaviour fairly. Where pupils occasionally need more help to meet expectations, staff provide effective support.

There is a comprehensive careers education programme starting in Year 7. Pupils are very well prepared for the future. Most sixth-form students progress to university courses or apprenticeships of their choice. Leaders successfully ensure that disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are aspirational. They have equal access to all parts of the programme, including work experience.

Staff are exceptionally proud to work at this school. They recognise that school and trust leaders have taken practical steps to reduce workload and establish a collaborative and respectful working environment. Staff appreciate the professional development and leadership programmes provided.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and those responsible for governance take safeguarding very seriously and ensure that it has a high profile in school. They have instilled a strong culture of vigilance supported by effective policies and procedures. The designated safeguarding leader ensures that all staff receive comprehensive training. She provides strong direction and

regular updates. As a result, staff take swift and appropriate action if they have any concerns about pupils. Record-keeping is thorough. The wider safeguarding team works tenaciously to secure support for vulnerable pupils. Consequently, pupils feel safe in school and parents also confirm this.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are not ambitious enough for pupils at key stage 4. The range of courses that pupils are expected to take is too limited. As a result, the portfolio of subjects secured at the end of Year 11 is not as ambitious as it could be. Leaders should embed their plans to ensure that pupils take a broader range of subjects in key stage 4, particularly subjects included in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc).

Background

When we have judged outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 outstanding in January 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

Unique reference number	136845
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10227052
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
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	1362
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	437
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gaynor Bull
Headteacher	Jeanette Cochrane
Website	www.sirhenryfloyd.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 and 3 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Insignis Academy Trust.
- 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 11 with information about approved technical educational 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 carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, science, modern foreign languages and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the

curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation, including governor minutes, policies and records for behaviour management, attendance and bullying. Inspectors also reviewed documents related to the alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils at different times during the school day, including form time, assemblies and breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of pupils from different year groups and considered their responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND. During the lessons visited, they looked at the support these pupils were receiving.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the confidential staff survey. They took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Mary Davies, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jason Philipsz

Ofsted Inspector

Ed Mather

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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