

Sandwich Technology School

Deal Road, Sandwich, Kent CT13 0FA

Inspection dates

1 to 2 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have maintained the good standard of education at the school. They have responded effectively to dips in recent years of pupils' achievement at the end of key stages 4 and 5.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teachers challenge pupils well to achieve more, to learn new skills, and to develop their knowledge.
- Middle leadership is effective. English and mathematics leaders work very effectively with their teams. Teaching is good and pupils' outcomes are improving in these subjects.
- Pupils engage well in learning. They enjoy their lessons and behave well. Pupils show respect for each other and value the work their teachers do to support them.
- Leaders have implemented a broad and well-balanced curriculum. Many more pupils now study modern foreign languages, and more pupils study the English Baccalaureate subjects than previous cohorts.
- Students in the sixth form study a wide range of interesting subjects. They receive strong advice and guidance to prepare them well for the next steps in their education or employment.
- Leaders' work to prepare pupils for the next stages in their education is very effective. A comprehensive careers advice and guidance programme supports pupils well to make informed decisions about their futures.
- Leaders work effectively to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils. Targeted support linked to well-planned wider curriculum opportunities helps disadvantaged pupils to learn and experience more. As a result, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are improving quickly.
- Governors work well with school leaders. They have a secure overview of the school's strengths and areas to develop.
- Teachers do not always ask pupils questions that probe pupils' understanding and help them learn more.
- Leaders have not yet ensured that the revised school feedback policy is used consistently. Pupils are not always clear on how to improve their work.
- Outcomes for current pupils require improvement, particularly in science.
- Persistent absence rates are high for some pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders should continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
 - ask questions that support pupils to understand and learn more
 - provide more consistent feedback to pupils in the areas they need to improve, in line with the school's policy.
- Leaders' work continues to improve outcomes for pupils rapidly, particularly in science.
- Ensure that fewer pupils persistently miss school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders are highly ambitious for the school. They are determined to keep the school moving rapidly on its improvement journey. As such, they have made useful decisions to develop leadership capacity and effectiveness. For example, they have recently appointed leaders to oversee the provision for disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders have thoughtfully changed the curriculum. Pupils now study more aspirational qualifications that can help them in their futures. For example, more pupils study a modern foreign language in key stage 4 than in previous years.
- Leaders' work to improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils is effective. Teachers are fully aware of the needs of these pupils. As a result, gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are closing quickly.
- Leaders regularly check the standards of work pupils achieve. They use the information they collect about pupils' achievement well to support any pupils who may fall behind in their work. Consequently, pupils in need of extra help are well supported.
- Teachers value the professional-development opportunities provided to them. Weekly professional development meetings support teachers to develop their teaching skills further. They often use this time to check their understanding of the standards of pupils' work.
- Leaders' collaborative work with local primary schools is very effective. Links with primary schools are used to inform teachers about the work that pupils study in primary school. These links help to support pupils well in their transition from primary to secondary school.
- Middle leadership is effective. Middle leaders have a secure understanding of their priorities and the successful areas in their individual departments. Effective English and mathematics leadership is improving standards swiftly in these areas of the school.
- Leaders' work to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain is helping pupils understand British values well. For example, the student council discusses democratically how bullying is dealt with in school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through a wide range of relevant topics. During the inspection, for example, Year 7 pupils engaged enthusiastically in a classroom discussion about how young people help raise awareness of the impact of climate change.
- Leaders spend the additional money they receive from government wisely to support vulnerable pupils well. For example, a wide range of activities and trips help pupils to learn more about life in Victorian times, as part of their English literature curriculum.
- Leaders' work to improve the outcomes of pupils across the school is very well planned and monitored. Nevertheless, outcomes are not yet good for all pupils, particularly in science.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school's strengths and areas to develop well. They are supportive of leaders' work. Governors visit school regularly to review the work of leaders and the progress being made in accomplishing the school's ambitious development plans.
- Governors fulfil their legal responsibilities well. They know how additional funds to support disadvantaged pupils and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are spent.
- Governors are well trained and knowledgeable about their safeguarding duties. They are aware of recent changes in legislation and the local contextual issues that might affect children and young people at the school.
- Governors have implemented appropriate checks of leaders' processes to appoint staff who are suitable to work with children.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have created a secure culture to ensure the safety of children in the school.
- Leaders are trained well and appropriately informed of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. They have a secure overview of the procedures used to report and record any worries related to pupils' safety and welfare. Leaders work effectively with other agencies in a timely manner to ensure that vulnerable children and their families are appropriately supported.
- Staff are regularly trained about safeguarding issues. They know how to record issues and how to report them to leaders. They know that leaders will deal swiftly with any safeguarding concerns.
- Pupils feel safe at school. They have a good understanding of the risks involved in using the internet and mobile technology inappropriately. Pupils told inspectors that they were confident that there was an adult to talk to in school if they needed support with any concerns they might have.
- Most parents who responded to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, said their children feel safe and happy at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching in English and modern foreign languages engages pupils well, addressing effectively any misunderstandings that pupils might have, and helping pupils to gain more subject-specific knowledge. As a result, most pupils make good progress in these subjects.
- Teaching in mathematics is well matched to pupils needs. Teachers make good use of the information they collect and, as such, identify the areas of work pupils need to improve. As a result, teaching is helping pupils develop their skills to solve mathematical problems more confidently.

