

Inspection of a good school: South Nottinghamshire Academy

Glebe Lane, Off Cropwell Road, Radcliffe on Trent, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG12 2FQ

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 March 2022

Outcome

South Nottinghamshire Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say that all teachers encourage them to do things the 'SNA Way'. One pupil accurately described this as being 'taught to be respectful, put ourselves out there, try new things and be kind to others'.

Pupils belong to one of three houses. These are Aquitaine, Maine or Rollo. Pupils wear their ties with pride to show others which house they represent. During tutor time, younger pupils join in discussions with older pupils well. Pupils value the fact that they get to know other pupils in different year groups.

Many pupils benefit from the wide range of leadership and volunteering opportunities at the school. Teachers train older students to become reading leaders. Reading leaders read twice a week with younger pupils. Both groups get a sense of achievement from this.

There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Staff have high expectations of pupils' conduct. Pupils understand these expectations and rise to them. Leaders have developed a school environment in which pupils feel safe and happy.

Pupils know what bullying is. They say that staff are quick to deal with bullying when it happens. Pupils agree that the school is very inclusive and that teachers do not tolerate any form of bullying or discriminatory language.

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

Leaders have focused their attention on ensuring that pupils achieve highly in subjects they choose to study in key stages 4 and 5. Pupils study a broad curriculum and experience a good quality of education. Pupils can choose to study from a wide range of subjects. The vast majority study the English Baccalaureate. Most pupils in key stage 3 study at least two languages.

Leaders have ensured that the order in which teachers teach concepts in their subjects helps pupils to build their knowledge and skills. This enables pupils to know and do more. This is particularly the case in mathematics and English and in those subjects that pupils choose to study in more depth in Year 9. Pupils achieve well in these subjects as a result.

There is too little lesson time available for subjects that pupils do not choose to study in greater depth in Year 9. This restricts the opportunities for some pupils to learn the planned-for key stage 3 curriculum in full. For example, teachers sometimes teach topics too quickly to cover the curriculum in the reduced teaching time available. Consequently, some pupils do not gain the depth of knowledge they should in these subjects in key stage 3. Leaders have plans in place to resolve this shortcoming.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They present information clearly. Teachers match resources and activities closely to what pupils need to know. Pupils benefit from this approach. In most cases, they know and remember more. Leaders have recently trained teachers to use retrieval practice in lessons to help pupils embed knowledge. Sometimes, teachers do not use this practice purposefully and it does not match the intended learning.

Pupils demonstrate commitment to their learning. There is very little low-level disruption in lessons. When there is poor behaviour, teachers deal with it quickly. The corridors are calm and orderly. Pupils agree that the school is a place where they can learn.

Teachers support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) extremely well. Leaders ensure that 'pen portraits' identify these pupils' additional needs and their targets. Teachers use this information well to ensure that pupils with SEND access the curriculum.

There is a clear strategy to support pupils who are still at the early stages of reading. The 'reading recovery scheme' has a positive impact on improving pupils' reading ages.

Students in the sixth form are mature and focused. They act as role models for younger pupils. Many undertake extended projects and volunteering opportunities through the 'stellar' program. This helps students to strengthen their applications for their next steps, including those who choose to go to university.

Pupils in key stages 3 and 4 also enjoy wider development opportunities. In tutor time, pupils explore issues such as fundamental British values and the risks of substance abuse. Pupils benefit from age-appropriate relationships and sex education. Many enjoy attending a range of after-school clubs. Many pupils take 'pledges'. These encourage them to represent the academy in sporting events and to take part in cultural trips and community projects.

School leaders receive effective support from Redhill Academy Trust. Many teachers benefit from the ongoing training that they can access in the trust. Leaders, representatives of the trust and governors work in partnership to improve the school further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders create and maintain a strong culture of safeguarding at this school. They have trained staff to recognise when pupils may be at risk. Staff are vigilant and swiftly report concerns they may have about pupils. Safeguarding leaders are quick to respond when there is a concern, to ensure that pupils receive the help they need. Leaders engage with external agencies to protect the most vulnerable pupils.

Governors and trustees understand their statutory safeguarding responsibilities. They ensure that leaders implement the necessary policies and procedures to keep children safe.

Pupils know there is someone to talk to if they have a worry.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that teachers have sufficient curriculum time to teach some subjects in key stage 3 to the depth that pupils need. In some subjects, teachers rush through the planned curriculum. As a result, pupils do not develop the depth of knowledge that is set out in the curriculum plans. Leaders must ensure that teachers have sufficient time to teach to the aims of the curriculum so that pupils are able to gain the depth of knowledge in those subjects they do not continue into key stage 4.
- Leaders have recently introduced the use of recall activities to help pupils embed the most important knowledge in their long-term memory. Leaders have not ensured that all teachers know how to use this approach well enough. On occasions, teachers use these activities without having identified the purpose. As a result, some pupils do not benefit from these activities as well as they should. Leaders must ensure all teachers understand how to use any preferred approach to teaching the curriculum so that it is purposeful and has the desired impact.

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 outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2017.

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.

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

Unique reference number	137112
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10227762
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	756
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	99
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Simon Healy
Headteacher	Daniel Philpotts
Website	www.southnottinghamshireacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 February 2022

Information about this school

- A new chair of the local governing body was appointed in September 2020.
- The school makes use of two registered alternative providers. These are Stone Soup Academy and CP Riverside School. The school also uses an unregistered alternative provider. This is Equip Education and Support Services.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in art, history, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector also visited a range of lessons in other subjects. For these subjects, he checked the work pupils had produced and spoke to teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development, the sixth form, the curriculum and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- The lead inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stages 3, 4 and 5.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. He reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector had a telephone discussion with the chair of trustees.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the trust's executive team, including the chief executive officer.
- The lead inspector spoke to representatives of all three alternative provisions the school is using.
- Inspectors took note of the responses received on Ofsted Parent View. They considered the results of the Ofsted staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jenny Brown

Ofsted Inspector

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