

# Inspection of a good school: Sheffield Park Academy

Beaumont Road North, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S2 1SN

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Inspection dates:

7 and 8 December 2022

## Outcome

Sheffield Park Academy continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where staff care for pupils and are determined that they will succeed. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve highly. Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They feel at home in its respectful and kind culture. All pupils follow the same broad curriculum. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders have thought carefully about how they can re-engage pupils with school after the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. They do not shy away from sharing important messages about how pupils can keep themselves safe in school and in the local area. Leaders promote pupils' wider personal development well.

Pupils are proud of the school. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but when it occurs it is taken seriously and dealt with well. Pupils say that they feel safe in the school. Sixth-form students act as positive role models for younger pupils.

Teachers make sure that lessons are well designed and follow the curriculum plan. They consistently use school-wide strategies, such as 'I do, we do, you do', so that pupils know what to expect in lessons.

Pupils and students benefit from rich experiences beyond the curriculum. These include visits to universities and outdoor pursuits centres, and sports trips abroad. All pupils have access to a wide range of opportunities to develop their interest and talents.

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

Leaders have planned an ambitious and broad curriculum. Pupils regularly revisit what they have learned before applying this to new learning. For example, in most subjects, pupils begin each lesson by answering questions on topics they learned last week and last term. This helps pupils to remember their learning. The proportion of pupils in key stage 4

who study the suite of challenging subjects, which collectively are known as the English Baccalaureate, is remarkably high.

Teachers assess pupils' learning to check their understanding. Teachers use this information to plan the next steps of learning. However, some teachers do not ensure that pupils use this advice about how to improve their knowledge well enough. As a result, pupils do not always complete the tasks that teachers set them.

Warm, respectful relationships between staff and pupils mean that most pupils are well supported. However, there is some difference in the effectiveness of staff in supporting the specific needs of pupils with SEND. These pupils do get extra help, but it is sometimes not precise enough to ensure that they make the best possible progress through the curriculum.

The personal development curriculum is strong. Pupils value what they learn about healthy relationships and online safety and say this happens at the right time for them. Different groups of pupils get on well together. The extra-curricular opportunities that leaders provide to broaden pupils' and students' wider development are a strength of the school. Leaders ensure that pupils and students receive useful careers information, advice and guidance. This has supported successful applications for some pupils to study at Eton College with residential scholarship bursaries.

Leaders ensure pupils are well prepared for adult life. Teachers promote strong moral and social awareness. The sixth form is very successful. Students achieve well in a broad range of subjects and are well prepared for their next steps. After sixth form, high proportions of students enter further education, employment or training successfully. Students in the sixth form display mature attitudes and are confident and articulate. Leaders are increasingly ambitious for sixth-form students.

A small number of pupils struggled to adjust back into routines after the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions lifted. Leaders have shared best practice from other schools to strengthen behaviour systems. All staff who spoke with inspectors feel that there are clear behaviour systems in place. Lessons across the school typically take place with little disruption. Leaders study patterns of behaviour and act swiftly if they identify problems.

Leaders have improved the reading curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to read widely. Leaders identify the specific barriers faced by pupils with insecure reading knowledge. They put effective support in place to help these pupils become more confident and fluent readers. Weaker readers are very well supported in 'The Bridge', the school's additional resource base.

This is an inclusive school where all pupils are made to feel welcome. Leaders, including governors, cater for the needs of the local community. They demonstrate a clarity of purpose in line with the school's values. Staff appreciate how leaders and governors develop ways to protect them from excessive workload. Governors are well informed about the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a strength of the school. All staff share in the responsibility for ensuring that pupils are kept safe. The members of the large safeguarding team are well known and work well with teachers and pastoral staff to support pupils at risk.

Leaders form strong links with external agencies. This allows them to access timely help for pupils when required. They are tenacious in seeking the support that pupils need. The designated safeguarding lead keeps meticulous records of the actions taken to keep pupils safe.

Leaders regularly update staff on local safeguarding issues. Staff at all levels know what to do if they have concerns about pupils' safety. Pupils say that they feel safe and have a trusted adult they can talk to if needed.

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

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

- Sometimes pupils do not know what they need to do to improve their work. This is because they do not understand how to act on the guidance that they receive. Leaders need to ensure that teachers are clear about what pupils need to do when acting on feedback. This will assist pupils with knowing what they need to do next.
- Some pupils with SEND do not get the precise support they need. This means they do not make as much progress through the curriculum as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff better understand the needs of pupils with SEND and how to support them.

## **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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the 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>	131895
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240462
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,205
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	172
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Local governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Juliet McKervey
<b>Principal</b>	Roland Freeman
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sheffieldpark-academy.org/">http://www.sheffieldpark-academy.org/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the United Learning Trust.
- The school uses four alternative providers for small numbers of pupils.

## 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 with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the principal, other senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors spoke to staff at one alternative provision.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, geography, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked

at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the United Learning Trust.
- Inspectors spoke to many pupils and students about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' and students' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's records of safeguarding checks and referrals to the local authority. Inspectors spoke to staff about how they keep pupils safe. Inspectors also asked the pupils how they keep themselves safe and what to do if they have concerns.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff who responded to Ofsted's online staff survey and to parents who responded to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Tudor Griffiths, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Cresswell	Ofsted Inspector
Marc Doyle	Ofsted Inspector

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