

# Inspection of a good school: Studfall Junior Academy

Rowlett Road, Corby, Northamptonshire NN17 2BT

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Inspection dates:

27 and 28 September 2022

## **Outcome**

Studfall Junior Academy continues to be a good school.

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

Studfall Junior Academy is a flourishing school. There is a family feel about the place. Pupils enjoy their learning. Pupils are proud of their school. They told the inspector, 'Staff really help us understand the learning.' Pupils said that they feel safe.

Staff prioritise pupils' personal and academic development. They have very high expectations of pupils. Pupils want to achieve. They have positive attitudes towards their work and towards each other. The school's values permeate its work. Pupils know and understand the values. Pupils like being well-being ambassadors and school councillors.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils know what is expected of them. They are polite and respectful. They work hard and care for each other. Pupils know that staff quickly sort out any problems and that bullying is not tolerated. Pupils know and understand the school rules. They have a very clear understanding of difference and equality.

Parents and carers are delighted with the school. They feel well informed about their children's learning. One parent, typical of many, said, 'This is an amazing school, which goes above and beyond to help both the pupils and parents. I can't fault it.' Parents like that the school staff are so approachable.

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

Leaders have developed a strong curriculum in most subjects. They ensure that pupils build their knowledge and skills gradually over time. Pupils remember what they have learned. For example, pupils recall learning about the Vikings. Other pupils can recall facts about the Second World War. They remembered that 'blitzkrieg' is the German word for 'lightning war.' However, there are inconsistencies in what some pupils can remember about their learning. In some subjects, leaders have not identified precisely the key knowledge that pupils need to learn.

Leaders ensure that there is a sharp focus on reading from the moment that pupils join the school. Books are valued. There is a strong culture of reading at the school. Leaders ensure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading. Pupils build their phonic knowledge, enabling them to learn to read. They use their phonic knowledge to sound out unfamiliar words. Leaders make sure that the books pupils read match the sounds they have learned. Leaders ensure that pupils develop the reading skills necessary for future learning.

Pupils say that they 'love' mathematics. Leaders have set out the order in which pupils learn new knowledge in mathematics. Pupils gradually build their understanding and skills over time. Pupils explain their learning well using mathematical vocabulary. For example, pupils use 'numerator' and 'denominator' when discussing fractions. Other pupils confidently explain how to divide four-digit numbers by two-digit numbers.

Leaders are reviewing the school's approach to assessment. In some subjects, teachers check carefully how well pupils acquire knowledge and use it fluently. In other subjects, where leaders have not identified precisely the key content that pupils need to learn, approaches to assessment do not identify gaps in pupils' learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the full curriculum. Teachers provide strong support and ensure that resources are suited to these pupils' needs. They regularly check how successfully pupils with SEND access the curriculum. Leaders communicate well with parents. They work effectively with external agencies.

The school's work to enhance pupils' personal development is of high quality. Leaders support pupils to be resilient and to develop strength of character. Typically, a pupil said, 'We don't give up easily!' Pupils have a secure understanding of British values, such as democracy and liberty.

Trustees and representatives of the Greenwood Academies Trust know the school very well. Trustees fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Leaders work very well with staff. They provide regular training. They consider staff's well-being and workload. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the leaders and the professional support from the trust.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders provide regular training for staff and governors. Staff know how to spot pupils who may be at risk. They pass on concerns promptly. Leaders support pupils' welfare. They work well with external agencies to provide additional help when needed. Record-keeping is comprehensive. Trust representatives regularly check the school's safeguarding procedures.

Pupils know who to go to if they have a concern. They know that staff take their concerns seriously. Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe, including when online.

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

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

- The key knowledge and content that pupils need to learn in some subjects is not sufficiently well considered and sequenced, unlike in other areas of the curriculum. In these subjects, it is not yet fully clear what pupils should learn and by when, to build their knowledge over time. Leaders should ensure that curriculum thinking for all subjects sets out precisely the knowledge that all pupils, including those with SEND, should know and by when.
- Staff regularly check what pupils know in the core subjects. However, leaders have not developed assessment systems for the foundation subjects. As a result, teachers do not regularly check how successfully pupils access the wider curriculum. Leaders need to develop a consistent approach to assessment in the wider curriculum subjects and ensure that the use of assessment does not place unnecessary burdens on staff or pupils.

## 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Studfall Junior School, to be good in June 2013.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145823
<b>Local authority</b>	North Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241497
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	462
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Michael Hamlin
<b>Principal</b>	Louise McGeachie
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.studfalljunioracademy.org">www.studfalljunioracademy.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school joined Greenwood Academy Trust in June 2018. When its predecessor school, Studfall Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The school has a special educational needs provision for pupils with severe learning difficulties.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the principal, the vice-principal, curriculum leaders, the leader with responsibility for provision for pupils with SEND, and several teaching and support staff.
- The inspector met with representatives of the trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.

- The inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspector examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. He considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns. The inspector considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's free-text service. He also considered the responses to the staff survey and the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Damien Turrell, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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