

Inspection of Daventry Hill School

Ashby Road, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 0QE

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 April 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this much improved school. Staff are very caring and supportive. Parents and carers appreciate the help staff give them and their children. Staff understand pupils' individual needs well. Pupils say that they feel safe and are happy at the school. One parent summed up the views of others when they stated, 'My child flourishes at this school.'

Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Pupils know staff will look after them and help them to learn. Staff are skilled in meeting the pupils' needs.

Leaders have high expectations that pupils will be ready for their next stage in life. Leaders have ensured that the school supports all pupils to make a positive contribution to society. They want their pupils 'to be ready for the community and the community to be ready for their pupils'.

Pupils behave well and engage with their learning. They have positive attitudes to their education. Staff know the causes of distress for each pupil and so can intervene early to help pupils remain calm. Lessons are not affected by disruption because staff support pupils to understand and manage their emotions. Pupils are certain that if bullying happens, staff will deal with it quickly and effectively.

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

Pupils follow a curriculum 'pathway' that is appropriate to their particular needs.

Pupils on the black and green pathways benefit from studying a very well-structured mathematics curriculum. They also enjoy an excellent employability curriculum. This threads through the subjects and projects that they study.

In some of the subjects on these pathways, leaders do not always identify precisely enough the key knowledge that pupils need to learn. Pupils do not develop their understanding as well as they should when teachers have not made it clear to them what they should learn.

Pupils on the yellow pathway, who have more complex needs, are very well served by a curriculum that is well matched to their needs. Staff use suitable techniques to help develop these pupils' ability to concentrate and focus. Staff are skilled at helping pupils to improve their language and communication. Pupils use individual strategies effectively to communicate what they need to others.

Children at the 'foundations for learning' stage experience an exceptional curriculum. They enjoy exploring their environment and engaging with it in their own ways. Adults skilfully guide children to learn through play. The employability curriculum starts early with focused activity that develops knowledge of different careers, for example 'playing shop'. Physical development is supported through a wide range of

creative and imaginative activities. The sensory needs of the children are provided for exceptionally well. Children thrive and develop well from their starting points.

Leaders promote a love of reading by making sure that pupils read, or are read to, each day. Some young pupils learn to read using their phonics knowledge. Others are supported with a phonics programme as they move through the school. A recently introduced phonics-based programme of support is helping some older pupils to read with confidence.

Staff plan activities that interest the pupils and help them to learn. Consistent routines and visual timetables mean that pupils feel secure during lessons. Staff regularly check pupils' progress and communicate this to parents.

Older pupils and students in the sixth form have opportunities to gain accreditation in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). Students also enjoy an excellent range of work-related learning. They have opportunities to help run the school's café as well as to undertake extensive work experience with local employers. Some students write articles for a national disability magazine. They then decide how to spend the money they receive for this work. Students are very well equipped to pursue a career of their choice.

Pupils benefit from high-quality personal development. They enjoy activities such as residential trips, after-school clubs, bicycle-riding lessons and learning in the school's outdoor area. Some have the opportunity to be involved in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Pupils receive good-quality careers advice and guidance. Many pupils receive lessons that prepare them for the world of work and adult life. They develop important work-based skills and learn to look after themselves. Pupils are taught about other cultures, religions and moral issues. However, some important knowledge that pupils need is not explicit enough in the planning teachers use. This means that some pupils are not as fully prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be.

Staff are proud to work at the school. The school leaders are appreciated by the staff. Staff value the support leaders give them. They say that leaders care about their well-being and are considerate of their workload. The academy trust leaders and governors have provided effective support to improve the school rapidly. Leaders are committed to making further improvements to the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. Safeguarding leaders are knowledgeable about pupils' particular vulnerabilities. Staff are well trained to recognise any signs that might cause concern. They closely monitor behavioural changes in any non-verbal pupils to identify any early indicators of concern.

Safeguarding records are clear and accurate. Concerns are recorded in a timely manner and tenaciously followed up with the appropriate agencies when needed. Leaders have appropriate procedures in place to manage any allegations. Staff work with pupils to help them understand online risks. When required, appropriate risk assessments are put in place to keep pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about. Leaders need to complete the process of reviewing the curriculum in all subjects within their identified timescale. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.
- Leaders have not identified the knowledge that pupils need to gain through the personal development curriculum to develop their understanding of fundamental British values and aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. As a result, pupils enjoy planned experiences without realising the significance of what they are undertaking. They fail to retain the important knowledge that these activities were designed to provide. Leaders need to ensure that the personal development curriculum provides pupils with the necessary knowledge to enable them to prepare fully for life in modern Britain.

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	142783
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10227394
Type of school	Special
School category	Free school special
Age range of pupils	4 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	163
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	15
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jeanette Payne
Headteacher	Gareth Ivett
Website	www.daventryhillschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 and 16 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides education to pupils aged four to 18 with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These include: specific learning difficulty; moderate learning difficulty; severe learning difficulty; profound and multiple learning difficulty; speech, language and communication needs; and autism spectrum disorder.
- The school uses two unregistered providers of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science, English and communication. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at individual pupils' education, health and care plans and checked these against the school's provision. They spoke to leaders and visited lessons in the 'yellow' pathway and looked at the provision for ICT.
- Inspectors spoke to the leaders of the early years provision and visited the early years foundation stage area.
- Inspectors spoke to the leaders of the sixth form and visited the sixth-form area and school café.
- Inspectors heard children in different year groups read books.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the local governing body and representatives from the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school development plan.
- Inspectors took note of the responses received on Ofsted Parent View and considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire. Inspectors met with several groups of pupils to gather their views.
- To judge the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors read the school's relevant policies, scrutinised the single central record, checked the school's procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and met with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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