

# Springwood Junior Academy

Aughton Lane, Aston, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S26 2AL

## Inspection dates

12–13 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The principal provides exceptional and dynamic leadership. She inspires staff to aim high and provide the best for every pupil.
- Leadership at all levels is highly effective. Senior and middle leaders give strong support in the drive for excellence. They check unerringly to ensure that teaching of the highest quality enables all pupils to make strides in their learning.
- Governors make sure that they keep their finger on the pulse of school effectiveness by seeing the school's work at first hand. They provide measured and supportive challenge to leaders. Together with trust members, they have the highest ambitions for the school and its pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants value the high-quality training and support that leaders and the trust have put in place. Clear communication, tight appraisal and teamwork form the bedrock of school improvement.
- The 2017 outcomes for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 were extremely high. Progress in reading, writing and mathematics was in the top 2% nationally.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress in this school.
- Pupils take a real pride in their learning and the presentation of work. Writing across a range of subjects is a particular strength and is widely celebrated in eye-catching displays.
- Many children join the early years with abilities below those seen typically. Precise teaching, focused on each child's needs, means that they get off to a flying start in school. When they move to key stage 1 and key stage 2, their learning continues to flourish.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around school. They respond positively to their teachers' high expectations. Consequently, learning time is used to the full and pupils feel safe and happy. Attendance is above average.
- Leaders and staff work very hard to involve parents. Parents have a very positive view of the school and appreciate the efforts of staff who care for their children so well.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is excellent. Work to deepen their awareness of other faiths and cultures is less advanced.
- There are good examples of science work to develop practical science skills in some classes, but these experiences are not routinely provided for all groups. Pupils' understanding of diet and health is limited.

## **Full report**

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

- Provide consistent opportunities in science across all classes, building on existing good practice, to develop and extend pupils' scientific and mathematical skills and to improve pupils' understanding of health and diet.
- Deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths and cultures represented in modern Britain.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The principal has communicated a clear vision for the school that focuses on the very best for every pupil. Together with an extremely effective senior leadership team and the support and challenge from the trust and the governing body, she has moved the school forward rapidly. Leaders' relentless drive to improve teaching has led to excellent pupil outcomes.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school and are always striving to reach new heights for the pupils. Working with the principal, leaders of English and mathematics skilfully support the teaching of other staff, following up new approaches and revisiting any areas for improvement. Staff value this coaching and are proactive about seeking out additional help where they feel they need to develop their expertise further.
- Leaders make very effective use of well-established assessment procedures, designed to meet the school's needs. Senior leaders and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) review assessment information in detail to pinpoint any groups or individuals in need of extra support, then plan next steps accordingly. This thorough approach means that any underachievement is quickly identified and addressed.
- Foundation subject leaders also make a good contribution to school improvement planning. They are currently linking subject schemes of work, for example in history, more closely to the development of skills to make assessment of pupils' progress even sharper in these areas.
- The SENCo ensures that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are very well supported by teachers and skilled teaching assistants. Comprehensive arrangements are in place to involve outside agencies where additional input and advice are needed.
- Leaders make admirable use of the additional pupil premium grant to support disadvantaged pupils. Over time, these pupils have made good progress and, in some cases, have outperformed other non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. Money is used to support the cost of educational visits, provide additional teaching and fund staff who manage welfare and attendance arrangements.
- Leaders provide a cohesive and rich curriculum with many opportunities for pupils to experience exciting first-hand learning, for example through class educational visits such as to Cannon Hall. There are also special events or focus weeks. Specialist teachers from the Aston Community Education Trust (ACET) provide additional subject expertise, for example in art, computing and modern foreign languages. School staff lead an impressive range of after-school clubs that include crafts and baking.
- Specialist teachers, funded from ACET, provide very effective physical education (PE) teaching for all classes and this commitment is set to continue. Leaders have used the additional funding for sport and PE to purchase new equipment to benefit a wide range of pupils and to support additional opportunities for pupils to engage in clubs and competitions. Leaders have yet to fully analyse the impact of the funding, however.
- The school works closely with the local authority in hosting regular community learning opportunities that prove popular with adults and pupils. At the time of inspection,

families were working on creating battery-powered fairground models. Other sessions have focused on phonics and safety online.

- Parents have a high regard for the school. They say communication is effective, leaders and staff are very approachable and that their children love coming to school. One parent wrote: 'All the staff, whether office staff, support staff, teaching assistants or senior management team, have their hearts in this school and it shows. The amount of dedication and effort holds no bounds.'

