

# Inspection of Huish Episcopi Academy

Wincanton Road, Huish Episcopi, Langport, Somerset TA10 9SS

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Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Sixth-form provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

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

Many pupils do not have a positive experience at the school. There are groups of pupils who do not feel safe. They are worried about the poor behaviour of others during social times. Many staff do not manage pupils' behaviour effectively. They do not receive the support they need from leaders.

The culture of the school is not inclusive. Pupils hold intolerant attitudes that go unchallenged. Some pupils suffer bullying, including abusive language based on their individual characteristics. Pupils have little confidence that staff will deal with incidents of bullying or other concerns they raise. Many parents echo these views.

Poor behaviour means that pupils cannot learn the curriculum well. Learning time is frequently disrupted. Leaders are not ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum is not designed to help these pupils to learn. Some staff do not know how to meet pupils' needs.

There are some opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and to consider future careers. The school offers a range of extra-curricular activities and trips. However, many pupils do not take part in these.

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

Pupils feel the impact of poor behaviour across all aspects of school life. Low-level disruption prevents them from learning. Some pupils wander the school grounds during lesson time. Staff do not challenge poor behaviour consistently well. Consequently, unruly and defiant behaviour, and the use of unacceptable language, are commonplace. Leaders have not taken the urgent action that is needed to improve the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils.

The curriculum is at a very early stage of development. Leaders have not identified what pupils need to know, and when, in each subject. Few pupils go on to study an ambitious curriculum in key stage 4. Leaders are reviewing the curriculum, but they have not yet taken into account the needs of disadvantaged pupils, or pupils with SEND, including those in the sixth form.

Pupils with SEND follow the same broad curriculum as their peers in key stage 3. However, teachers do not fully understand their needs. Therefore, they are not able to provide the support pupils with SEND need in order to learn. There are frequent interruptions to lessons due to poor behaviour. This makes it difficult for pupils to learn the curriculum successfully.

Leaders have dedicated more curriculum time to reading. However, many staff do not prioritise this because they do not have the expertise to support pupils with their reading. Leaders provide support for some pupils in Year 7, who are at an early

stage of learning to read. However, many more pupils do not receive the help they need to become fluent readers.

A minority of pupils continue into the sixth form. They study courses that match their aspirations. Teachers are knowledgeable about the courses they teach in the sixth form. However, students in the sixth form do not attend as well as they could. Leaders do not monitor attendance or deal with absence effectively.

The curriculum to support pupils' personal development includes learning about how to keep safe, including online. Sixth form students learn about healthy relationships and how to maintain good mental health. However, staff do not have the confidence to share important messages about sensitive issues. There are limited opportunities for pupils to learn about equality and diversity or to discuss their views with others. As a result, pupils do not value the programme and intolerant views are not challenged effectively.

Leaders aim to provide pupils with the 'Huish Edge' - a range of experiences to equip them for life beyond school. Pupils develop their leadership skills as part of the curriculum for physical education. Pupils are supported to undertake work experience in Year 10 and Year 12. The school complies with the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. Most pupils receive useful careers advice, including information about apprenticeships. Many students in the sixth form go on to university.

Pupils and parents have raised concerns with leaders about the school. Leaders have been slow to respond. They have not recognised that the behaviour of some pupils means that school is not a safe place. Leaders have not ensured that subject staff have the time and training they need to address the weaknesses in the curriculum. Leaders demonstrate limited capacity to improve the quality of education, behaviour, safety and personal development of pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Many pupils do not feel safe at school. They do not have confidence in staff to address their concerns, including when bullying occurs. The prejudiced language they hear from their peers makes them uncomfortable, as does unruly conduct around the school.

All required checks are made to establish the suitability of staff working at the school. Staff know the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm and how to report concerns they have. Leaders act on these concerns. They make timely and appropriate referrals to secure help from other agencies.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A significant minority of pupils do not show respect towards their peers. Discriminatory language is widespread. Pupils do not have confidence that staff will follow up incidents of bullying. The behaviour of some pupils is unruly or aggressive. As a result, many pupils do not feel safe in school. Leaders must act swiftly to make the school a safe place for all pupils.
- Leaders have not ensured an inclusive school culture. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to reflect on the views and beliefs of others. They are not well prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum enables pupils to appreciate views and beliefs that differ from their own.
- Learning time is frequently interrupted by the poor behaviour of some pupils. This means that pupils learn less than they should. There is not a consistent approach to discipline. Leaders must support staff to manage behaviour effectively.
- Leaders do not provide an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum in each subject. As a result, pupils do not build on what they already know or learn as much as they could. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum enables all pupils to learn an ambitious body of knowledge.
- The curriculum is not adapted to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers do not provide effective support for these pupils. Consequently, pupils with SEND do not progress as well as they could. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Leaders do not prioritise reading. Many pupils have fallen behind with their reading. The curriculum does not do enough to help these pupils to catch up. Pupils do not read widely or often. Leaders should help pupils to read with the fluency and understanding appropriate to their age.
- Leaders have not acted swiftly to improve several aspects of the school that are causing concern. Consequently, issues have persisted. Leaders must ensure that their self-evaluation processes are robust and that they act on the identified weaknesses with urgency.
- Having considered the evidence, we strongly recommend that leaders and those responsible for governance do not seek to appoint early career teachers.

## 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](#)' 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136294
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10252968
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1440
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	124
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Gareth Piper
<b>Principal</b>	Chris Wade
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.huishepiscopi.net">www.huishepiscopi.net</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 and 13 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The size of this secondary school is larger than average.
- 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 education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses four unregistered alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is

failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- 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 met with the headteacher, senior leaders, governors and trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, mathematics, English, science and physical education.
- For each deep dive inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from the alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the views of staff and pupils in Ofsted's online survey.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the trust and with the school's improvement partner.

### **Inspection team**

Sarah Favager-Dalton, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jon Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Tonya Hill	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Foley	Ofsted Inspector
Frances Bywater	His Majesty's Inspector

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