

Inspection of a good school: Guilsborough Academy

West Haddon Road, Guilsborough, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN6 8QE

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 May 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff are ambitious for pupils and want them to achieve well. Pupils study a wide range of subjects. Leaders and staff provide pupils with sound advice about subject choices and careers.

Pupils said that they enjoy school. In lessons, teachers frequently check how well pupils have understood. Teachers use a range of different strategies to help pupils learn, including asking searching questions.

Most pupils behave well in lessons and get on well together. Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively. However, pupils told inspectors that sexist and homophobic language is common, and that leaders and staff have not taken the necessary steps to address it.

The school has put plans in place to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However these plans have not been communicated effectively to parents and carers. Some parents do not know what support their child is receiving, or whether it is working.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about the way that lessons build on prior learning to develop pupils' knowledge and skills over time. They ensure that pupils study a wide range of subjects and are well prepared for the next steps in their education.

The work that pupils do in lessons matches the planned curriculum. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ask questions that develop pupils' understanding. Teachers adapt their teaching when they need to, to ensure that it meets pupils' needs. They carefully target support for pupils who need it. Teachers use assessment well to check how well

pupils have understood, and then adapt the next steps accordingly. Pupils told inspectors that this approach helps them to make progress through the curriculum. Leaders have adapted the curriculum to ensure that content that was missed when pupils were not in school can be covered by the end of the course.

Pupils with SEND receive support in class where it is needed. Leaders track their progress carefully. However, many parents feel that the provision for their child is not effective. They feel that leaders and staff have not communicated well with them. As a result, they are not confident that their children's needs are met.

Leaders ensure that the sixth form offers an appropriate range of subjects and that teaching enables students to achieve well. Students in the sixth form appreciate the leadership and development opportunities that they are given. They make a positive contribution to the life of the school.

Behaviour in most lessons is good. Some pupils do not always stay on task. Serious disruption to learning is very rare. Leaders have developed a system to track behaviour in every lesson. They use this information to support pupils who need it. Leaders have developed systems and policies to address discriminatory language. However, some pupils reported that such language is not always taken seriously or dealt with appropriately. Some pupils and staff told inspectors that it occurs frequently.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum goes beyond academic subjects to support pupils' wider development. Life skills lessons help prepare pupils for issues beyond school. Pupils are given helpful advice and support when considering a career or deciding on their next steps. The school is reintroducing extra-curricular activities which were affected by the pandemic.

Leaders have taken steps to help teachers manage their workload. They have reduced the number of tasks that staff are required to complete. Leaders ensure that staff have enough time to complete the tasks that they need to do.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have set up effective and thorough systems to track and manage safeguarding concerns. Staff and governors receive regular training and are clear about their responsibilities. They know how to report concerns. Leaders carefully monitor these to ensure that the situation improves. New staff receive effective induction training so that they understand the systems.

Life skills lessons help pupils learn how to stay safe by focusing on a range of important topics, such as online safety and healthy relationships. Pupils know who they can talk to if they feel worried or upset.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have established systems for supporting pupils with SEND. However, these systems are not understood or supported by a significant number of parents. Leaders should engage effectively with parents of pupils with SEND to build a strong working relationship based on a culture of trust.
- Too many pupils experience discriminatory language. Not all staff adhere to the school's policies on how to address such language. Leaders should ensure that all pupils feel confident to report their concerns, and that all staff act consistently to address such language.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2014.

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	136489
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10227940
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
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	1337
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	191
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tim Heydon
Principal	Simon Frazer
Website	www.guilsborough.northants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is larger than average.
- The school is part of the Guilsborough Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school uses three registered alternative providers.

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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, history, physical education and social sciences. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to

teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with a wide range of senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator.
- An inspector met with representatives of the of the trust and the academy governing body.
- Inspectors looked at information about behaviour, attendance and enrichment opportunities.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including self-evaluation documents, minutes of governance meetings and safeguarding documents.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about workload and leadership.
- Inspectors talked to the leader in charge of safeguarding arrangements. They met with a range of staff and pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors considered the 209 responses to Ofsted Parent View, the 90 responses to the staff survey and the 242 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

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