- Most teachers maintain very well-established routines for pupils to follow in class and have high expectations of behaviour. As a result, most classes are calm and purposeful places for learning.
- Teachers use their secure subject knowledge well to ask pupils questions and check pupils' recall of subject-specific facts. Questioning is not always extended to probe pupils' understanding further.
- Teaching assistants work well with pupils when engaged in one-to-one and group situations in classes. They ask pupils helpful questions and use positive praise to support pupils to think more and understand more. Consequently, pupils are well supported, and most pupils with SEND make good progress in line with their individual targets.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Interesting discussions between teachers and students are well managed by teachers. Students engage confidently with their teachers and respond maturely with considered responses. Most students show a depth of subject-specific understanding. They make good progress.
- Teachers use interesting and stimulating activities to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders encourage staff to share their ideas about projects they believe will help disadvantaged pupils improve their subject knowledge and skills. For example, trips to the Globe Theatre help pupils relate to the Shakespearean plays they study in English. Disadvantaged pupils are well supported. More disadvantaged pupils make the same progress as other pupils with similar starting points than in previous years.
- Pupils do not always know what they need to improve further to learn more and develop their subject-specific skills and knowledge better.
- Teaching in science is not planned consistently well enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress in developing their scientific knowledge and skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Most pupils are self-confident and self-aware. They know how to keep themselves safe from dangers online and how to use mobile technology appropriately. They are taught about the effects cyberbullying can have on others. They told inspectors that on the rare occasions bullying occurs, it is dealt with by school leaders quickly.
- Pupils value the guidance they receive about careers and other options available to them as they progress in their education. The school has been recognised for its effective careers guidance and support with a national award. As a result, the proportion of pupils who leave Year 11 into further education is in line with national figures.
- Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 learn how to stay healthy, both physically and mentally. Younger pupils are supported, on request, by sixth-form buddies trained in mental-health awareness.

- Pupils value their morning tutorial time together with pupils in the same year group. They have age-appropriate sessions that are effective in helping them develop their personal, social and health skills suitably. For example, in these sessions the younger pupils learn about road safety and safe travel on public transport. Older pupils learn about the danger of drugs and are taught to be aware of the danger of knife crimes and some types of gang culture. Pupils enjoy the Friday current affairs quizzes that their teachers lead for them. Pupils are well prepared for life in the modern world.
- Pupils have regular themed assemblies. During the inspection, Year 7 pupils presented an engaging assembly to their year group around the school motto of 'hold fast that which is good'. During these assemblies, pupils were seen listening with respect towards others.
- Pupils learn about equality and respecting others' differences. Some pupils reflected the views of others when they confidently told an inspector, 'It is fine to be different in school.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. Most walk calmly and purposefully to their lessons across the large campus. There is no graffiti evident and very little litter around the school site.
- Pupils' breaktimes and lunchtimes are well supervised by adults. Pupils behave well during their breaks. They line up responsibly in the lunch queue. Lunchtimes are quiet, and pupils eat together well.
- Pupils are supported well to reflect on any behavioural issues that arise. Leaders have introduced helpful strategies to assist pupils who need support. Leaders have raised their expectations for standards of behaviour of pupils. Consequently, incidents of reported misbehaviour and fixed-term exclusions have both risen recently.
- 'The More Centre', an on-site provision for pupils with behaviour concerns, is effective in supporting and re-engaging pupils in learning. As a result, permanent exclusions of pupils are very rare. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were very positive about the good standards of behaviour in the school.
- The few pupils who attend alternative provision are well supported and cared for. Leaders regularly communicate with the providers to check on pupils' progress. Most pupils are making good progress and attend regularly.
- Pupils' absence rates are improving and are currently slightly below national figures for similar schools. Leaders have put appropriate procedures in place to support pupils and their families in improving pupils' attendance at school. Indeed, leaders' work has been very effective in supporting some pupils to attend more regularly. However, persistent absence rates for pupils are above national figures.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils at the end of key stages 4 and 5 have been low in recent years. Leaders are taking effective action and improving these historically low figures. Current pupils are achieving better outcomes than in previous years.
- Outcomes for pupils with SEND are improving. Pupils with SEND are making better progress than pupils previously towards their personal targets.
- Disadvantaged pupils' outcomes are improving. Leaders' well-planned use of additional funding and the school's pupil achievement information are improving. Consequently, more disadvantaged pupils are making progress in line with other pupils nationally.
- All Year 11 morning tutorial sessions are focused to support pupils to achieve better outcomes by the end of key stage 4. Pupils highly value this support. Year 11 pupils told an inspector that these sessions are helping them improve and prepare for their GCSEs.
- Pupils' mathematics outcomes are improving. Leaders have an accurate understanding of topics pupils need to improve on to develop their mathematical knowledge. Subsequently, teachers adapt the learning needed to support pupils to improve quickly.
- Leaders have changed the way pupils are entered for some GCSE examinations, allowing pupils more time to study the subject before their final examination. This is helping improve pupils' outcomes.
- Pupils are very well prepared for the next steps in their education. Career guidance, advice and support is a strength of the school's provision. The school's work to fulfil government guidance on careers advice and guidance has exceeded statutory guidance.
- The few pupils who study some of their subjects at alternative providers are well supported. Leaders have strong links with the alternative providers. Pupils at these providers make appropriate progress.
- Pupils' outcomes in modern foreign languages and geography are improving. Pupils' work in their books shows some inconsistencies in the amount of progress pupils make over time in history and art. Pupils' outcomes across all subjects are not yet consistently good, particularly in science.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Students in the sixth form receive a good education. Leaders have an accurate overview of the provision and its effectiveness.
- Recent changes to leadership roles and responsibilities have resulted in the introduction of many useful initiatives that are supporting students to achieve better outcomes, compared to recent years.
- Teaching of 16 to 19 study programmes is good. Teaching engages students well in psychology, film studies, geography and biology. Teachers promote effective discussions between themselves and students to check students' understanding.

