

Inspection of Les Varendes High School

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 November 2025

The quality of education	Requires Improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development and welfare	Good
Leadership and management	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Les Varendes High School is a welcoming school community. Leaders have skilfully and diligently supported pupils and staff through the recent school merger. They have already built warm, trusting relationships throughout the school. Pupils can share any concerns that they have, knowing that adults will help them. This makes them feel safe.

This newly-formed school is ambitious for pupils. It has high expectations for the way pupils conduct themselves. Clear routines have ensured that disruption to learning is reducing and not tolerated. The school provides a wide range of effective support for pupils to help them to improve their behaviour and engagement with learning.

The personal development programme is a strength of the school. An extensive range of clubs and activities help pupils to develop their talents and interests. Cooking, crafts, dance, gardening and competitive sport are just some of the activities that are popular with pupils. Pupils who have taken up student leadership roles, such as prefects, house captains and citizenship leaders, are proud to act as role models for others. Some of these roles are recent, but pupils are excited about the contributions that they will be able to make to their school.

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

Pupils study a broad and balanced curriculum. The school has proactively engaged in the curriculum development work taking place across the Secondary School Partnership (SSP) in Guernsey. This means that the curriculum is well sequenced and builds on prior learning.

However, the checks that teachers make to establish what pupils know and can do are not consistently effective. At times, they do not highlight gaps in pupils' knowledge or understanding or accurately assess their starting points. Therefore, without this information, teachers cannot take the steps needed to resolve these gaps and misconceptions. Equally, when some pupils have grasped concepts, they are not given the opportunity to move on to more challenging work quickly enough.

The school has assessed the individual needs of pupils with barriers to their learning, such as those with additional learning needs (ALN). Teachers receive this information to support them to adapt their teaching accordingly. However, at times the activities chosen and the support provided are not precise enough to meet the needs of some pupils. When this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Reading is a priority area for the school. The weakest readers are quickly identified and receive the support that they need to catch up and keep up with their peers. The school is beginning to develop pupils' wider reading in all areas of the

curriculum and through promoting reading for pleasure. However, this work is in its early stage and therefore not all pupils are currently benefiting from the intended offer.

Improving pupils' attendance is a key focus for the school. The school has raised expectations that pupils attend regularly and track this closely. This information informs timely support for pupils and their families, for example through the newly opened Phare provision.

Pupils are very well prepared for adult life. They talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe and healthy in an age-appropriate way. Pupils understand the importance of respecting others and enjoy learning about different cultures and engaging in moral debates. Many pupils develop as active citizens through democratic voting opportunities and charity work. Pupils are highly positive about the extensive support they receive to consider their future employment, education or training. This means that pupils move on successfully to destinations that align with their future ambitions.

Senior leaders, with the support of the Education Office, are accurate in their self-evaluation of the school. They actively take steps to consider staff workload and well-being. Subject leaders are being developed and supported to ensure that they have the same sharp oversight of their areas of responsibility. Where leaders are aware that there are weaker aspects of the school's work there is a commitment to improve so that all pupils receive a high-quality education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective

What does the school need to do to improve?

- The way in which the curriculum is taught is not adapted precisely enough to meet the needs of some pupils. Consequently, these pupils do not learn the curriculum as well as their peers. The school should ensure that teachers have the necessary information and expertise to meet the needs of all learners.
- The checks that teachers make to assess how well pupils have learned the curriculum do not accurately identify pupils' starting points or gaps in their knowledge. This means that some pupils do not receive the support or challenge that they need to learn well. The school should ensure that teachers' use of assessment identifies exactly what pupils have successfully learned to inform what comes next.

School details

Inspection number	10412535
Type of school	Secondary
Age range of pupils	11 - 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	772
Appropriate authority	The States of Guernsey
Principal	Verona Tomlin
Executive Principal	Elizabeth Coffey
Website	www.lvhs.gg
Date of previous Ofsted inspection	Not previously inspected by Ofsted

Information about this school

- Les Varendes High School is a non-selective 11-16 secondary school which opened in September 2023 after the closure of Guernsey Grammar School. The subsequent merger with La Mare de Carteret High School and the relocation of the Sixth Form was completed on the 1st of September 2025.
- The school uses alternative provision.
- The school has a specialist resource provision for pupils with Communication Interaction and Autism (CIAS).

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 35 of the Guernsey Education Law 1970.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 staff and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with a representative from the Education Office and the executive principal.

- Inspectors analysed school documentation, including leaders' evaluations and plans for improvement and paperwork relating to support and challenge. Inspectors scrutinised a range of policies and procedures, including those that relate to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and history. 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the view 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 the views of parents who responded to the Guernsey Parent Survey. They evaluated the views of staff and pupils from the questionnaires issued at the time of the inspection.

Inspection team

Sara Berry, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Rachel Hesketh	His Majesty's Inspector
Victoria Griffin	His Majesty's Inspector

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