

# Inspection of a good school: Falconer's Hill Academy

Ashby Road, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 0QF

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Inspection dates:

22 and 23 November 2022

## Outcome

Falconer's Hill Academy continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this welcoming and inclusive school. They feel safe and well cared for. As one pupil said, 'We are kind and generous towards each other.' Pupils trust that adults will quickly sort out any problems that arise, including any instances of bullying.

Pupils live out the school's values of 'aspiration, ambition, courage and respect'. They are keen to learn and try their best. They listen intently and talk confidently about their work. Pupils consistently meet adults' high expectations and behave sensibly in lessons and around school.

The 'Flourishing@Falconers' programme encourages pupils to try different experiences. It helps them to develop life skills, such as changing their own bedsheets. Pupils appreciate the wide range of visits, clubs and activities the school offers. These include yoga, orchestra and athletics. They enjoy a range of cultural visits, including the Royal Opera House and Hampton Court.

Pupils are proud of the contribution they make to everyday school life. They learn to be caring and responsible citizens. They develop their leadership skills. Pupils receive opportunities to voice their thoughts and opinions. They readily take on roles and responsibilities such as house captains, eco-councillors and prefects. The pupil well-being champions support and advise their peers.

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

Leaders have developed a highly ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum. It helps pupils to build their knowledge and vocabulary gradually. In history, pupils can explain the importance of the Mayan number system. Other pupils can talk about the relationship between Julius Caesar and the Roman Senate. In science, Year 4 pupils can describe the difference between pitch and volume after listening to different instruments. However, there are inconsistencies in what some pupils can remember about their learning over time.

Leaders have rightly prioritised reading. They are determined that pupils will become fluent and enthusiastic readers. Pupils who join the school thrive because teachers quickly identify their next steps in reading. Pupils receive reading books that closely match the sounds that they are learning. As a result, pupils develop confidence and accuracy in their reading. They say they love to read. They enjoy the high-quality books that their teachers read to them every day. Pupils read in most lessons. This enables them to develop their fluency, vocabulary and understanding.

Teachers present learning in a way that sparks pupils' enthusiasm. Teachers skilfully break key knowledge into small, manageable chunks for pupils to learn. They make sure that pupils build on what they have learned before. However, occasionally, pupils' misconceptions are not identified and addressed effectively by staff.

Pupils with additional needs are identified quickly. Staff ensure these pupils get the help they need. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities access the full curriculum. Preteaching and sensitive adaptations help these pupils to learn the curriculum well.

Leaders place a high priority on pupils' personal development. The curriculum is designed to enable pupils to develop their character and resilience. They reflect on the importance of British values, such as democracy. They have many opportunities to debate current issues. Pupils learn to understand the importance of equality and diversity. They learn about different types of families. They develop respect for different cultures and beliefs. Pupils are confident that discrimination 'doesn't happen here'.

Leaders responsible for governance challenge and support leaders. They have robust systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of leaders' actions. Staff work extremely well together and there is a real sense of team spirit. Leaders are considerate of staff's well-being, and morale is high.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. They know their pupils and families well. As a result of well-designed training, staff know what to look out for and how to record their concerns. Leaders act promptly when a pupil might be at risk. They work closely with external agencies to secure help for vulnerable pupils.

The curriculum, including school visits, supports pupils to be safe. They learn how to keep safe in a range of situations, such as around water or when there is a fire. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to keep safe when online.

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

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

- In a few subjects, pupils' mistakes are not identified and addressed in a timely manner. This means that pupils do not remember what they have been taught accurately and misconceptions continue. Leaders must ensure that all adults have the knowledge and expertise to identify misconceptions quickly so that pupils develop a secure understanding of a subject.
- On occasions, there are inconsistencies in what pupils can remember about their learning. Pupils do not reliably remember what they have been taught. Leaders should ensure that all pupils know and remember more of the curriculum as they progress through the school.

## 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 school to be good in May 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.

## 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>	140829
<b>Local authority</b>	West Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240432
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	235
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	David Ross
<b>Principal</b>	Angela Rock
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.falconershillacademy.co.uk">www.falconershillacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	16 and 17 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new chair and vice-chair of the local governing body have been appointed. The vice-principal was appointed in April 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There is a breakfast club, provided by the school.
- The school is part of The David Ross Education Trust.

## 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, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, curriculum leaders and groups of staff.
- The inspector met with a representative of the trust and two members of the school's local governing body.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, science and history. For each deep dive, the inspector visited lessons, discussed the curriculum with leaders, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with pupils and teachers about their lessons.
- The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with a group of pupils to discuss their views about the school and spoke to other pupils informally during social times.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including those relating to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour. The inspector scrutinised the school's single central record.
- The inspector reviewed responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Responses to the staff and pupil surveys were also considered.

### **Inspection team**

Joanne Sanchez-Thompson, lead inspector    Ofsted Inspector

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