

# Inspection of a good school: Southfield School for Girls

Lewis Road, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN15 6HE

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Inspection dates:

25–26 February 2020

## Outcome

Southfield School for Girls continues to be a good school.

There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a section 5 inspection now.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school and attend well. Behaviour is excellent in lessons and at social times. Pupils told us that they feel safe in school and well supported by the adults who teach and look after them. Many parents and carers are positive about the school. One parent represented others by telling us: 'We couldn't be happier with the school that we have chosen for our daughters.'

Pupils thrive because they are fully involved in school life. Pupils achieve well within a culture of high ambition. For this school, this means getting good examination results as well as preparing pupils to be active citizens. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education and employment.

Pupils enjoy many exciting activities during and after school. They take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, sporting activities, music clubs and global adventures. The popular 'eco club' raises the awareness of environmental issues.

There is a calm and productive atmosphere in lessons. Pupils use opportunities in lessons to debate maturely. They work together well to support each other's learning. Pupils say that teachers deal with any bullying or poor behaviour straight away.

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

Leaders successfully promote a culture of teamwork and aspiration. Leaders and governors set high standards. They have constructed a curriculum that is ambitious for all. Pupils study a wide range of academic, creative and other subjects across all key stages. Teachers provide challenging work for all pupils. This includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Across all subjects, teachers have thought hard about the important knowledge pupils need to know. Well-designed and well-sequenced curriculum plans exist in most subjects. The plans make it clear exactly what teachers must teach and the order in which they must teach it. Leaders are beginning to work together to make links between subjects. For example, in both history and English pupils are learning about women in society in the past.

Leaders have provided frequent professional development opportunities for staff. Teachers use new approaches to teaching that enable pupils to learn more and make stronger progress through the curriculum. Teachers try new things and then share what has worked. Teachers use thoughtful and engaging ways to recap and review knowledge. As a result, teachers understand what pupils know and can recall before moving them on to what they need to learn next. For example, in geography, we saw pupils recalling important knowledge about coastal erosion at the beginning of a lesson. Pupils told us this helps them to know and remember more.

Pupils achieve well in most subjects. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND also do well. This is because staff adapt their teaching for these pupils effectively.

Pupils and students in the sixth form learn to respect the needs, beliefs and choices of others. The curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is well designed. Leaders and governors give a high priority to pupils' mental health. National and international trips extend pupils' learning. For example, pupils visited India to work with charities supporting vulnerable women and children.

The quality of education in the sixth form is improving. Sixth-form students are now benefiting from more opportunities to recall knowledge. In science and mathematics, students told us that they always review work before moving on. They say that teachers are always available to help them. This includes during time outside of lessons.

Governors play an active part in ensuring that every pupil achieves their best. This includes working with leaders to improve the school environment for both pupils and teachers. Staff told us that leaders are very considerate of their workload. Leaders take care of staff's well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors, take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. The safeguarding and pastoral teams are well trained and take effective action when staff or pupils raise concerns. Staff know what they must do to report any concerns they may have.

Leaders make sure that all record-keeping is detailed and up to date. They also make sure that staff receive important safeguarding training. For example, staff have had training on county lines, 'upskirting' and how to support pupils to look after their own mental health.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe online and about the dangers of alcohol and drug misuse.

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

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

- Over the last three years, leaders have reviewed the curriculum. There is coherent, clear and detailed sequencing of learning in most subjects. This is enabling pupils to know more and to do more. In a few subjects, such as music and media studies, curriculum plans focus on the activities that pupils will do and do not identify clearly enough the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. Leaders should ensure that all curriculum plans enable pupils to know and remember more.
- Leaders have not ensured that there are effective links between all subjects so that teachers can identify the important knowledge that pupils need to know and plan opportunities to revisit this knowledge in different subjects. Leaders should ensure that collaborative planning enables subject leaders to identify the substantive knowledge pupils need in each different subject and how they can work together to help pupils know more and remember more.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 3–4 February 2016.

## **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 are the school and you are 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>	136976
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10110120
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,068
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	166
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Christopher Drake
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephanie Roberts
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.southfieldsch.co.uk">www.southfieldsch.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3–4 February 2016

## Information about this school

- The school uses three alternative providers: Keystone Centre, Oakland’s Centre and Hospital and Outreach.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- We spoke with pupils about life at school and their work. We held meetings with senior leaders, governors, teachers and non-teaching staff.
- We did deep dives in English, mathematics, science and humanities. We met with subject leaders, spoke with pupils, visited lessons, looked at pupils’ work and met with teaching staff. A range of other subjects was also considered.
- We reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders’ curriculum plans. Bullying logs and information relating to pupils’ behaviour were examined.

- We considered the views expressed by parents in the 175 responses to Ofsted Parent View. We also considered the 80 responses to the staff questionnaire and 181 responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- We reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff and the support provided for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Stephen Long, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Vanessa Stanley

Ofsted Inspector

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