

Inspection of Swanwick Hall School

Derby Road, Swanwick, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 1AE

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 January 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have ensured that the school's three core values are at the heart of everything that happens at Swanwick Hall School. These values are resilience, respect and inclusivity. Most pupils talk about feeling safe. They recognise key people who they could talk to, should they have a concern or a worry.

The school has high expectations of all pupils. Pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes a wide range of GCSE and A-level subjects. Younger pupils benefit from a timetabled enrichment programme which allows them to develop their talents and interests.

The school's sixth-form provision is growing. One parent echoed the views of several when they stated that their child 'has good relationships with her teachers and pastoral manager in the sixth form'. Sixth-form students commented on how their teachers motivate them to do well.

Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to the management of behaviour. This is beginning to have a positive impact. Some pupils and parents are not fully satisfied with the communication that they receive connected to behaviour. While many pupils feel that teachers deal with bullying effectively, this is not the case for all pupils.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. Pupils study a wide range of different subjects. The curriculum for key stage 3 pupils has recently undergone development to ensure that pupils are able to recall their knowledge over time. Sixth-form students benefit from teachers' subject expertise.

The school has a new approach to assessment and feedback. This helps pupils to recognise how they can improve their work further. Most teachers address misconceptions well and allow time for pupils to correct and deepen their thinking. However, this is not yet consistent across all subject areas.

Teachers adapt their teaching for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The strategic oversight of support for pupils with SEND is not fully embedded. Teaching assistants are not always used effectively. Sometimes pupils may not get all the support they need.

Leaders have recently adopted a new approach to support pupils who need help to become confident and fluent readers. Many pupils access the library at breaktimes and lunchtime. Some pupils embrace the opportunity of being library leaders.

Leaders have raised their expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct. This is beginning to have a positive impact. Most pupils' behaviour in lessons is calm and orderly. Many pupils talked positively about the impact of the new behaviour

systems. Leaders have also recently established a new system to improve pupils' punctuality. The impact of this has not yet been seen in terms of the number of pupils late to lessons. Some pupils and parents feel that leaders do not always quickly deal with incidents of bullying. Parents would like more information about the new behaviour systems that the school has put in place.

Not all pupils attend school often enough. Leaders monitor the attendance of pupils. They use a range of strategies to try and improve pupils' attendance. The low attendance of some of the most vulnerable pupils means that learning is often missed.

Pupils have access to extra-curricular activities, including choir and chamber orchestra. Pupils in Years 8 and 9 have a timetabled extra-curricular lesson every week. These pupils access a range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests such as baking, sports leadership and codebreaking. In the sixth form, students have access to a learning and academic mentor to support them. They value this provision.

All pupils have one lesson a week of personal, social and health education. This includes lessons connected to healthy relationships and lifestyles. All pupils have access to some religious education. However, most older pupils do not learn about religious education as part of a discrete subject. Some older pupils are not able to recall their learning of different religions and belief systems.

Leaders have established a 'pause for thought' initiative. This gives pupils the opportunity to think about and debate questions connected to the wider world. All pupils and staff also write their own legacy statement which allows pupils to reflect on what they want to achieve. Not all pupils show an understanding of fundamental British values. However, pupils demonstrate an awareness of the school's values.

There is a careers programme in place at the school. Pupils hear from a range of speakers about different career options. Sixth-form students have weekly meetings with a mentor to help them prepare for their next steps. Sixth-form students talked positively about this provision.

Governors are effective in their roles. They understand the strengths and areas for development of the school. Most staff feel that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. They value the opportunities and support provided by the trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are aware of their duty in relation to safeguarding. They receive regular training to ensure that their knowledge of safeguarding concerns is up to date. Leaders have adopted clear mechanisms to support the reporting of safeguarding concerns.

The school has a safeguarding team in place to ensure that they can provide help and guidance when necessary. There is also a family support worker at the school who supports pupils and their families.

Pupils have lessons about keeping themselves safe. They recognise the importance of these sessions.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- All pupils, including those with SEND, follow a broad curriculum. In most lessons, adaptations are made to support pupils with SEND. However, the strategic management of the provision and support for pupils with SEND is not clear. Therefore, pupils are at risk of missing out on the support they need. Leaders should ensure that there is clear oversight of the management of pupils with SEND and that communication with both staff and parents connected to these pupils is clear.
- Some pupils do not attend school often enough. This means that they miss out on learning. Leaders should ensure that they continue to support families and pupils to improve pupils' attendance.
- Leaders have recently developed new policies connected to behaviour expectations and punctuality. Many older pupils feel that these policies are having a positive impact. The impact of these policies are yet to be felt by all members of the school community. Leaders should ensure that the behaviour policy continues to be used consistently and that all pupils benefit.

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	142741
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10254854
Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,127
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	109
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Karen Potts
Headteacher	Jonathan Fawcett
Website	www.swanwickhall.ttct.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 and 27 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Two Counties Trust.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision and five unregistered provisions.

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 completed deep dives in English, mathematics, physical education, modern foreign languages, geography and art. As part of the deep dives, inspectors reviewed curriculum plans, visited lessons, scrutinised samples of pupils' work and held discussions with subject leaders, teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, members of the local governing body and representatives of the trust, including the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of alternative provisions used by the school.
- The lead inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil surveys were also considered.

Inspection team

Roxanne Fearn-Davies, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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