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors are a very knowledgeable and experienced group who make a full contribution to school life. They seek out opportunities to find out at first hand how well things are going. They are not shy about asking demanding questions but, at the same time, are deeply proud of the school's performance and the work of its leaders and staff.
- Governors are also fully committed to advancing their own expertise and knowledge. Training sessions, supported by ACET, follow every governing body meeting so that all governors are fully up to speed with any new developments or emerging issues.
- Senior leaders provide a wealth of detailed, accurate and timely information to governors through reports and face-to-face meetings. This helps governors to make informed decisions. If any governors wish for clarification, then questions are circulated well in advance of meetings to allow leaders to provide a full response.
- The chair of the governing body works closely with the trust to evaluate the effectiveness of governors and is fiercely ambitious for the school. 'Our aim is to keep challenging continuously. Every governor has a specific responsibility,' he stated.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are fit for purpose. The site is secure and all entry checks are thorough. Staff and governors keep a watchful eye out for any hazards and site staff work hard to keep the premises clean and tidy.
- Staff recruitment procedures are tightly managed and overseen by trust staff, the principal and a governor who visits to review the record of statutory security checks. Record-keeping is exemplary.
- All staff are clear about what to do if they have concerns about a child's welfare. Staff with special responsibility for safeguarding matters have no hesitation in taking appropriate action where they consider any such concerns may have substance. They are tenacious in securing external intervention and support where this is needed.
- Arrangements to update staff on safeguarding issues are systematic. Leaders use weekly briefings to bring any current concerns about child protection to the notice of staff and refresher training, for all groups of staff, is meticulously recorded.
- Several parents commented how supportive staff had been in helping them at difficult times. The inclusion manager and the trust welfare officer play a significant role in supporting families and encouraging good attendance.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Outstanding

- There is a real buzz about learning in this school. Staff are constantly striving to improve their practice and set high expectations of every pupil, whatever their ability. Pupils, in turn, display positive learning attitudes and consequently lesson time is used well. Teachers welcome advice and work very closely together to support each other's professional development.
- Teachers make learning exciting. They use a variety of stimuli to hook in pupils' interest and get them thinking. In Year 1, a video clip about Grace Darling provided a starting point for pupils to write an account of the story, which they did with great enthusiasm, accurately recalling the events.
- Teachers plan learning extremely well so that they are able to adjust their teaching in the light of pupils' responses. In Year 4, when pupils were grouping shapes by properties, the teacher quickly changed the approach to simplify the task when some pupils showed uncertainty.
- Teachers build on previous learning most effectively. Sequences of learning in pupils' books show that teachers build up pupils' skills and then provide purposeful tasks that draw these together. In Year 6, pupils demonstrated their ability to write descriptive passages and build up tension in their vivid accounts of a space walk.
- Questioning is of a high order. Teachers tease out pupils' understanding of advanced vocabulary and whether pupils have fully taken in the deeper meaning of what they read. Teachers model language very well and seize opportunities to broaden pupils' word power. For example, in Year 2, the most able pupils encountered words that included 'rampage', 'demolished' and 'investigate' as part of phonics work.
- The teaching of phonics is top-notch. Teachers articulate sounds clearly and provide plentiful activities for pupils to link the sounds with letter patterns. Teaching is lively, engaging and challenging. Teachers maximise opportunities to strengthen pupils' early writing skills, checking carefully on correct letter formation and explaining the role of vowels and consonants in spelling rules.
- Leaders and teachers promote reading well and pupils are able to talk about favourite authors and books they enjoy. Leaders have timetabled reading lessons to make the best use of teaching assistants in leading group work. This work is paying dividends as pupils are making strong gains in their reading prowess. Teachers also build in research tasks across different subjects to help develop pupils' more advanced reading skills. Some fine work in geography in Year 5 stemmed from such a task.
- The teaching of writing is a notable strength in the school. Pupils write for a variety of purposes in a range of subjects. Writing quality is consistently good across all classes and teachers provide constructive guidance to move pupils on even further. Pupils use 'fix-it time' conscientiously at the start of some lessons to improve and edit their work.
- In mathematics, teachers have placed great emphasis on developing pupils' fundamental knowledge of number and place value before presenting more complex work. They are increasingly confident about moving pupils on to more challenging activities as soon as they are ready to tackle these. There are opportunities to apply mathematics in other subjects such as science, but this is not routine in all classes.

- Homework is used creatively and pupils can select tasks from a varied menu that includes investigative avenues for pupils to explore. Some activities, often light-hearted, are provided to challenge most-able pupils. 'How many beans in a can?' is one such example, but others focus on social and family aspects, for example, 'Help with washing up the dishes tonight,' or 'Try to make your own bed.'

