

# Inspection of Southgate School

Sussex Way, Cockfosters, Barnet, Hertfordshire EN4 0BL

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Inspection dates: 16–17 October 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Sixth-form provision

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders, staff and pupils all aim to be faithful to the school's motto of 'Excellence for all'. Pupils want to succeed, and staff work hard to help pupils to achieve well. Pupils' positive attitudes to education are clear. As one pupil put it: 'There is never a day that I don't want to come to school'. All the pupils we spoke to held this view. Parents and carers are pleased with the school's work, too.

The leadership team has raised expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils said that this has improved their conduct and attitudes to school. Pupils particularly like the school's new reward system.

Pupils feel safe and valued here. They know where to go for help if they need it, for instance in the school's 'Be Well Zones', where pupils can get support from adults or older pupils. Pupils find the zones very helpful. Bullying is not a problem at this school. Leaders deal with any incidents fairly and effectively.

Pupils enjoy taking on leadership roles. They are proud to represent their school. Pupils also enjoy taking part in the many extra-curricular activities on offer, including the popular school choir.

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

The new headteacher and the leadership team are ambitious for all pupils. Following the headteacher's appointment in 2015, he made many changes for the better. Leaders' work has been sharply focused on making sure that all subjects are planned and taught effectively. As a result, pupils achieve well in their GCSEs. Leaders are clear about what they should do to further improve pupils' achievement.

Subject leaders design series of lessons that build on pupils' earlier learning. Teachers plan activities that help pupils remember important concepts and knowledge. Occasionally, teachers do not check whether pupils have any gaps in their understanding of subject content. As a result, these gaps are not filled. This means that pupils sometimes lack the knowledge they need to grasp more complex concepts securely.

Teachers in English, mathematics, physical education and music have strong subject knowledge. Leaders make the development of teachers' subject expertise a priority. Most teachers use resources well to support pupils' understanding. However, these strengths are not fully as secure in subjects such as geography and science.

Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Ambitions are equally high for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff understand these pupils' individual needs. They adapt tasks so that pupils can be successful. Pupils told us that teachers provide them with lots of help when they need it.

During lessons, staff encourage pupils to identify and reflect on social and moral issues. They help pupils to think about how their actions can affect others. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles, for instance through elections to the student council. Pupils take these opportunities seriously. They run campaigns to persuade their peers to vote for them. Pupils also told us that such experiences really help to boost their confidence.

Leaders make sure that the school's diverse community is equally valued. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. Special events, such as 'Black History Month', contribute well to this. Leaders and staff also help pupils to understand how to look after their physical and emotional health.

Leaders make sure that pupils in Years 10 and 11 receive appropriate careers guidance and advice. For instance, pupils attend the annual careers fair and all pupils in Year 11 have a careers interview. Teachers help sixth-form students to complete applications for jobs and universities. However, the programme of careers guidance in Years 7 to 9 is not as well planned. Pupils told us that they would like more information about careers.

Leaders have put in place a new rewards and sanctions policy. Pupils like this, especially the rewards which they get to choose. The changes have had a positive effect on pupils' behaviour. Pupils' attendance is now above the national average. Pupils' attitudes to learning are strong. Low-level disruption in lessons is rare. Leaders work hard to avoid excluding pupils. This work has been successful. The number of exclusions from school has reduced and is now below national averages.

Leaders have high expectations of sixth-form students. Students' knowledge of their subjects is improving. This is because leaders and teachers have strengthened the way that all subjects are taught and planned. However, some students do not keep an accurate record of their work to support their recall of prior learning. Students appreciate the wide programme of enrichment activities on offer. They enjoy leading assemblies and supporting younger pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff are well trained and vigilant. All staff keep a close eye on pupils' welfare and identify concerns promptly. Leaders work well with external agencies to keep pupils safe.

Leaders and staff know about particular risks in the local area. After school, they escort pupils to the local bus and train stations to safeguard pupils' well-being. Leaders make decisions in the best interests of pupils' safety. When they identify any pupils who may be particularly vulnerable, they take appropriate action so that pupils are safe.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils achieve well in a range of subjects because leaders and staff plan pupils' learning carefully. However, teaching in science and geography is not as strong as other subjects. Leaders should ensure that all teachers have the necessary expertise to deliver subject plans effectively and consistently.
- Careers advice and guidance for pupils in key stage 3 are not as well planned as they are in key stage 4. Leaders should make sure that all pupils receive high-quality careers advice and guidance.
- Leaders and teachers should check that all pupils have a secure understanding of important concepts and subject content. They should adapt subject plans to plug gaps in pupils' knowledge and address misconceptions so that pupils build their knowledge and skills securely.

## 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142727
<b>Local authority</b>	Enfield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10110517
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,515
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	239
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Ashni Shah
<b>Headteacher</b>	Martin Lavelle
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.southgate.enfield.sch.uk/">www.southgate.enfield.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Southgate School converted to become an academy school on 1 April 2016. When its predecessor school, Southgate School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- Since the predecessor school's last inspection, a new headteacher and senior leadership team have joined the school.
- The school is part of the Middlesex Learning Trust. The school joined the trust in 2018.
- The school does not make use of any off-site or alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- We held meetings with the headteacher and other school leaders, governors, a trustee and the chief executive officer from the trust.
- We considered English, mathematics, geography, physical education, music, business studies and science in depth as part of the inspection. We met with subject leaders and visited lessons in these and other subjects. We also held meetings with teachers and with pupils, and looked at pupils' books. We talked to pupils and staff around the school.
- We looked at the single central register of checks on all employees and regular visitors to the school.
- We considered the 629 responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils as well as 113 responses to the staff survey. We took into account parents' views through the 99 responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Joan McVittie, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Fiona Abankwah	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Bailey	Ofsted Inspector
Andy Webster	Ofsted Inspector

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