

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Sir William Romney's School

Lowfield Road, Tetbury, Gloucestershire GL8 8AE

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Inspection dates:

11 and 12 February 2025

## Outcome

Sir William Romney's School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Will Ruscoe. This school is part of The Athelstan Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Dr Tim Gilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Keval Shah.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The school's purpose of 'striving for excellence together' is evident throughout the school. Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations, both academically and for their conduct. The 'strong start' routines help pupils to be ready for their learning. As a result, pupils progress well through the curriculum.

The local post-14 offer means that some pupils move to and from the school throughout the academic year. When this happens, pupils are well supported in their transitions between schools. Pupils, parents and carers highlight the strong community-feel of the school. Pupils know that staff care about their well-being.

If pupils have a concern, they are confident to share this with the pastoral team. A minority of pupils may use derogatory language towards others. When this happens, the school acts robustly. Through discussions, workshops and a well-designed personal development programme, most pupils are empathetic and respectful of others.

The school designs a broad programme of clubs, trips and speakers for pupils. It is ambitious for pupils to have a wide experience as part of their curriculum learning. Most pupils engage well in this, such as attending lunchtime clubs, like debating. Pupils recognise and appreciate the varied enrichment programme the school provides for them.

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

The school's curriculum considers what pupils will learn and when. This means pupils build their learning based on their prior knowledge. Few pupils study the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) suite of subjects. The school makes sure pupils are well-informed when making decisions about the subjects they choose to study in key stage 4. In Year 10, more pupils now study the EBacc subjects.

Teachers carefully adapt teaching of the curriculum for pupils when they need it, such as extending learning for pupils when they are ready to move on. However, in a few parts of the curriculum, teaching strategies to adjust the learning for some pupils are not well implemented. When this happens, pupils don't progress as promptly as they might.

Teachers check how well pupils recall their learning. They revisit the gaps in pupils' understanding. For example, in English, younger pupils revisit their grammar learning from Year 6. This helps pupils to improve their knowledge and application of grammar.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are skilfully identified. Pupils with SEND are well supported with appropriate interventions and provision to support their learning. The recent opening of the school's 'SEN hub' provides additional structure and help for pupils.

The school is thorough in checking how well pupils can read. Intense teaching helps pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read, such as learning phonics or building fluency. This helps pupils to progress their reading skills well.

The school's revised behaviour routines have led to an increase in suspensions for a small number of pupils. This is reducing as most pupils understand and respect the higher expectations. Some pupils do not come to school regularly. The work of the school to help pupils and their families is thorough. This has led to much-improved attendance for many of those pupils. However, several pupils continue to have too many days off school. This hinders their progression through the curriculum.

The school's personal development programme is designed to help pupils to be well-prepared for the future. The school has designed an ambitious programme about careers. For example, through 'Futures days' pupils from Years 7 to Year 11 experience a day in the workplace. Pupils make the connections between the subjects they learn and how this might inform future career pathways.

Staff workload is carefully considered by the school and the trust. For example, staff positively highlighted the approach to evaluating collaboratively and time given for change to become established. The local governing body and the trust provide support and challenge to the school. This helps the school to prioritise its work to sustain improvement with pupils at the centre of the decisions it makes.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- On occasions, in a few parts of the curriculum, pedagogical strategies to adapt the learning for pupils are not put into effect in a timely way. This means that some pupils do not proceed with their learning as promptly as they could. The school should make sure that its strategies to adapt learning of the curriculum for pupils are well-implemented.
- Some groups of pupils do not come to school regularly enough. When this happens, these pupils are hindered in their learning of the curriculum. The school should continue its work to improve pupils' attendance.

## Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in February 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](#)' 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>	136985
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10371322
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	501
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Keval Shah
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Dr Tim Gilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Will Ruscoe
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.swr.gloucs.sch.uk">www.swr.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	25 and 26 February 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school currently uses two registered and seven unregistered alternative provisions.
- The headteacher commenced their post in September 2023.
- 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 evaluation 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 visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to curriculum leaders, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, trust leaders, teachers and representatives from the local governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from key stage 3 and 4 about their experiences of school. They visited lessons and observed the school during breaktimes and transitions.
- Inspectors reviewed and discussed key school documentation, including the school development plan, minutes from governance meetings, and attendance and behaviour analysis and data.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text comments. The inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey and responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Rachel Hesketh, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Helen Kerr

Ofsted Inspector

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