Students demonstrate maturity in the questions they ask of their teachers to help them understand more. Hence, most students in the sixth form make good progress.

- Students studying 16 to 19 vocational study programmes are very well supported through well-planned teaching and learning activities. For example, students attending the football academy were seen confidently discussing their understanding of the human body's muscular system with their teacher, which they learned through their own individual research.
- Students have access to a well-structured and comprehensive package of careers advice and guidance. Many are ambitious and know their own preferred routes to follow their personal career and further- and higher-education goals. They have been guided appropriately to follow these aspirations. As such, students are well prepared for their next steps in education.
- Leaders have developed a wide-ranging offer of non-subject activities to support students' learning. For example, age-appropriate financial guidance helps students prepare well for their financial independence. Students have opportunities to investigate apprenticeship opportunities through the school's work with local providers in Kent.
- Leaders have implemented a very successful student well-being support programme. Students have access to a qualified member of staff to talk about any worries they have associated with sixth-form studies. This access is highly appreciated by students.
- Students aspiring to attend university are guided thoughtfully in their applications. Helpful support in writing personal statements for university applications, along with one-to-one practice interviews to support students in the university application process, are available. The destination information showing the proportions of students moving on to further or higher education and employment is in line with national figures.
- Students develop their social responsibility well. Some are involved in teaching Year 7 pupils about mental-health issues in young people. Some students are involved in charitable work with a local age-concern charity and a food bank. Students run a support group for lesbian, bisexual, gay, queer and transgender young people at the school.
- Current student outcomes are good. Students take pride in completing their subject-specific notebooks. They develop their note-taking and independence skills well.
- Leaders have successfully introduced an extra year of study for some students who need more time to develop before starting the more challenging 16 to 19 programmes. Students study different packages of GCSE subjects to those they studied previously and take resits in mathematics or English where necessary. Students retaking mathematics or English GSCSE examinations achieve as well as other pupils nationally.
- Student retention rates from Year 12 to Year 13 have been lower than national averages in recent years. These figures are improving.

School details

Unique reference number	136317
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10088199

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Modern (non-selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1414
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	165
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Terence Porter
Headteacher	Tracey Savage
Telephone number	01304 610 000
Website	www.sandwich-tech.kent.sch.uk
Email address	admin@sandwich-tech.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 to 2 July 2015

Information about this school

- Sandwich Technology School is a larger-than-average sized secondary school. It converted to academy status in 2010.
- The highest proportion of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below average.
- The school works with one alternative provider, the Enterprise Learning Alliance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out learning walks with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in books during visits to lessons, and separately with leaders.
- Inspectors considered 63 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View and 59 free-text responses.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils during lessons and at breaktimes. Inspectors also met with groups of pupils from key stages 3 to 5.
- An inspector heard a group of Year 7 pupils read.
- The lead inspector spoke on the phone with a headteacher from the Dover, Deal and Sandwich collaboration of schools.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of Kent local authority.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders and other staff, and the lead inspector met with a group of governors.
- Inspectors considered the published information and school's documentation relating to pupils' achievement, and leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness.
- Inspectors reviewed additional funding plans, governor minutes and evaluation reports.
- An inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding procedures and policies.

Inspection team

Dylan Davies, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Ann Fearon	Ofsted Inspector
Frederick Valletta	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Swan	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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