

St Sampson's High School

Rue de Dol, Guernsey GY2 4DA

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 June 2022

The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
Personal development and welfare	Requires Improvement
Leadership and management	Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

The quality of education at St Sampson's High School is not good enough. Senior leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is implemented well. Some pupils progress through the curriculum well and enjoy school. However, far too many pupils do not gain the knowledge they need because staff do not have high enough expectations of what they can achieve.

Pupils' behaviour around the school is poor. While most pupils show respect to their teachers, some do not. Some pupils ignore or directly challenge their teachers. Poor behaviour sometimes goes unchecked because staff do not apply the behaviour policy consistently.

When bullying happens, pupils report it to their teachers, but they have little confidence that staff will be able to put a stop to it. As a result, many pupils do not feel safe in school.

The school provides pupils with rich cultural and artistic experiences. For example, pupils present an evening of music, art and drama for parents. Pupils take part in many sporting activities and clubs at school. These help to build pupils' confidence and resilience.

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

Senior leaders have not established a clear vision for the curriculum. This has led to disjointed curriculum thinking across the school. While many staff are keen to develop the curriculum in their subject, this work is piecemeal. Staff training has been limited over time and so some staff do not have the necessary subject expertise. Consequently, the pace of improvement has been too slow.

The Bailiwick Curriculum is used as the agreed starting point for the school's curriculum. Nevertheless, subject leaders have not set out in sufficient detail key knowledge in each subject and how it will be taught and assessed. As a result, pupils' learning varies widely across the school. Many pupils do not build their knowledge and understanding effectively over time.

Pupils who find it difficult to read receive effective extra help. Teachers have developed a programme of support that improves these pupils' reading fluency. However, this programme is still being developed and is not applied in all year groups.

Teachers' expectations of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are too low. Leaders are starting to take the right actions to identify accurately the individual needs of these pupils. However, teachers do not have the

necessary expertise to adapt the curriculum for these pupils. As a result, pupils with SEND are not supported effectively.

A high proportion of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, are regularly absent from school. This limits their ability to learn and achieve. Leaders are working determinedly with families to improve pupils' attendance, but their efforts have not had enough impact.

The curriculum to support pupils' personal development and character is ambitious. Leaders' work to achieve the Rights Respecting Schools Award demonstrates that most pupils have strong moral and social awareness. Older pupils receive appropriate careers advice. However, careers education for pupils in Years 7 and 8 is not well developed.

This year, leaders have used assemblies, equalities days and the personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme to challenge racist and misogynistic attitudes and language. This has reduced the amount of derogatory language used by pupils around school.

Outdoor education is a strength of the school. Leaders have rapidly increased pupils' participation in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. Through this scheme, pupils volunteer to work in the local community. For example, they help to clear invasive plant species from the local coastline. This builds pupils' self-esteem and confidence.

The principal is determined to improve the quality of education provided by the school. She has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the priorities for improvement. Senior leaders are now working with greater urgency to improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective

Senior leaders have recently established an effective system for identifying and helping pupils who are at risk of harm. When necessary, staff communicate quickly with external agencies to protect pupils at times of greatest need. Senior leaders work effectively with the Education Office to carry out statutory recruitment checks on all staff.

Even so, many pupils do not feel safe at school because they fear poor behaviour or bullying. Over a number of years, senior leaders have introduced behaviour systems that have subsequently been dropped. They have not had enough impact on pupils' behaviour.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- Leaders have not ensured that staff share a common understanding of the design, implementation and assessment of the curriculum. Curriculum development work has not been coordinated effectively, leading to a slow rate of improvement. Leaders need to ensure that all staff, particularly subject leaders, quickly develop effective curriculum plans in their subject areas.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils with SEND can achieve are too low. This leads to pupils not being supported to reach their potential. Leaders should ensure that all teachers adapt the curriculum effectively so that pupils' needs are met.
- The school's strategy for behaviour management is not effective. A significant minority of pupils do not behave well. Bullying is not dealt with quickly. Senior leaders must establish a system which ensures that teachers work together consistently to improve pupils' conduct and allows all pupils to feel safe.
- The rate of pupils' attendance at school is too low. In particular, pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This holds back their learning and exposes them to potential harm. Senior leaders need to continue to work with parents to stress the importance of good attendance.
- Staff are not sufficiently skilled in subject curriculum design, behaviour management or approaches to supporting pupils with SEND. This leads to weaknesses in these areas of the school's work. Senior leaders must ensure that staff are provided with suitable training to improve their professional skills.
- The PSHE curriculum is not coordinated effectively with the careers education programme. This leads to an imbalance in the programme. For example, pupils in Years 7 and 8 are not given sufficient depth of information about careers. Senior leaders should arrange for all aspects of the personal development programme to be integrated into a coherent strategy.

School details

Inspection number	10230804
Type of school	Secondary School
Age range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	718
Appropriate authority	The States of Guernsey
Principal	Vicky Godley
Executive Principal	Elizabeth Coffey
Website	https://stsampsonshigh.gg/
Date of previous Ofsted inspection	Not previously inspected by Ofsted

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 principal was appointed in September 2020, following a period of interim leadership.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first inspection the school has had since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, senior leaders and a range of staff. A meeting was held with the executive principal and a senior representative of the Education Office. Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils formally and informally throughout the inspection to hear about their experience of school life.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and modern foreign languages. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They visited lessons and scrutinised pupils' work. Inspectors spoke to leaders about curriculum planning in other subjects.

- Inspectors analysed a range of documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, plans for improvement and external reviews of the school's work.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding by discussing policy and process with staff, checking safer recruitment processes and scrutinising records relating to safeguarding on the school's record-keeping system.
- Inspectors considered responses to the pupil and staff questionnaires issued at the time of the inspection and the Guernsey Parent Survey.

Inspection team

Paul Williams, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lydia Pride	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tracey Reynolds	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kathy Maddocks	Her Majesty's Inspector

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