

Inspection of Tanbridge House School

Farthings Hill, Guildford Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 1SR

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 June 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

A clear sense of care resonates through this truly inclusive school. Strong relationships are evident across the site, and pupils are known well by staff. Pupils are ambitious for what they can achieve, and staff encourage this through high expectations. A range of opportunities engage pupils' interests beyond their curriculum, including the 'scholars' programmes, where pupils can be 'subject scholars' or 'global scholars' and develop leadership and study skills.

Behaviour around the school site is calm and settled. The school's values of kindness, care, and achievement are lived out daily by pupils. Bullying rarely happens, and it is dealt with swiftly by staff if it does. For the small minority who struggle to meet the school's high expectations for conduct, there is exceptionally strong support through spaces such as 'The Bridge'. Here, pupils are supported in learning how to regulate themselves, leading to longer term improvements in their conduct.

Pupils achieve particularly well at this school. At GCSE, outcomes over time are impressive and this includes performance of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are keen to work hard and do well. One parent described the way that staff really 'ignite the passion for learning' in their children.

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

The school has planned a carefully considered curriculum across subject areas, systematically plotting the knowledge and skills that all pupils, including those with SEND, need to learn. As a result of these plans and the strong teaching they receive, pupils accrue a broad range of knowledge which they can apply with increasing independence.

Staff have expert subject knowledge and use this to give clear explanations and model what effective answers look like. In lessons, staff check the learning of pupils with precision, adapting their input to ensure that any misunderstandings do not persist. These highly effective adaptations also ensure that pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged access the same learning as their peers and secure the same high outcomes. Pupils' engagement in lessons is strong, and low-level disruption is rare.

The experiences of pupils with SEND are positive. They are supported well, and staff know how to adapt their input to ensure that pupils thrive. As part of the school's drive for continual improvement, it re-evaluated the systems to identify need rapidly. This has helped to further strengthen these processes, particularly for pupils transitioning from primary school. This has been noted by parents, who increasingly comment on their children being 'supported in every way' and on how they 'thrive' with the care and attention of staff.

Reading is made a high priority across the school. For those who struggle to read with confidence, an exceptionally strong programme of interventions is tailored to develop their fluency. This shows a demonstrable impact with the most disadvantaged pupils. These same approaches are mirrored across the curriculum, meaning that all staff develop pupils' literacy and increasing use of subject-specific vocabulary.

Pupils access a well-planned personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) programme which, in careful conjunction with assemblies and tutor time, supports them in developing beyond the classroom. Pastoral relationships are remarkably strong; staff know the pupils in their care well and anticipate their needs effectively. This leads to especially strong support for pupils' mental health. This is rightly prioritised, both by being woven through the PSHE programme but also through giving pupils access to counselling should they need it.

There is an exceptional range of activities on offer to support the wider development of every child. The school is mindful to ensure this offer is truly inclusive, so those who are disadvantaged are given access to these as a priority. Opportunities including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, the scholars' programme, and cultural trips such as the recent one to Glyndebourne, are vast and varied.

Leaders are precise in their recognition of what works well in their school, and what needs further refinement. Development plans are founded on secure understanding of the school and they take decisive actions where they are needed. Governors know the school especially well and hold leaders to account effectively through a range of developed systems.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a

social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	126064
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10321910
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,525
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Morgan Chambers
Headteacher	Mark Sheridan
Website	www.tanbridge-house-sch.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 and 23 November 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been a number of changes to staffing since the last inspection, including the headteacher.
- The school currently uses no alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspection team held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and pupils. The lead inspector met with the members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also held a telephone meeting with representatives from the local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography, modern foreign languages, performing arts and technology. 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, the 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.
- The inspection team took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and minutes of governors' meetings.
- The team spoke with pupils about their experience of the school. They took account of parent and carer and staff views through conversations and responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Marian Feeley, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Anne Cullum	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Serridge	Ofsted Inspector
Debbie Brake	Ofsted Inspector
Tash Hurtado	Ofsted Inspector

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