

Inspection of St Dunstan's School

Wells Road, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9BY

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The headteacher of this school is Lynda Bevan. This school is part of the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Alun Williams, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anthony Wells. There is also an executive headteacher, Duncan Powell, who is responsible for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Dunstan's School knows its pupils well as individuals. There is a strong sense of community within the school, which makes pupils feel safe. The school has set out clear expectations of what pupils need to do to stay 'On Track' with their learning and behaviour. Pupils behave well, both around the school and in the classroom.

The school reward system celebrates the values of truth, resilience, ambition, community and kindness. Pupils enthusiastically collect 'On Track' points which become 'Dunnie Dollars'. Pupils appreciate the involvement that they have had in choosing the rewards available. Pupils take on leadership roles in their houses and in the student council. They feel empowered to help others. Roles such as anti-bullying ambassadors help to maintain the inclusive nature of the school.

The school has developed a vibrant culture of reading. Pupils and adults read together regularly, sharing the love of story. The school has selected a wide range of books that all pupils will read during their journey to Year 11. These have been deliberately chosen to interest and inspire. The school identifies and supports the weakest readers to build their confidence and accuracy. As a result, they quickly catch up with their peers.

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

Pupils follow a broad and ambitious curriculum. They learn what makes subjects unique as well as the subject-specific vocabulary used. For example, pupils develop their knowledge of scientific enquiry or text analysis. The trust provides subject networks to share teachers' specialist knowledge and training. These have supported subjects to reflect on and develop their curriculum and teaching approaches. Because of this, pupils are increasingly achieving well in their qualifications.

The school's assessment approach gives pupils opportunities to recall their learning. Pupils relish the chance to show their knowledge and understanding. Most pupils act on the feedback given to improve their work. However, sometimes, this information isn't used to help support pupils to correct misunderstandings. This hinders pupils' ability to learn more complex concepts.

The school identifies and supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers have the information that they need to help adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils. Most of the time, pupils are able to learn the curriculum well. Some parents have expressed concerns about the level of communication from the school about the provision for pupils with SEND. Leaders have already taken steps to address this, but this work is in its infancy.

The Autism Resource Centre (ARC) specialist resource base provides a personalised curriculum for a small number of pupils with autism. This is tailored to individual's exact needs and ambitions. Pupils attend mainstream lessons while also benefiting

from bespoke interventions. The school works with pupils and their families to plan future education and training opportunities. As a result, these pupils are well prepared for their next steps.

Leaders promote the importance of pupils attending school regularly. They track pupils' attendance closely, and work with families to support when required. Consequently, attendance is broadly in line with the national average, with aspirations for this to rise further.

The school has a clear vision to 'create pupils who are aware, engaged, active and able to contribute positively to a rapidly changing world'. Pupils value their personal, social and health education lessons as an opportunity to prepare for adult life. For example, they learn about personal safety, mental health and healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. Pupils have opportunities to learn about other cultures and debate moral issues. Pupils in all year groups learn about the wide range of options they have for future careers, including apprenticeships through an effective careers guidance programme.

Pupils develop their talents and interests through a range of extra-curricular activities. For example, pupils enter writing competitions, take part in sports and represent the school at public speaking events.

The trust has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. It provides the support and challenge needed to continue to develop the school. For example, it provides the school with additional leadership resources during periods of change. This means that the school is well placed to respond to growing pupil numbers. Leaders and staff work closely together to manage staff workload and support their well-being. As a result, staff feel supported and are proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, while assessment identifies the gaps in pupils' understanding, these are not addressed sufficiently before moving on to new topics. When these gaps remain, it hinders pupils' ability to learn more complex concepts. The trust should ensure that assessment information is used to securely address gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils with SEND are supported effectively in school. However, previously, the system for reviewing support and communicating with families has not always been clear. This has led to some parents lacking confidence in the support provided for their child. The trust has recently begun to address these concerns.

The trust should further embed the changes that they are making to the systems and procedures for supporting pupils with SEND.

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 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	137202
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10307252
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	462
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anthony Wells
CEO of the trust	Alun Williams
Headteacher	Lynda Bevan (headteacher) Duncan Powell (executive headteacher)
Website	www.stdunstansschool.com
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 July 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership.
- The school has a specialist resource base, the ARC, for pupils with autism. This opened in September 2023. Currently, there are 13 places within this provision.
- The school uses three unregistered 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.
- Inspectors held discussions with school leaders at all levels. Inspectors also spoke with teaching and support staff, governors, trust executive leaders and trustees.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, including representatives from the student council and senior prefects.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, science and geography. 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.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for pupils with SEND. They visited the specialist resource base.
- Inspectors viewed a range of school documentation, including minutes of the local governing body meetings, the school's self-evaluation documents and improvement plans.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, as well as responses to the staff survey and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Sara Berry, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Simon Tong	Ofsted Inspector
Rob Coles	Ofsted Inspector

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