

Inspection of Farnborough Spencer Academy

Farnborough Road, Nottingham NG11 8JW

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is a warm and happy learning community where everyone can be themselves. Pupils and staff pledge to be proud of the school, and they are. Pupils treat each other with respect and kindness. They laugh and smile. They enjoy positive relationships with staff who know them well. Pupils feel safe and cared for.

The school is ambitious for all pupils. The curriculum is designed to help pupils to succeed in education and in life. Pupils want to learn. Most pupils work hard and help each other. Staff encourage pupils to be confident. Most teachers adapt their teaching to meet pupils' needs. Reading is important. Every class starts the day by reading together.

Pupils benefit from a strong programme of personal development. This helps prepare pupils well for their next steps. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including the dance and LGBTQI+ clubs. Pupils have opportunities to lead and serve the community, for example by being anti-bullying or well-being ambassadors.

Pupils appreciate the school's clear expectations. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Staff reward pupils for doing the right thing. Some pupils need help to improve their behaviour or attendance. Staff support these pupils sensitively.

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

This school has improved significantly. Leaders, including leaders from the trust, lead with clear moral purpose. They are committed to providing a high-quality education to all pupils. Staff and pupils work together to create a school that everyone can be proud of.

Pupils study a broad, ambitious curriculum. In key stage 3, pupils study a rich curriculum that allows them to make informed choices about their next steps. Leaders encourage pupils to study a wide range of subjects, including humanities and languages, at key stage 4. For a small number of pupils who need additional support, the curriculum has been adapted appropriately.

Subject leaders have thought carefully about the important knowledge pupils will learn. They have planned how pupils' knowledge will build steadily from Year 7 to Year 11. They ensure that teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, access the same subject curriculum.

The school has established effective routines to support learning. Every lesson in every subject begins with knowledge-retrieval questions. Teachers plan these questions carefully to help pupils to remember what they learned recently and in previous topics. Most pupils put effort into completing these tasks. However, some do not, and teachers do not always pick up on this. Teachers provide pupils with

regular opportunities to discuss their learning using key vocabulary. They check pupils' learning and understanding before moving on.

Most teachers have secure subject knowledge. Some do not and they do not always make appropriate task choices to ensure that all pupils can learn the important knowledge.

'Farnborough reads' is a new daily form-time reading programme. Pupils read carefully selected class texts. The school provides effective support for pupils who need help to read fluently. However, there is currently no phonics teaching for those who need it. Leaders have clear plans for teaching to begin very soon.

The school's ethos, 'we are proud', runs through the school's highly effective personal development programme that includes strong careers education. Pupils enjoy thinking hard about the world from a range of viewpoints. They learn to respect and celebrate diversity.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They work hard to maintain a calm and orderly environment. All pupils know what is expected of them. When pupils behave poorly, staff apply the behaviour policy consistently. Leaders provide effective support for pupils to improve their behaviour. A small number of pupils receive an individual programme of good support at the school's Trent House provision.

The staff at this school are a strong team. They feel well supported by leaders. They value the high-quality training that school and trust leaders provide. Governors and trustees play an important role in supporting the school's development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a culture of care and vigilance at this school. Pupils feel safe. They know that they can turn to an adult in school if they are worried. Pupils benefit from a range of effective support for their mental health.

Safeguarding leaders have high levels of expertise. They know pupils and families well. They take prompt action when concerns are raised. They keep detailed records. They are tenacious in securing support from external agencies.

Leaders provide comprehensive training for staff. All staff know their duties well. They are alert to signs that a pupil may need support.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff do not have sufficient subject expertise to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils. When this is the case, pupils do not learn the curriculum as well as they should. Leaders must ensure that all staff are supported to improve their subject knowledge so that pupils are not disadvantaged by ineffective teaching.
- The school does not teach phonics. Some pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read do not get the support they need. They cannot access the curriculum as well as their peers. Leaders must ensure that pupils who need extra help receive the support they need to make sufficient progress to catch up with their peers and become confident readers.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly. Some are not punctual. They miss out on learning. Leaders must ensure that pupils receive support to attend school regularly and on time.

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.

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	146564
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10245804
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	886
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Donna Kinderman
Principal	Graeme Smith
Website	www.farnboroughspencer.com
Date of previous inspection	not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is a member of The Spencer Academies Trust.
- The school uses three registered alternative providers.
- The school meets 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 graded 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 held meetings with senior leaders, other leaders, staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with trustees and members of the local governing body. She also met with leaders from the Spencer Academies Trust.

- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, humanities, physical education and science. As part of the deep dives, inspectors visited lessons, spoke with curriculum leaders, reviewed curriculum plans and reviewed pupils' work. They also spoke with pupils and teachers.
- Inspectors visited lessons, form time and an assembly. They listened to pupils read.
- An inspector visited Trent House, the school's behaviour support provision.
- An inspector spoke to a representative of one of the alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils at various times of the school day, including at break and lunchtime. They also visited clubs.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions during the inspection and the Ofsted surveys.

Inspection team

Aoife Galletly, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Roxanne Fearn-Davies	His Majesty's Inspector
Mark Rhatigan	Ofsted Inspector
Sally Wicken	Ofsted Inspector

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