

Inspection of Bishop Stopford School

Headlands, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN15 6BJ

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Bishop Stopford School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils enjoy attending Bishop Stopford School and value the teaching that they receive. The school is 'unapologetically academic' and leaders have high expectations of what pupils should achieve.

Pupils have access to a range of extra-curricular activities. These include debating club, sports clubs and music clubs. Pupils also have the opportunity to visit a wide range of places. For example, Year 8 pupils recently returned from a trip to the Isles of Scilly. Many pupils take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

As part of the school's personal development programme, younger pupils have access to personal, social and health education lessons. They learn about healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe. However, the personal development programme for older pupils is not as well developed.

Behaviour in lessons is calm and orderly. The majority of pupils feel safe in school. However, some pupils do not always feel confident to report cases of inappropriate language and bullying. They state that their concerns are not always dealt with effectively.

Sixth-form students achieve well. They benefit from their teachers' good subject knowledge. Students have access to a tutorial system to support them in applying to university. Some students in the sixth form feel that they would benefit from further guidance about other pathways, in addition to university-based information.

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

Leaders have high aspirations for pupils. Subject leaders have a clear vision of what they want pupils to learn. The curriculum is well sequenced to help pupils build their knowledge over time. For example, in English leaders have selected texts to help pupils connect their learning of language and literature. In geography, leaders have considered how they can develop pupils' understanding of key concepts, to allow them to understand more-difficult concepts over time. Pupils achieve well in most subjects.

Leaders have developed the 'Bishop Stopford lesson charter'. Some teachers use this to ensure that there is a clear structure to their lessons. Teachers use questioning to allow pupils to develop their thinking.

Leaders provide pupils with a range of opportunities to enjoy reading and develop their fluency. Teachers identify weaker readers and provide extra support to help them to catch up.

Not all teachers deliver the curriculum consistently well in all subjects. In some subjects some teachers do not always give pupils the guidance that they need in order to remember key knowledge. In some lessons teachers make effective use of assessment, but this is not yet consistent across all areas. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to access the same ambitious curriculum as others.

Younger pupils receive regular personal, social and health education lessons about keeping safe, and age-appropriate relationships and sex education. However, the provision for personal development for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is not sufficient. Pupils do not have access to regular information that could support them further in developing their understanding of equality and diversity, alongside age-appropriate relationships and health education.

Teachers in the sixth form have good subject knowledge. Students receive some helpful careers information. However, some sixth-form students feel that they would like information about pathways other than university.

Many parents hold the school in high regard and would recommend the school to others. However, some parents feel that the school does not always respond effectively to their concerns, and that the school's actions regarding bullying and the use of inappropriate language are not always well communicated.

Generally, staff feel that leaders are considerate of their workload. They appreciate the time that they have to plan and develop their subject expertise.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training and updates about safeguarding. The management of the central record of the safeguarding checks that the school carries out on all staff and relevant people is effective.

Child-protection concerns are managed effectively. However, risk assessments that are in place for some pupils are not always regularly reviewed. Information regarding safeguarding concerns is not always well documented.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Older pupils do not receive effective personal development provision. Pupils do not have access to a wide range of opportunities to develop their understanding of topics connected to relationships and health education. Leaders need to ensure that effective provision for personal development continues for all pupils throughout their time at school.

- The school does not currently record and share all safeguarding information effectively. This means that the actions taken to safeguard pupils are not always clear. Leaders must ensure that concerns, actions and risk assessments are clearly documented and reviewed.
- Pupils do not always feel confident in reporting concerns connected to bullying and the use of inappropriate language. As a result, leaders do not always know about, and therefore cannot respond to, pupils' concerns. Leaders need to create a culture where pupils feel confident in reporting concerns in the knowledge that they will be dealt with effectively.
- The school does not always use the appropriate system for coding student absences in the sixth form. Therefore, leaders do not have the information that they need to accurately analyse attendance. Attendance systems need to be used more effectively so that leaders can have a clear picture of attendance across the whole school.
- Not all teachers use assessment effectively enough. Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently identify and fill gaps in pupils' knowledge.

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	137086
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10229045
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	1,478
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	414
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Mike Gunasekara
Headteacher	Jill Silverthorne
Website	www.bishopstopford.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The religious character of the school is Church of England. The last section 48 inspection was undertaken in 2018.
- 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 qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school 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 English, modern foreign languages, science, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with the subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's safeguarding arrangements. They spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding, The lead inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding records and the school's single central record.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They considered responses to the pupil and staff surveys. Inspectors also considered the views of parents that were shared in phone calls to the inspection team.

Inspection team

Roxanne Fearn-Davies, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Paul Sweeney	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Shepherd	Ofsted Inspector
John Craig	Ofsted Inspector

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