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Leaders make sure that there are many opportunities for pupils to celebrate their learning and receive recognition for their efforts. Pupils and parents like the various systems for rewards, such as the special stars or coin awards that are not given lightly.
- Positive learning attitudes contribute greatly to very successful outcomes. In lessons, pupils respond quickly to their teachers and many are bursting to provide answers. They settle down to work without fuss and sustain their concentration over long periods. They work cooperatively and take a strong pride in their work, following carefully their teachers' guidance on how to make it even better.
- Pupils are very positive about their school. An active school council meets regularly to discuss possible enhancements to the school. Councillors wrote a well-crafted letter to the chair of the trust to request additional play equipment and this was granted. In a whole-school assembly, Year 6 pupils confidently gave a presentation about the Royal Family, interspersing the information with questions and role play.
- Pupils enjoy carrying out a number of jobs and responsibilities. Pupil librarians operate the lending library, using the school's software to check on book issues and returns. They recommend favourite books to their peers and produce book reviews. Pupils also help to prepare audio-visual support for assemblies. Those pupils who make particularly noteworthy efforts in learning or conduct are given the role of VIP for lunchtime, which allows them to help younger pupils at playtimes and with reading.
- Pupils have a secure sense of personal safety as a result of very effective teaching about online dangers and also from a series of lessons and visits about environmental risks. For example, junior road safety officers play a part in publicising how to stay safe on the roads when out and about. Pupils have also learned about fire safety with support from the local fire service.
- A breakfast club operates daily and provides a calm start to the day. Pupils can enjoy cereals, toast, milk or juice and a chance to play board games or to draw. This provision has helped to regularise attendance and punctuality over time for some individual pupils.
- A programme of assemblies and displays around school about different countries help to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils are able to discuss some aspects of British values but their knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures are less well developed.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The principal explained that staff encourage pupils to behave well simply because it is the right thing to do and also that they expect pupils to behave well even when no adults are present. Inspectors saw examples of such responsible behaviour that reflected those high expectations.
- In lessons, pupils respond quickly to adults' instructions, take turns when talking and listen, respectfully, to others. They move calmly around school and are friendly and polite to visitors. In the playground and on the field, where equipment and activities are provided, they play positively and mix well.
- Any incidents of bullying are rare and dealt with well by staff and leaders. Pupils explained that there is occasional bickering, but this is soon sorted out. They were clear that there are no racist comments or any teasing about family dynamics. 'If someone came here with a different background, we would help them to soon settle in,' one pupil explained.
- There is a very small minority of pupils who find it difficult to control their emotions, but staff support them well, so that learning is not affected. The work of both the inclusion manager and the trust education welfare officer is very effective in encouraging good attendance. This is above average for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Children enter the Reception class with abilities that are below those seen typically, but they make strong progress over the year, so that they are ready for key stage 1. Over time, the proportion of children leaving Reception with a good level of development has been at least in line with the national average and current children are well on track to do even better.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was above average in 2017 and current pupils are expected to replicate this. In Reception, the majority of children are already well ahead in their phonics development and this bodes well for the future.
- In 2017, at key stage 1, the proportion of pupils reaching expected standards and working beyond these was above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2017, by the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils reaching expected standards in these subjects was well above average. Proportions reaching higher standards in reading and mathematics were also well above average. The progress that pupils made from their starting points was in the top 2% nationally and the school's minister congratulated leaders, staff and governors on this achievement.
- In 2017, the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, at all key stages, compared favourably against national figures for non-disadvantaged pupils.
- Careful tracking procedures and bespoke individual provision help pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to make good progress. Some pupils with complex needs make



outstanding progress as a result of the excellent support and encouragement they receive.

- The school's latest assessment information indicates that outcomes for current pupils, across all year groups, are likely to remain strong. Pupils' positive learning attitudes, coupled with their confidence in key literacy and mathematical skills, mean that they are well placed to profit from the next stage in their education.
- Pupils' work in books is consistently good across all subjects and some work, especially in writing, is exceptional. Work in art, history and geography is notable and displays around school show this off in good style.
- In some year groups, there is evidence of splendid science work. For example, in Year 2, pupils explored heat conduction of different glove materials in a bucket of ice in connection with research on polar bears. However, not all classes have similar opportunities to develop practical science skills.

