

# Inspection of Sneyd Academy

Sneyd Street, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST6 2NS

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Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

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

Pupils enjoy their learning and spending time together in school. They speak with pride of the many varied opportunities and activities they take part in. Pupils embody leaders' ambitions to 'learn, achieve and believe' in all they do and say.

Leaders make sure that most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. However, for some pupils, teachers do not make their steps to success in learning manageable enough.

Older pupils discuss fundamental British values with insight and understanding. They show respect and appreciate their own cultural heritage being valued in school. Extensive visits out, visitors in and taking on leadership roles help shape pupils' personal development. Leaders' recent improvements to the curriculum are helping to strengthen pupils' learning across subjects.

Pupils are mature and respectful. They behave well. They converse about a range of topics in detail. This starts in the early years. Children shared their news about a visit to see a helicopter. Their excitement and enjoyment of taking turns to be a pilot was palpable. Year 6 pupils' knowledge of first aid, especially resuscitation, is impressive.

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

Trust and school leaders work in tandem to set and achieve an ambitious curriculum for all pupils. Staff feel valued and take on a range of middle leadership responsibilities. While there have been many developments across school, senior leaders do not always check to see whether what they have put in place is working well.

The recent improvements to the curriculum are beginning to make a real difference to how pupils remember and recall their learning. Pupils' recall of their current learning is secure, but they sometimes struggle to remember learning from previous terms. Leaders have identified what key knowledge to teach and when and how to teach it. However, leaders do not check well enough on how successfully their intended plans are being followed. This leads to some variation in teachers' delivery of the curriculum across classes and subjects.

Pupils learn the basics of reading and mathematics quickly and effectively in the early years. Staff provide a range of carefully thought-out activities that support all aspects of learning. They teach children, step by step, specific knowledge that successfully builds learning. Staff interact with children in a way that gives credit for what they know. They also extend and challenge children, so that they are ready for Year 1.

Leaders' time and energy given to implementing the new phonics scheme is paying dividends. Pupils learn to read with fluency. The daily phonics sessions ensure pupils get to grips with sounds and help them to apply them well in their reading. The sessions also help staff identify pupils who need extra support. Teachers give extra help quickly, which allows pupils to catch up.

Older pupils continue the success with reading as they move up through the school. They read willingly to visitors, showing expression and understanding through their voices and their responses. Pupils convey a strong sense of finding pleasure in holding a book in their hand. They talk of experiencing the joy of being moved by a storyline. Becoming a 'secret storyteller' to the younger pupils is a much sought-after role, as is becoming a 'library legend'.

Leaders promote successfully a calm and inclusive culture around school. Pupils know themselves and their peers well. They recognise and respect that some pupils need extra help on occasion, to do the right things in the right way.

Leaders identify pupils' additional needs swiftly and accurately. They seek external support and advice when necessary. The recent introduction of the Lily Pad provision in the early years is successful.

Leaders put individual plans in place to support many of the pupils with SEND. These plans work to a degree. However, they often have very broad aims. Leaders do not break these broad areas down into small enough steps to support pupils' learning as well as they should. Nor does their review of pupils' learning consider carefully enough what is working and what needs to come next. This means that some pupils stay working on the same goals for longer than necessary, which slows their learning. Additionally, for pupils with SEND who have behavioural needs, leaders do not provide staff with sufficient guidance on strategies to help pupils learn to manage their own behaviour.

Pupils speak of the family feeling within and across the school. They recognise that this extends to the Alpha Academies Trust too. Pupils appreciate the memories and friends they make on the days where they join together and work with pupils from other schools within and beyond the trust.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make the required checks on staff working at the school. Leaders provide targeted training that ensures staff know how to spot, report and record concerns. Staff are clear on their roles and responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. This includes child protection, first aid and medicines. Leaders have systems in place to ensure pupils' safety. Their checks on a few of these systems are not always thorough enough. However, despite this, pupils' safety is not compromised.

Pupils are taught about keeping safe in a range of situations, including online. They know why age restrictions on games are important. They know that they have the red and blue button system on the school website to seek help for bullying or to talk to someone.

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

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

- Pupils remember their recent learning but are unable to consistently draw on what they know and remember over time. Leaders should continue to embed the curriculum and develop further recall strategies. This is so that all pupils can make links across their learning to secure deeper understanding and ensure that they can remember and apply what they know consistently across all subjects.
- The learning intentions for pupils with SEND, including those with complex needs, are sometimes too broad. Pupils remain working on the same areas of learning for a longer than is necessary. Smaller steps are not put in place to help pupils with SEND be as successful as they could be. Leaders should ensure that staff develop the skills and knowledge to break down these broad aims into small, achievable steps that should pave the way for pupils' increased success.
- Leaders do not systematically check the impact of some of their work. This means that they are not always clear enough on what is working well or what needs reviewing and amending. Leaders should thoroughly review their actions and systems, so that they can check that what has been put in place is effective.

## **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>	145691
<b>Local authority</b>	Stoke-on-Trent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268127
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	582
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Katherine Townshend
<b>Principal</b>	Rosina Lee
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://sneyd.alphaacademiustrust.co.uk">https://sneyd.alphaacademiustrust.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school joined the Alpha Academies Trust in February 2019.
- The school provides wraparound provision.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## 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 the principal and senior leaders.
- An inspector spoke with representatives of the local governing body and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed

the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, met with some teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work in other subjects, including science, geography and personal, social, health and economic education.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at playtimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors met with leaders about the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors reviewed policies and records relating to safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and attendance. Inspectors spoke to pupils and staff about pupils' safety.
- The lead inspector reviewed a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors talked informally with pupils and staff to gather general information about school life. In addition, they took account of the responses to Ofsted's surveys of staff's, pupils' and parents' views. Inspectors spoke with parents during the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Kirsty Foulkes, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Allyson Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Anna Vrahimi	His Majesty's Inspector

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