

# Inspection of St Sampson's High School

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Inspection dates: 19 and 20 June 2024

The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The school has successfully created a calm and purposeful environment for pupils. There are high expectations of their behaviour. Pupils know what is expected of them because the school has established clear routines. The vast majority of pupils behave very well and are respectful towards one another. Staff listen to pupils' views and adapt the personal development curriculum accordingly. For example, they have taught pupils about how to look after their mental health.

The curriculum has undergone many recent changes. It is ambitious for all pupils and is carefully planned. Most pupils engage with their learning positively and learn effectively as a result. These changes are beginning to ensure that pupils achieve more highly in public examinations.

The school offers an extensive range of activities that enrich pupils' lives. Many pupils successfully complete The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, for example. Pupils proudly participate in music performances and in a variety of clubs. Pupils' successes are celebrated. This, along with the warm and respectful relationships between staff and pupils, underpins the positive changes the school has made.

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

In the majority of subjects, the school has identified the most important knowledge pupils need to learn, and in what order. The school's collaboration with the Secondary School Partnership has supported it with this. Staff understand how to support pupils to remember what they have learned. Typically, pupils build successfully on what they have learned before. However, this does not happen all the time. Sometimes, teachers do not check that all pupils have grasped new concepts before they move on, so these pupils fall further behind. The poor attendance of some pupils exacerbates this problem. The school's work to increase attendance has led to some improvement, but there is still work to do to ensure all pupils attend school every day.

The school's work to improve pupils' literacy is starting to bear fruit. Pupils enjoy reading with their tutors. Younger pupils value the time they have reading with older pupils to improve their fluency. The school knows there is more work to do here, but it has taken appropriate steps to ensure that pupils' reading, writing and vocabulary improve.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are accurately identified. Staff have a secure knowledge of how to apply suitable strategies to support pupils. This meets their academic needs and is supported by additional pastoral provision. Pupils benefit from the calm and orderly environment within the school. However, when the curriculum is taught less effectively, some pupils flounder, and this is not spotted soon enough.

The school's work to improve behaviour has been successful. A minority of pupils still struggle to meet the school's expectations, but appropriate support is provided. The school's 'learning modes' reinforce the expectations that staff have of pupils. Mostly, staff are consistent in their approach. This means that, generally, pupils have positive attitudes towards school. This is particularly the case for younger pupils.

The personal development curriculum is very new. It is highly ambitious and ensures that pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Alongside this, the school responds to issues that arise within the community through additional assemblies and pastoral support. The school ensures that all pupils receive unbiased information about careers and their next steps. The majority of pupils take part in extra-curricular activities. This is a strength of the school.

Leaders have been highly effective in ensuring that their expectations and ways of working are widely understood. Senior leaders are meticulous and thorough in their analysis of all aspects of school life. Subject leaders are developing their expertise to gauge the impact of their actions in their areas of responsibility. However, this work is in its infancy. This means that some weaker pockets of teaching are not picked up. Nevertheless, leaders have galvanised staff. They are united in their vision to continue driving improvements at the school, so that all pupils receive a good quality of education.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- Some subject leaders do not assure the quality of their areas of responsibility with precision. Where this is the case, the way in which the curriculum is taught does not support pupils to deepen their understanding. The school must strengthen its subject leadership, so that all pupils are supported to learn the curriculum successfully.
- Teachers' use of assessment is not fully developed. As a result, pupils' misconceptions sometimes persist, or there are gaps in pupils' understanding. This noticeably affects pupils with poor attendance and those with SEND. The school must ensure that all teachers check pupils' understanding systematically and adapt learning appropriately, so that the experience of the majority of pupils is the experience of all.

## School details

<b>Inspection number</b>	10350508
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	693
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The States of Guernsey
<b>Principal</b>	Vicky Godley
<b>Executive Principal</b>	Elizabeth Coffey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stsampsonshigh.gg">www.stsampsonshigh.gg</a>
<b>Dates of previous Ofsted inspection</b>	22 and 23 June 2022

## Information about this school

- St Sampson's High School is a non-selective 11-16 secondary school, located in the St Sampson's district in the north of Guernsey.
- The school uses one alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 35 of the Guernsey Education Law 1970.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the principal, members of the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders and teachers.
- The lead inspector met with a representative from the Education Office and the executive principal.
- Inspectors analysed school documentation, including leaders' evaluations and plans for improvement and paperwork relating to support and challenge. Inspectors scrutinised a range of policies and procedures, including those that relate to the curriculum and safeguarding.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, modern foreign languages, history and geography. 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.
- 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.
- An inspector visited the alternative provision used by the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who responded to the Guernsey Parent Survey. They evaluated the views of staff and pupils from the questionnaires issued at the time of the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Victoria Griffin, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Rachel Hesketh	His Majesty's Inspector
Sara Berry	His Majesty's Inspector

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