### Early years provision

### Outstanding

- Effective liaison between school, parents and pre-school providers helps children settle into the Reception class quickly and happily. Induction visits, meetings with parents and holiday tasks in advance pave the way for a smooth start to school life.
- Children join the Reception class with abilities below those typically seen for their age, but excellent teaching moves them on quickly, so that they are ready for the move to Year 1 by the end of the year. The proportion of children on track to reach a good level of development this year is comfortably above average.
- Every child is seen as capable. Staff know the children well and are alert to their different family backgrounds and needs. They take every opportunity to extend and deepen children's learning through daily interactions.
- Adults focus strongly on developing children's speech and language and seek external support promptly if they feel a child needs extra help. Teaching lays good foundations in the basic skills of reading, writing and number. The early years leader knows what effective teaching looks like and communicates her expectations clearly to staff. She is keen to improve the proportion of boys who meet age-related expectations in writing.
- The indoor learning environment is bright, attractive and stimulating for children. All areas of learning encourage independence. Outdoor work is equally effective, and adults have tried to build in more mathematical experiences this year, to develop children's sense of number, shape and space.
- The early years leader knows all the children very well and has established thorough assessment procedures. Records of children's learning are detailed and well organised, but above all, they are used to identify next learning steps. Staff encourage parents to contribute to these learning journey booklets.
- The teaching of phonics is first-rate. Sessions are lively and engaging for children. Adults model sounds clearly and show children how to make their letters properly. The teacher checks children's understanding frequently and takes time to explain the meaning of unfamiliar words, such as 'hike'.



- Children's work shows good progress in all aspects of learning across the year, for example in number and letter formation, application of phonics, science skills, recognition of shapes and working with larger numbers.
- The trust has very recently decided to take over responsibility, mid-year, for the pre-school Nursery provision for two- and three-year-olds. Until April this year, this had been run by an independent provider within the school site. Work to align the setting with the school's existing high-quality provision is at an early stage but is moving fast. The trust has already committed to replace the current tired building over the summer break and staff are eager to develop their practice in line with that of the school.
- Children in this Nursery setting are happy and busy. They are able to access a wide range of activities. Many of them are able to choose resources independently and sustain interest. They respond well to the adults, who provide high-quality interactions. Provision for the very youngest children is appropriate.
- Children behave very well and rub along well with each other. All welfare requirements are met and the setting is clean, safe and tidy. Adults revisit any safety issues to make sure that the learning environment presents no risks. They also involve children in keeping a lookout for anything untoward.

## School details

Unique reference number	142139
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10048391

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John Barton
Principal	Cathryn Keeton
Telephone number	01142 872597
Website	<a href="http://www.springwoodacademy.org">www.springwoodacademy.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@springwoodacademy.org">info@springwoodacademy.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are seven single-age classes and a Nursery unit, recently adopted by the trust board at the start of the summer term 2018. This provides part-time places for three-year-old children and full-time placements for some two-year-olds.
- The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is extremely low.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support funded by the pupil premium is much higher than average.
- There are slightly fewer girls than boys in the school.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is slightly above average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school converted to academy status in 2015. It is a member of ACET. The chair of the school's local governing body is also the chair of the trust and is a national leader of governance.
- The current principal of the school took up her post in 2016, having previously served at the school as deputy headteacher. The vice-principal and key stage 1 leader were appointed to their current positions from within the school in 2016. Since the previous inspection of the predecessor school in 2014, two teachers have joined the academy to replace teachers who moved on.
- The school operates a breakfast club and an after-school care club, attended by approximately 27 pupils on a daily basis.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 20 lessons or part-lessons across classes to assess teaching and learning. The principal and inspector viewed many lessons jointly.
- Inspectors listened to a selection of pupils reading, from the Reception class and from Years 2, 4 and 6.
- Inspectors and senior leaders sampled work from all year groups in English, mathematics and a range of other subjects.
- Inspectors conducted meetings with the ACET chief executive officer, the ACET improvement adviser, middle leaders, subject leaders and members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors analysed information from a range of school documentation. This included published data about pupils' progress and attainment, the school's report on its own effectiveness, school improvement plans, the school website, the predecessor school's previous inspection report and the school's latest assessment information.
- The lead inspector viewed monitoring information about the performance management of teachers. Inspectors also examined safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors took the views of parents into account through several informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day and by analysing responses from the 19 parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff through Ofsted's online staff survey, to which 15 staff provided responses.
- Inspectors took the views of pupils into account through two meetings with groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2. They also met groups of pupils informally at playtime and lunchtime and viewed the responses to the school's own recent pupil survey.

## Inspection team

James Reid, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Chris Cook

Ofsted Inspector

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