

# Inspection of a good school: Poole Grammar School

Gravel Hill, Poole, Dorset BH17 9JU

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Inspection dates:

26 and 27 March 2024

## 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 be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Amanda Smith. The school is part of the Poole Grammar School trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ken Power.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Poole Grammar School has high expectations of the boys who attend. Pupils and adults work together to uphold the school values of compassion, integrity, motivation, respect, teamwork and wisdom. Pupils are polite and courteous, behaving well in lessons and around the school site. Adults support pupils to learn from mistakes, so they are not repeated.

Pupils and students in the sixth form are keen to take on leadership roles within the school, for example, as members of the student forum, as charity fundraisers or as sports leaders. Pupils feel able to share their views about the school, knowing that adults will listen. They actively collaborate with each other to make improvements to the school, such as designing the new physical education (PE) kit. Pupils now wear this with pride when representing the school in competitive sport.

Pupils at this school have a wide range of extracurricular and enrichment opportunities. Pupils develop their artistic and musical talents. They perform regularly for others, including as whole year group choirs. Lunchtime clubs develop pupils' interests in topics, such as economics, medicine and engineering. They also enable pupils to engage in a wide range of sports for fitness and fun. Older pupils enjoy sharing their passions with younger pupils. Sixth-form students particularly appreciate opportunities to enhance their future applications for employment or higher education. Debating and essay groups allow students to deepen their thinking across a range of subjects.

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

Poole Grammar School has developed a broad and ambitious curriculum. Teachers have an excellent subject knowledge and use this to refine and enhance the curriculum. Pupils develop their oracy skills exceptionally well, including through their use of subject specific language. This means that pupils can talk confidently about their learning. As a result, pupils remember what they have learned and achieve highly in external examinations.

The school appreciates the value of reading. Pupils who need additional literacy support are quickly identified and given the help they need to catch up with their peers. The school's reading programme is being expanded to enable more pupils to share a rich selection of books. This covers a diverse range of themes and authors to interest and entertain. Sixth-form students read widely about subjects through academic journals and texts. Students relish this challenge and are well prepared for higher education.

The school has clear systems in place to identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils learn the curriculum as well as their peers. The Bryson Base provides the personalised support that pupils need to improve or maintain their attendance and engage with education. The attendance of all pupils is closely monitored by leaders. Pupils attend well.

The school recognises the importance of preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils understand the importance of being respectful of the differences between people. They are knowledgeable about world religions and are considerate of others' views and opinions. The school never tolerates bullying or racism. Pupils report concerns on behalf of themselves or others, knowing that adults will help to resolve them. When incidents occur, they are fully investigated. Adults and peer-mentors provide support and proactively educate pupils about why some behaviours or language are unacceptable.

The 'Life Skills' curriculum provides pupils with age-appropriate sex and relationships education. Pupils are actively encouraged to look after their physical and mental health, for example, educating pupils on the dangers of vaping through lessons and guest workshops. The sixth-form pastoral programme provides students with the knowledge and skills they need to prepare for independent adult living.

Pupils in all year groups meet local employers and learn about the world of work, including apprenticeships. Pupils develop transferable employment skills through the curriculum and enrichment activities. The entrepreneurs' group, for example, design and sell their own products. Pupils in Year 11 and Year 13 receive impartial advice and guidance. This supports individuals to reach their ambitious goals for employment or future study.

The governance of the school has recently been independently reviewed and revised. The new structure is enabling trustees to work more closely with leaders. There is a shared focus on continuing to develop the high-quality education that is already provided to pupils. Staff feel well supported with their workload and well-being. The trust supports a wide range of professional development opportunities both within the school and other

professional networks. Consequently, staff feel invested in and are well equipped to carry out their roles.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **Background**

When we have judged 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 January 2018.

## **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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136850
<b>Local authority</b>	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297985
<b>Type of school</b>	Grammar (selective)
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,199
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	300
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Ken Power
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amanda Smith
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.poolegrammar.com">www.poolegrammar.com</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	23 and 24 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a single academy trust.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with school leaders at all levels. Inspectors also met staff, the chair of trust and members of the trust board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, religious education and design technology. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons in other subjects and toured the school during pupils' breaks from lessons.
- Inspectors met representatives from the student leadership team.
- Inspectors met with staff who are responsible for overseeing pupils with SEND and reviewed planning that supports these pupils. They also visited the Bryson Base, which provides support for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors viewed a range of school documentation, including minutes of governance meetings and the school's self-evaluation documents.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, as well as responses to the staff survey and pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Sara Berry, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

John Weeds

Ofsted Inspector

Mike Foley

Ofsted Inspector

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