

Inspection of Springwell Harrogate

59 Grove Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 5EP

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
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

While at the school, pupils develop their self-esteem, confidence and sense of purpose. Their time at the school has a tremendously positive effect on them. For example, many become more engaged in their education. Pupils told inspectors that the school had 'turned them around'. One parent, echoing the views of others, described the school as a 'lifeline' for their youngster.

Leaders and staff ensure that pupils who join the school settle in well. They get to know them as individuals and understand what pupils need to feel secure. Therefore, pupils respond positively to staff and follow their instructions well. The atmosphere around school is calm. Pupils generally treat each other with respect and there is little bullying. Staff take care of the pupils and keep them safe.

In the short time that most pupils stay at the school, they make strides in their learning. This includes developing their understanding of relationships through a well-developed relationships and sex education programme. The curriculum for pupils who remain at the school for shorter periods is stronger than for those who stay at the school for longer.

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

Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes at the school, including to the staffing structure. Several new methods for working with pupils have been introduced. New leaders and staff are ambitious for pupils and are determined that they succeed in their next steps. Most pupils move back to their original school or to appropriate settings, including college.

Pupils join having missed large amounts of their schooling and lacking in motivation. The curriculum reignites pupils' interest in learning. It enables pupils to fill some of the gaps they have in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The 'experiential learning programme' develops pupils' physical fitness as well as broadening their knowledge of the world around them. The curriculum across subjects does not focus enough on ensuring that pupils know and apply subject-specific vocabulary.

Teachers and leaders select topics carefully so that pupils gain the fundamental knowledge they need to make progress. For example, pupils learn about spelling and grammar so that they can write more accurately. However, for pupils who remain at the school for longer, the content of topics and the way topics are sequenced need further refinement.

Pupils complete a suite of carefully chosen assessments when they join the school. These include phonics assessments and assessments relating to their behaviour and attitudes. Information from these assessments is used to identify specific additional help that pupils need and to complete pupils' individual risk assessments. Teachers meet pupils' individual needs well. They make subject-related concepts accessible to them, making good use of real-life examples.

Most pupils join the school without the habit of reading. The reading programme sparks pupils' interest in books. The tasks set enable them to connect with the stories they read and understand plot and character. The reading programme does not systematically develop pupils' general vocabulary knowledge.

Attendance has improved since the previous year and is now in line with similar schools. Leaders have used a wide range of approaches to improve the attendance of pupils who are extremely anxious. As a result, the attendance of some pupils has improved dramatically. Staff work tirelessly to encourage pupils resistant to coming to school to attend more regularly.

The personal development programme supports pupils well in preparing for their next steps. Leaders have threaded spiritual, moral, social and cultural education through the programme. Pupils learn about cultures and traditions, such as Chinese New Year and the Queen's Jubilee. An effective work experience programme enables them to gain work-related knowledge and skills. Pupils also receive independent careers advice in line with the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Leaders from the multi-academy trust (MAT) and members of the local governing board use a range of suitable measures to evaluate how well the school is doing. Effective MAT-wide improvement systems enable the school to benefit from expertise from across the MAT.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders place safeguarding front and centre in their work. They liaise closely with outside agencies, including community police officers, to ensure that pupils get the support they need. Staff access a wide range of training, including bespoke training linked to the school's context. Recent training has focused on criminal exploitation.

Leaders make sure that staff are given the appropriate information about each pupil's safeguarding needs and circumstances. This helps staff to give pupils bespoke care and attention. Leaders also use this information to choose pertinent topics for the personal, social and health education programme.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not well sequenced enough for the small number of pupils who attend the school for longer than one academic year. In some subjects, this means pupils do not gain deep knowledge of concepts and how to apply them. Leaders are in the process of refining the curriculum. They should make sure that their refinements focus on how topics are sequenced, and their content. This

would enable pupils who stay longer at the school to build up their knowledge over time so that they can apply it at a deep level.

- Not enough focus is placed on developing pupils' vocabulary in the reading programme and the curriculum in subjects does not always emphasise subject-specific vocabulary enough. This means that some pupils do not understand the nuances in the texts that are being shared. Pupils also find it hard to explain subject-related ideas in speech and writing. Leaders need to introduce a more systematic approach to teaching both everyday vocabulary and subject-specific vocabulary. This would mean that pupils comprehend the more sophisticated meanings in the books that teachers share with them. It would also enable pupils to communicate their subject-specific knowledge in speech and writing with greater clarity.

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	140077
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10212210
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	29
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Hearl Lenten
Teacher in charge	Alex Bentley
Website	www.swharrogate.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Springwell Harrogate is a pupil referral unit which serves a wide catchment area around Harrogate.
- All the pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities and five have education, health and care plans.
- At the previous inspection, the school was part of the Delta Academies Trust. In April 2020 it was re-brokered to become part of the Wellspring Academy Trust.
- The school has close links with Springwell Leeds Academy, which is a special school within the Wellspring MAT.
- For most pupils, the school day lasts from 8.15am to 1.15pm. A small number of pupils receive on-site education from 1.30pm to 3.30pm.
- There are many more boys than girls in all classes and in all year groups.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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.
- Meetings were held with the head of the centre and with MAT leaders who work closely with the school, namely the associate principal from Springwell Leeds, the executive principal of Springwell Leeds and the director of learning for Wellspring Academies Trust.
- Inspectors had separate online meetings with the special educational needs coordinator for the school based at another school in the MAT, the chief executive officer for the MAT, the chair of the local governing board and leaders from schools who have placed pupils at the setting.
- Inspectors spoke separately with a group of boys and a group of girls. They also spoke informally with pupils.
- Inspectors observed the procedures for greeting pupils at the start of the day and visited form time.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, science, mathematics and experiential learning. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed documentation relating to the school's curriculum, along with the school's own evaluation and its development plans. Inspectors also sampled education, health and care plans for four pupils, as well as internal plans detailing the individual support the pupils require. A meeting was also held with a small sample of leaders from subjects where deep dives were not undertaken, including the mathematics leader.
- Inspectors reviewed five comments made by parents on free text in Ofsted Parent View.
- The single central record was checked. Two meetings were held with the designated safeguarding lead. An inspector also reviewed records of safeguarding concerns and referrals.

Inspection team

Sarah Hubbard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Paul Barton

Ofsted Inspector

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