

Inspection of an outstanding school: Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School, Horsham

Comptons Lane, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 5NW

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 May 2023

Outcome

Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School, Horsham continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is a very special place. Staff care deeply for the pupils here, all of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Every pupil is treated as an individual whose talents and needs are well understood. There are high expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning. Staff use a range of effective strategies to help pupils so that their learning is successful. Pupils do not worry about bullying because it is not something that happens. They understand what bullying is and know who to talk to if it were to happen.

Pupils are rightly very proud of their school. They oozed positivity when they told inspectors about their experiences. One student in the sixth form told the lead inspector, 'It's like a family here.' Similarly, parents and carers who met inspectors spoke highly of the difference the school has made to the lives of their children. One parent, echoing the views of many and confirming what inspectors found, commented, 'The school has been absolutely amazing in supporting my child with complex needs. He has taken part in so many activities I never thought I would see him do.'

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

The curriculum is constantly evolving. Staff carefully design learning that suits pupils' individual needs. This is not straightforward. The school caters for pupils from Nursery through to the sixth form. Every pupil needs something unique. Staff strike a very delicate balance between teaching a range of topics while also addressing the specific needs of pupils as outlined in their education, health and care (EHC) plans. Pupils also receive therapy and interventions. During the inspection, some pupils were being supported to develop movement and coordination skills by riding Rocky and Taffy, two visiting donkeys.

Importantly, when pupils arrive at the school, staff check what they already know and can do. They use this information to make important decisions about what pupils need to

learn and when. They break learning down into small steps, which helps pupils to grasp and remember it. Pupils get lots of practice so that what they learn sticks in their memories.

Staff work hard to make learning fun and exciting. They organise activities that help pupils to experience success. In lessons, pupils are motivated and engaged. In a sixth-form personal, social, health and economic lesson, students worked collaboratively in small groups to discuss scenarios about worries others might have when joining the school. They came up with excellent advice for each one and shared their thinking with the rest of the class.

In some lessons, a small minority of pupils find it more difficult to stay calm and focused. They are supported well by staff who use a plethora of strategies to help them. While staff are well trained, they constantly strive to develop their practice. Some of them are keen to up-skill and receive even more training and support to respond to pupils' challenging behaviour.

Pupils make considerable progress with reading. The passion staff have for reading rubs off on pupils. Many of them are excited about reading. One child in Nursery confidently approached the lead inspector carrying a storybook. She went on to ask him to sit and read the book to her. Staff teach phonics from the very start. Pupils continue to hone their phonics knowledge as they move through the school. They learn the different sounds and how to blend them together. This takes lots of practice, but pupils persevere.

Pupils learn to understand the world around them and are prepared well for adulthood. Staff have developed excellent partnerships with local companies. As a result, some pupils take part in work experience. Pupils explore different jobs from an early age. For example, children in Reception meet police officers and fire fighters to find out about these professions. An effective careers programme prepares pupils for the future. By the time pupils leave, they achieve accreditation of some type and move on to their next steps.

Staff invest time and energy into making sure that pupils have as many opportunities as possible. They actively remove barriers facing pupils. There is no shortage of events that help to develop pupils. For example, pupils regularly go on trips, including to Chessington theme park and to the theatre in the West End. Some pupils are involved in revamping the local train station in readiness to display their artwork for all to see. The lead inspector was particularly impressed by pupils who showcased song and dance to commemorate the coronation of King Charles III.

The well-being and workload of staff are taken seriously. Staff are overall positive about their workload. However, leaders actively want to reduce the pressures on classroom support assistants and have plans in place to achieve this. Staff have a 'guardian angel', another member of staff who looks out for them and does something nice for them every so often.

Governors and the local authority understand the school's strengths and priorities. They support the school well so that it never stands still and constantly evolves to meet the needs of the pupils it serves.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Keeping everyone safe is a priority. Staff all undergo the required checks to make sure they are suitable to work here. Pupils are particularly vulnerable because of their needs. Staff are trained well and have a comprehensive understanding of the signs they need to look out for that could suggest a pupil needs help or protection. The designated safeguarding lead provides staff with regular updates about important safeguarding topics. Staff share concerns quickly with safeguarding leaders, who take swift, effective action to ensure pupils are kept safe. The curriculum ensures that pupils are taught about risk and staying safe.

Background

When we have judged a school to be 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 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

Unique reference number	126160
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10256557
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	130
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	22
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah Garwood
Headteacher	Helen Elphick
Website	www.queenelizabeth2.w-sussex.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 October 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School is an all-through community special school. It provides education for pupils who have severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties, or complex needs. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The headteacher was the deputy headteacher at the time of the last inspection and has since been promoted.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held a wide range of meetings with the headteacher, other leaders, and teaching and support staff in the school. The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and two other governors. He also held a discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, dance and drama and personal development. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also heard pupils read to an adult from the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with some pupils to gather their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments received during the inspection. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors held meetings with safeguarding leaders, governors and teachers. They scrutinised the single central record and sampled safeguarding records.
- Inspectors also took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and minutes of governors' meetings.

Inspection team

Shaun Jarvis, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Linda Jacobs

Ofsted Inspector

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