

Inspection of Springwell Alternative Academy Lincoln

Macaulay Drive, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN2 4EL

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say they feel safe. Staff are very caring and supportive. Parents and carers who responded to the survey appreciate the help staff give to their children. Staff understand pupils' individual needs well. Most pupils say that staff are helping them to improve their behaviour and that 'things are better here compared to my last school'.

Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. There are lots of adults available to support pupils at all times. Pupils know staff will look after them and help them engage with learning. One pupil said, 'They do the things that help us trust them.' Staff are very aware of the difficulties pupils experience. They offer a nurturing approach to help pupils understand themselves.

Leaders focus on the things that will have the greatest impact in the limited time pupils attend the school. They ensure that the curriculum begins to fill any gaps in pupils' knowledge. They are passionate that all pupils should be able to read and develop a love for reading.

Staff offer safe spaces and time for pupils to regulate their behaviour. For most pupils, this results in improvements in their behaviour and attendance. Most pupils say 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?

Senior leaders have worked well with trust leaders to provide an appropriate curriculum. They have focused on ensuring that pupils learn essential literacy and numeracy skills. Curriculum leaders have thought carefully about what knowledge teachers should teach and when. This enables pupils to know more and remember more in subjects like mathematics and English.

Teachers provide work for pupils that builds on their previous learning. This allows pupils to deepen their knowledge of the topics they are studying. For example, in English, some pupils were using their knowledge of crime fiction to write the opening scene of their own crime story.

The early years provision has only recently started in the school. Leaders have adopted a curriculum that supports development and learning at an appropriate stage. This builds towards preparing children for their next stage of education.

Leaders have prioritised reading for all pupils. They have adopted a systematic phonics programme to support the teaching of early reading. Pupils are able to apply their phonics knowledge effectively when reading unfamiliar words. Staff are well trained to help pupils become more confident and fluent readers. Older pupils who need extra help with reading have access to a range of high-quality resources and interventions. This support is helping many to catch up with their peers.

Teachers write 'learning slips' in pupils' workbooks. They use these to assess pupils' knowledge. Teachers then know if they need to revisit any areas of learning to secure pupils' knowledge. They also use these slips to check the progress pupils are making towards achieving their behaviour targets. The use of these slips is more effective in primary classes, where pupils are more aware of their targets. Leaders do not have an overview across the whole school of this system of monitoring pupils' behaviour targets. They do not have a sharp enough view of exactly how much progress every pupil is making towards their behaviour targets.

Many pupils engage in their learning and focus on their work. At times, significant numbers of pupils are out of lessons in 'safe spaces' with staff. Some pupils display a poor attitude to learning. Staff work hard to encourage these pupils to be more committed to their learning.

Leaders have ensured that there is good quality provision for pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. Many pupils arrive at the school with negative feelings about education. Staff provide many opportunities to convince pupils that they can succeed. At the end of each day, staff remind pupils of the positive things they have done that day. However, leaders have not ensured that all pupils who may have additional needs stated on their education, health and care plans receive the precise support they need.

Pupils enjoy a range of opportunities that develop them as individuals. They said that they have enjoyed trips out to a wildlife park and a climbing centre. Leaders have planned personal, social and health (PSHE) education to be responsive to current issues and situations that arise in the school. Older pupils benefit from structured careers lessons. Pupils learn about British values. They know the importance of respecting cultures and beliefs that are different from their own. Leaders are committed to ensuring that pupils are well prepared for a transition back to a mainstream school or their next educational setting.

Staff say that leaders support them well. They have access to a wide range of training. Staff appreciate the efforts that leaders have made to improve their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive appropriate safeguarding training. They follow the right steps when they have any concerns about pupils' welfare and well-being. They know to report any concerns they may have about other members of staff.

The designated safeguarding leaders and pastoral staff know pupils well. They work closely with parents to ensure that pupils are safe and well. They involve the appropriate safeguarding agencies when necessary.

Leaders follow up absences quickly. They regularly check on any pupils who they have not seen in school. Leaders and governors know and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. Pupils are taught how to be safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers have a good knowledge of individual pupils and the social, emotional and mental health needs they may have. However, leaders do not currently have a clear and precise overview of how well pupils are improving in their learning and in how they manage their behaviours. As a result, leaders are unable to be certain that the most appropriate learning and behavioural targets are set to support all pupils. Leaders need to ensure that they have a precise understanding of how pupils are demonstrably improving in their learning and their behaviour, so that they can check that pupils receive the precise, targeted support they need.
- Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities SEND who have social, emotional and mental health needs are well supported at the school. However, some pupils with additional needs, such as autism spectrum disorder, are not as well supported as they could be. Staff do not receive precise enough information about these pupils to know how to meet their needs. Leaders' review of these pupils' progress does not always include how well they are progressing against any targets that relate to their additional needs. Leaders should ensure that all staff understand the additional needs of all pupils thoroughly, so that staff are able to provide precise support to meet these needs.

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	147195
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10243443
Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy alternative provision
Age range of pupils	4 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	44
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Hearl Lenton
Principal	Lisa Ashcroft-Day
Website	https://springwellalternativeacademylincoln.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Springwell Alternative Academy Lincoln was registered as open in June 2019.
- The school is part of the Wellspring Academies Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school meets all the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved 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 in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive principal, the vice principal and most members of the school's senior leadership team.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, English, mathematics and PSHE. 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 science planning documents and looked at samples of pupils' science work.
- Inspectors heard pupils from different year groups read books.
- Inspectors met with executive leaders of the school to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met representatives of the local governing body and of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the academy development plan.
- Inspectors took note of the responses received on Parent View and considered the results of the Ofsted staff and pupil surveys. 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 safeguarding team. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mike Pride

Ofsted Inspector

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