

Inspection of Hugh Sexey Church of England Middle School

Blackford, Wedmore, Somerset BS28 4ND

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Paul Tatterton. This school is part of Wessex Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Gavin Ball, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Brian Kirkup.

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 11 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe. They value their warm, respectful relationships with staff. The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils live up to these. For example, pupils know that they should 'think twice' before they say something to make sure it is kind. Parents and carers value the school's high expectations of pupils' conduct and the wider opportunities the school provides.

Pupils know the school's distinctive values well. The school is determined that pupils will learn how to help and inspire others. Older pupils are 'buddies' for younger pupils when they join the school. Some pupils share their learning with others, such as by running a 'French café' at a local feeder school. Other pupils have roles in the eco-club or are well-being ambassadors. These opportunities develop pupils' leadership skills and their understanding of civic duty.

Pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular opportunities. For instance, they enjoy performing in the annual school production and participating in house competitions. Pupils appreciate trips, such as to places of local historical significance. Pupils develop their teamwork through sporting and outdoor pursuits.

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

Pupils learn a broad curriculum. The school has sequenced well the order in which pupils learn. This begins in Year 5 and leads to what pupils need to know in Year 8. For example, in science, pupils learn about forces in key stage 2, which prepares them to learn about space in key stage 3.

In most subjects, the school has identified the key knowledge and skills that pupils should learn. In mathematics, for example, pupils learn mathematical facts, which they then use when solving problems. However, in some subjects, the school has not identified precisely what it is most important for pupils to learn and remember. As a result, pupils do not develop detailed knowledge in these subjects. Teachers typically use assessment well to check pupils' understanding routinely and correct their misconceptions.

The school identifies accurately the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It works closely with parents and carers to review the support it provides to pupils. For most pupils, teaching is adapted well to meet their needs.

Most pupils are confident readers. The school develops their enjoyment of reading, including reading fiction and non-fiction books. The school has recently introduced a programme to support weaker readers, but this work is in its infancy. Therefore, some pupils are not yet fluent readers.

The school has a calm and orderly atmosphere. Pupils follow routines well and have positive attitudes towards their learning. Bullying seldom occurs. If it does, pupils

and parents have confidence that the school will resolve issues swiftly and effectively. Pupils attend school regularly and are punctual.

The school has a carefully planned personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils learn about healthy relationships. They discuss ideas and issues sensitively and respectfully. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. The school keeps the programme under review to ensure that pupils gain an age-appropriate understanding of risk.

Pupils learn how to be active citizens. For example, they vote for their school council representatives. Pupils raise money for charities and pay tribute to others, such as by designing and laying wreaths for Remembrance Day. Pupils learn about difference and diversity through the books they read as a class.

Pupils benefit from an effective careers information, advice and guidance programme. The school ensures that pupils learn about a range of future education, careers and training options, including apprenticeships. The school evaluates its programme and strengthens its offer when necessary.

Trustees and local governors understand their roles and perform these effectively. They ensure that resources are well managed and statutory duties are fulfilled. School and trust leaders understand the school's strengths and where it needs to make further improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not pinpointed the knowledge that it is most important for pupils to learn and remember. Consequently, pupils do not build detailed knowledge in all subjects. Leaders need to ensure that planning supports pupils to build their subject knowledge in depth.
- Some pupils do not receive the support they need to improve their reading fluency and confidence. This hinders their learning in the wider curriculum. The school and the trust should ensure that there is an effective reading programme in place for all pupils who need it.

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	143329
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10298052
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	657
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Brian Kirkup
CEO of trust	Gavin Ball
Headteacher	Paul Tatterton
Website	www.hughsexey.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Wessex Learning Trust, a multi-academy trust.
- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The school received its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character in September 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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 inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders, trust leaders, the chair of the board of trustees, members of the local governing body, and the school's improvement partner.
- 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.

Inspection team

James Oldham, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Stuart Wilson	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Hill	Ofsted Inspector
Tom Hill	Ofsted Inspector

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