

# Inspection of Sprowston Community Academy

Cannerby Lane, Sprowston, Norwich, Norfolk NR7 8NE

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Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2022

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| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | <b>Good</b>  |
| The quality of education     | <b>Good</b>  |
| Behaviour and attitudes      | <b>Good</b>  |
| Personal development         | <b>Good</b>  |
| Leadership and management    | <b>Good</b>  |
| Sixth-form provision         | <b>Requires improvement</b>  |
| Previous inspection grade    | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

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

Pupils are happy. They talk proudly of being a part of 'Team Sprowston' where diversity is valued and celebrated. While the school's size may be daunting, younger pupils settle in well.

There is a palpable ethos of kindness. Should pupils not get their behaviour choices quite right, and let their standards slip, teachers promptly remind pupils of what the expectations are. Pupils like the fact that teachers ensure that there are clear and consistent boundaries. Many pupils are of the view that teachers are good at solving issues, including bullying. A small minority consider that a few teachers need to improve this aspect.

Like their peers, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive a good deal here. They enjoy interesting lessons and access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. There are many clubs and opportunities to develop leadership skills. Pupils can set up their own clubs, such as creating an allotment. All pupils with SEND secure their next steps in education, employment or training.

Currently, the personal development programme in the sixth form is under-developed. Sixth form students would like to undertake more activities such as charitable work.

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

Leaders' aim is to develop well-rounded citizens who gain the knowledge they need to succeed in life. Leaders have thought carefully about how to achieve this through the education pupils receive.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum in Years 7 to 9 is ambitious, and pupils study a broad range of subjects. Leaders are focusing on increasing the take up of modern foreign languages. This is so more pupils take the full range of subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate suite.

The curriculum is well established across subjects, including in the sixth form. Subject leaders know what they want pupils to learn and the order in which key content should be taught. They make sure that pupils revisit key knowledge so pupils can recall easily what they have learned. Teachers engage with the latest educational research to help inform how they teach their subject. They demonstrate clearly to pupils how to achieve well in a task. This means that pupils are confident to 'have a go'. Teachers check pupils' understanding before moving on.

Staff support weaker readers effectively. Staff have received training on how best to support pupils' reading in their subject. Leaders identify any weaknesses in pupils' reading when they join the school. They make sure that each pupil follows a

bespoke programme that helps them get better at reading. Pupils have dedicated time to read diverse texts from a wide range of authors which increases their love of reading.

Pupils with SEND are fully included in school life. Teachers know the pupils and their needs well. Pupils participate fully in lessons. Staff effectively manage pupils who have highly complex behavioural needs. Few pupils receive suspensions. Pupils who have come to the school for a 'fresh start' quickly learn the routines of the classroom and improve their behaviour.

While the school provides a range of services to help support pupils' mental health and well-being, there are some pupils who still struggle to attend school regularly. This may be a for a range of reasons, including anxiety. Leaders know they need to look more closely as to why pupils who have low attendance are not attending. Some pupils who have been absent from school are not catching up on the work they have missed.

Pupils in the main school follow a comprehensive curriculum for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE). This includes relationships and sex education (RSE) that is age appropriate. Pupils enjoy the personal development lessons and learning about different topics such as democracy and healthy living. Pupils have lessons in which they can explore current affairs, world religions and other cultures.

The programme for personal development is not as well-considered in the sixth form. Students have a 'bitty' experience made up from ad hoc activities and limited options for enrichment.

Pupils receive effective careers education throughout their time at school. Work experience is now running again after the pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A comprehensive website dedicated to careers as well as time with impartial advisors, help pupils to make choices that are right for them. Careers education for sixth form students is well structured.

Diligent trustees make sure that the school is effectively led and managed. Staff are proud of the school and enjoy working there.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a large safeguarding team who are well trained, knowledgeable and have specialist areas of expertise. For example, there are domestic abuse champions who ensure that vulnerable pupils receive the help and support they need with this area of concern. Staff liaise effectively with a range of external agencies.

Staff understand their safeguarding role. They know pupils' lives are complex with online as well as neighbourhood risks. They closely follow the school's policy for reporting concerns as well as the latest government safeguarding guidance.

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

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

- Despite leaders' efforts, a minority of pupils do not attend school on a regular basis. Some pupils who have been absent are not catching up on the work they have missed and have gaps in their learning as a result. Leaders should review and refine their systems so that harder-to-engage pupils want to attend school more regularly, and do not fall behind in their education.
- The personal development programme in the sixth form lacks structure and is under-developed. This means that students are not being prepared thoroughly for adult life and independent living. Leaders need to consider what students at this age need to be taught to live rich and fulfilling lives, ensuring that they put in place a coherent and structured programme for personal development.

## 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

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                    | 144359   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                            | Norfolk  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                          | 10227596   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                             | Secondary  |
| <b>School category</b>                            | Academy sponsor-led  |
| <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>        | 1516   |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b> | 154  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                      | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                             | Neil Bloomfield  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                                | Liz Wood   |
| <b>Website</b>                                    | <a href="http://www.spowstoncommunityacademy.co.uk">www.spowstoncommunityacademy.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                | Not previously inspected   |

## Information about this school

- The school joined the Boudica Schools Trust in February 2018.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## 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 on their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with members from the board of trustees, including the chair and executive director for education, and the vice chair of the local governing body. Inspectors also spoke to the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and pupils about the school's provision.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, music, geography, design technology and physical education to evaluate the quality of education. For each deep dive, 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 considered the provision for PSHE, relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) and religious education. Inspectors reviewed curriculum plans and spoke with pupils and leaders.
- Inspectors met with the leader in charge of SEND and scrutinised documentation for SEND. Inspectors observed support for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's information on behaviour, bullying and attendance. Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records and spoke with trustees, trust leaders, school leaders, staff and pupils about safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders of the alternative providers that the school uses.
- Inspectors considered the 99 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View and the 99 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the 81 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 261 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

## Inspection team

|                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Liz Smith, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Bessie Owen               | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Nicola Hood               | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Susan Sutton              | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Brenda Watson             | Ofsted Inspector        |

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