

Inspection of a good school: Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form

Clissold Road, Hackney, London N16 9EX

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 July 2022

Outcome

Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of the diverse nature and inclusive ethos of their school. Pupils are polite, welcoming and articulate. They work hard and generally behave very well. Pupils say that bullying is very rare and that teachers deal with it when it does happen. Pupils are safe here.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A carefully planned curriculum helps pupils to achieve well. Enthusiastic and committed teachers make lessons interesting for pupils. The number of students in the sixth form is increasing because students are attracted by the inclusive ethos and the wide range of courses on offer.

Leaders are committed to making sure pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They provide a programme of personal, political and philosophical studies which, among other things, helps pupils to learn how to stay safe. Many of the different clubs and activities which pupils attend, including poetry club, pottery club, and a very popular community evening, reflect the school's commitment to creativity and diversity.

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

Leaders have established a carefully considered curriculum from Year 7 to Year 13. In many subjects the curriculum promotes equality and celebrates diversity, reflecting the ethos of the school. The curriculum has been designed so that important content is regularly revisited. The sixth form curriculum is a strength of the school and is carefully designed to meet the needs of students who can choose from a very wide range of qualifications. This includes both academic and vocational courses.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and are passionate about their subjects. They use a variety of methods to help pupils remember what they have learnt. Teachers regularly challenge pupils to develop their thinking and to extend their answers. Sometimes, however, activities are not carefully matched to pupils' needs. This means

that some work is not completed by pupils, and the subsequent gaps in pupils' knowledge are sometimes not followed up.

Pupils with SEND are well supported to access the whole curriculum from Year 7 through to the sixth form. Teachers have detailed information about these pupils' additional needs and make sure that lessons are adapted appropriately. Some pupils are withdrawn from lessons for additional support and leaders make sure that these activities are closely matched to the main curriculum.

Leaders have made sure that reading is a priority in the school. This includes help for those pupils who are at the early stages of reading. These pupils are quickly identified and benefit from a planned programme delivered by experienced and well-trained staff.

In lessons and around the school pupils behave well. They are polite and respectful to each other and to their teachers. Pupils rarely use unkind or discriminatory language. Bullying is rare, but when it does happen pupils say that it is dealt with effectively. The number of fixed term exclusions has risen sharply recently, and this disproportionately affects some groups of pupils. Leaders are aware of this. They have a clear commitment and plan to address this issue.

Governors and leaders prioritise supporting pupils' wider development. This includes sessions on how to stay safe online, healthy eating, and healthy relationships, which are all taught to all year groups. Leaders listen to what pupils have to say and adapt this programme to respond to pupils' feedback. Pupils take part in range of different clubs and activities including many sports clubs. Leaders provide a programme of careers advice and guidance for pupils in all year groups. This includes work experience for pupils in Year 10 and 12, and activities such careers fairs where sixth-form pupils meet a variety of employers face to face.

A dedicated governing body shares the ambition of leaders to promote equality, diversity, and creativity through the curriculum. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. They engage with parents and carers through a regular parents' forum. Staff are proud to work in the school and say that leaders take appropriate steps to reduce unnecessary workload and support staff well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

An experienced safeguarding team has established a culture of vigilance across the whole school community. Leaders have made sure that staff are appropriately and regularly trained. Staff report any concerns promptly. Leaders work tenaciously with other agencies to secure the best outcomes for pupils who are vulnerable.

Pupils feel safe in the school and know who to talk to if they have concerns. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including how to stay safe online. Leaders are responsive to new safeguarding issues and adapt the curriculum accordingly.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes teachers do not ensure that pupils have completed tasks or check that pupils' work demonstrates a sufficient understanding of what has been taught. Leaders should make sure that lesson activities are suited to pupils' needs, and that gaps in knowledge are quickly followed up so that pupils are able to complete tasks and so that their books or folders can be used to help them to learn more and remember more.
- The number of fixed term exclusions is relatively high and disproportionately affects some groups of pupils. This means that too many pupils miss planned learning and some members of the school community feel a sense of unfairness. Leaders should ensure that the number of exclusions is reduced so that fewer pupils miss out on the planned curriculum.

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 October 2013.

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	100279
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10212470
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1666
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	428
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rose White
Headteacher	Zehra Jaffer
Website	www.sns.hackney.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 March 2017

Information about this school

- On occasions the school uses the following registered alternative providers for a very small number of pupils: The Pears Family School, New Regent's College, The Boxing Academy, Footsteps Trust, and The Complete Works

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 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 mathematics, English, history, and design and technology. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked to teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, and with members of staff, as well as a range of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and supporting pupils' welfare and well-being. This included reviewing the school's single central record of pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for SEND, reading, behaviour and attendance, the sixth form, and pupils' wider development.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body including the chair of governing body, and with a representative from the local authority.

Inspection team

Bob Hamlyn, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Blaney

Ofsted Inspector

Jonathan Newby

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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