Inspection of a good school: Derby Moor Spencer Academy

Moorway Lane, Littleover, Derby, Derbyshire DE23 2FS

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 June 2022

Outcome

Derby Moor Spencer Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Derby Moor Spencer Academy is a diverse and inclusive school. Many pupils and staff are of the view that everyone is accepted. Students in the sixth form said that the school celebrates differences which gives the school a 'community feel'.

Attendance is high. When pupils arrive in the morning, the sound of classical music reminds them to move swiftly to their first lesson. Most pupils enjoy attending the school. They feel safe and happy.

Pupils have good relationships with teachers. They receive a good standard of education across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported. Pupils said that they learn well in their lessons and recognise that teachers help them to achieve. Students in the sixth form benefit from demanding teaching.

Occasionally, pupils fall out. Pupils are confident that teachers deal with these issues well. Most pupils said that when bullying occurs, teachers do not tolerate it.

When pupils make mistakes, leaders take responsibility to provide extra support and education. Leaders focus on helping pupils aspire for future success. Staff have high expectations of what all pupils can be and achieve. Pupils know that leaders will not give up on them. Leaders' view is: 'Once a Derby Moor pupil, always a Derby Moor pupil.'

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

Leaders have reviewed the curriculum and ensured that it is both broad and ambitious for all pupils. They have identified the large concepts that they want pupils to know by the end of key stage 3, 4 and 5 in all subjects. They have broken down the knowledge and skills that build towards these concepts. Leaders know how important employability is in the context of their community. They have weaved employability into many aspects of the curriculum to ensure that pupils have the best chance in life.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. The 'Derby Moor classroom' gives teachers a clear structure of what leaders want to include in a typical lesson. Teachers present subject matter clearly. For example, mathematics teachers use modelling well to show pupils how to break down and solve a worded problem. Teachers use assessment well to check what pupils know and adapt teaching if needed. Teachers make sure that the most important knowledge is explicit and that pupils know it by using 'KAS' (knowledge and skills) and 'WIN' (what I know) sheets. These enable pupils to know and remember more. In a small number of subjects, the activities chosen to help pupils learn do not precisely match what is set out in the curriculum. Sometimes these activities are not demanding enough, and pupils do not get the depth of knowledge they need.

Teachers use 'pupil passports' to support pupils with SEND to access the same learning as other pupils. Teachers in the 'innovation' classroom devise small-step targets for each pupil. This helps pupils to achieve and make progress. Early reading experts are trained in how to teach phonics to help pupils who are at the early stages of reading become more fluent.

Teaching in the sixth form follows many of the same principles that teachers use in key stages 3 and 4. Teachers provide high quality explanations and opportunities for pupils to practise. Students get a good grasp of challenging topics. For example, psychology students were able to talk at length about the biological factors that could affect human behaviour, while also considering alternative theories. Many students are involved in volunteering, student leadership and extended projects. 'Drop down days' focus on life skills, preparation for next steps and finance. Students in the sixth form use all parts of the school to study independently. They act as role models to younger pupils.

Lessons tend to be disruption free and an environment in which pupils can learn. The system for managing behaviour is well understood and used consistently. The school has a calm and orderly environment. Some pupils and teachers have raised concerns about behaviour incidents between small numbers of pupils. Leaders work with pupils, the community, parents and carers to ensure that these issues are resolved appropriately.

Leaders have placed great emphasis on promoting pupils' wider development. There are well-planned opportunities for pupils to learn about the world of work. Leaders prioritise education that will help pupils to stay safe, such as education around knife crime and domestic abuse.

Many staff are proud to work at this school. Many say that leaders consider their workload and well-being. Leaders at the school, and at trust level, accurately evaluate the school's provision. They use this to continue to improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff are vigilant. Leaders provide staff with regular safeguarding updates. Staff report all incidents, no matter how big or small.

Leaders have a clear overview of the concerns that staff raise. They triage these concerns and involve the right staff or external agencies to help pupils quickly. Leaders maintain detailed records of how they safeguard pupils.

Pupils know that year managers are available at any time if they have a worry that they need to share.

Trust leaders have oversight of the school's safeguarding arrangements. They check that arrangements remain effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers in some subjects do not always ensure that activities are well matched to the intended learning. Sometimes these activities are not demanding enough. Pupils do not learn as much as they could. Leaders should ensure that all teachers know how to match activities to the intended learning.

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 predecessor school, Derby Moor Community Sports College to be good in December 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	145327
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10228435
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
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	1643
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	222
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul West
Principal	Scott Doyle
Website	www.derbymoor.derby.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Derby Moor Spencer Academy converted to an academy in January 2018 and became a part of The Spencer Academies Trust.
- The school uses two registered alternative provisions for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 11 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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in modern foreign languages, mathematics, computing and history. 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 looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for: behaviour; personal development; the sixth form; and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors observed break and lunchtimes and spoke to pupils informally.
- The lead inspector also met with groups of pupils and students from the sixth form.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leaders 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 subject improvement plans.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the trust, including the chair and vice-chair of the trust board. The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body, including the chair.
- The lead inspector met with members of the trust's executive team.
- The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the alternative provisions that are attended by a small number of pupils at this school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gill Martin	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
http://eepurl.com/iTrDn.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022