

Inspection of St Andrew's Church of England High School

Sackville Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN14 8BG

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 April 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

The headteacher leads St Andrew's Church of England High School with ambition, drive and determination, seeking to bring the school's motto, 'aspiration for all, from all', to life. She sets high expectations for herself, staff and pupils, and has brought much-needed stability to the school.

Many pupils feel safe at school because of the positive relationships that staff develop with them. Staff invest time in finding out about pupils' individual circumstances. As a result, most pupils feel well supported and well cared for.

However, some pupils feel unhappy at school. They describe the frequent use of misogynist, homophobic and, less frequently, racist language having become the norm. Pupils spoken to during the inspection know that this language should not be used and want it to stop.

Leaders are firmly committed to improving this situation and take quick, decisive action when incidents are reported to them. They have begun to tackle some of these issues. For example, staff have received training in how to respond to homophobic language. However, despite leaders' actions, there is much more to do to eradicate the use of prejudiced and discriminatory language.

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

The headteacher took up her post in January 2021 following a period of significant leadership instability in the school. She has brought with her a relentless commitment to bring about change. In her short space of time as headteacher, she has not shied away from taking difficult decisions. However, her ambitious vision to provide a high-quality education for all has not been realised, and more time is needed. Some of leaders' work has been hampered by disruption to staffing that has been caused in the main, but not solely, by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pupils are taught a broad range of subjects that are well planned and well sequenced from Year 7 to Year 11. However, leaders know that what is taught is more precisely planned in some subjects than in others.

Most teachers are confident in teaching the curriculum. Teachers are experts in their subjects and most explain new learning well. Pupils have regular opportunities to revisit what they have already learned to ensure that they have remembered it. This prepares them for what they will learn next. However, there are inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is taught.

Some teachers skilfully check pupils' understanding to shape their teaching so that it meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, other teachers do not check for understanding, and pupils move on without fully understanding what they have learned. This leads to pupils having gaps in their learning.

While there are opportunities for pupils to read, they do not read widely and often. Plans to improve reading are at an earlier stage of development. Staff have been trained to promote reading strategies and the use of key vocabulary in lessons. However, this is not consistently embedded across the school.

Pupils are mostly attentive and follow the school's rules in lessons and at social times. However, there are still too many who do not make good progress because not all teachers have the same high expectations. This means that pupils' experiences vary as they move from lesson to lesson.

The personal development provision for pupils is good. A well-planned curriculum ensures that pupils are knowledgeable about many different topics and issues. There are ample opportunities for pupils to learn relationships and sex education, and about finances, as well as different religions, values and beliefs. A well-thought-out careers programme ensures that all pupils receive guidance about future opportunities.

Governors are on the same page as leaders and are focused on the right priorities. A more rigorous approach to governance is providing challenge and support for leaders. A true partnership between governors, the local authority and the Diocese of Chichester is helping to support the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff understand the needs of the community. They know pupils and their families well. Staff are trained very well to identify concerns. They use the school's clear processes to report these concerns. Leaders take appropriate actions promptly. Records of concerns and the actions taken are thorough and detailed. Leaders are vigilant to the risks facing pupils and the wider community. They are not afraid to escalate their concerns to get the right support for pupils. Their close working relationships with external partners are helpful in ensuring a coordinated approach to supporting pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Incidents of prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour, both direct and indirect, are frequent. Consequently, some pupils say that this type of behaviour has become the norm and they do not feel happy. Leaders need to ensure that prejudiced and discriminatory language is eradicated.
- The behaviour of some pupils does not meet the expectations that the school sets. This means that some pupils are negatively affected by the behaviour of others. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils, including the most vulnerable, are able to thrive.

- The curriculum is not implemented consistently across the school. This slows the progress that pupils make in their learning. The headteacher’s ambitious vision for providing a high-quality education has not been realised. Leaders need to ensure that the planned curriculum is implemented consistently in every subject.
- Assessment processes are not consistent in all subjects. This means that too many pupils move on in their learning with significant gaps. Leaders need to ensure that these processes are sharper and that there is consistency in the school’s use of assessment.
- There is not a rigorous and sequential approach to the reading strategy. As a result, pupils do not develop fluency, confidence and enjoyment in reading. Leaders need to ensure that reading is prioritised in the school.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	126094
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10227334
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	578
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Woodman
Headteacher	Mia Lowney
Website	www.sta-worthing.com
Date of previous inspection	5 and 6 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up her post in January 2021. A new chair of the governing body took up his post in October 2021.
- The school was a single-sex school until September 2021, when the school became co-educational.
- The most recent section 48 inspection took place on 9 and 10 February 2016. Governors are aware that the next section 48 inspection is imminent.
- 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.
- The school currently uses two registered providers of alternative education provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 these subjects: modern foreign languages, English, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also reviewed some other subjects, including art, science, computing and the personal, social, health and economic education programme.
- Inspectors met with leaders, staff, pupils and those with responsibility for governance, including the chair and three other members of the governing body.
- Inspectors held discussions with two registered providers of alternative education provision.
- Inspectors observed tutor time, assembly and break- and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors scrutinised behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority and held a discussion with a representative of the Diocese of Chichester.
- Inspectors scrutinised governing body meeting minutes, and records of visits to the school by governors, the local authority and the Diocese of Chichester.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator remotely to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND. They visited lessons to look 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 Parent View questionnaire and comments made by those who responded.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors looked at the school's website and policies, met with leaders and spoke with pupils and staff. They scrutinised school records of the safeguarding checks carried out on adults working at the school and spoke with governors. They scrutinised a selection of electronic records of child protection.

Inspection team

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