

# Inspection of Spring Brook Academy

Dean Street, Failsworth, Oldham, Lancashire M35 0DQ

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Inspection dates: 28 and 29 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>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

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

Pupils enjoy coming to Spring Brook Academy. This is because leaders and staff create a learning environment that is filled with kindness and warmth. Pupils feel safe in school. They arrive happy and keen to learn.

Pupils show respect towards each other and towards their teachers. They receive an appropriate balance between pastoral and academic support. Before they start at this school, some pupils have had a tricky start to their education. However, leaders manage pupils' transition into Spring Brook Academy well. Therefore, most pupils begin to experience success in their learning.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for pupils' achievement and for their behaviour. Staff understand pupils' individual learning and developmental needs. As a result of a well-designed curriculum, typically pupils achieve well.

Staff ensure that pupils follow the school rules. This helps pupils to behave appropriately in lessons. There is a calm, purposeful atmosphere for pupils to engage in learning. Leaders successfully deal with any cases of bullying or unkindness.

Pupils get opportunities throughout the year as part of leaders' 48-week offer. Pupils enjoy continuing their education and their wider enrichment activities during the school holidays. They value the residential trips which form part of their education. These include going abroad to theme parks, or outdoor adventure parks, to take part in activities such as kayaking.

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

Leaders have made a strong start to their curriculum thinking in many subjects. They have developed the curriculum to ensure that it is ambitious for all pupils. In many subjects, the curriculum builds pupils' knowledge and skills over time, while addressing their social, emotional and mental health needs. This is because leaders have looked carefully at what pupils need to learn and by when. However, in one or two subjects, the curriculums are new. This means that some teachers are not as confident in the delivery of these subjects. This hinders how well some pupils learn new knowledge.

In the subjects that are more well established, teachers deliver the curriculum as leaders intend. They choose activities which support pupils to gain the knowledge and skills that they need for future learning. Teachers also use leaders' assessment systems as intended. They skilfully use the information that they gather from their checks on pupils' learning to address misconceptions. Teachers successfully establish whether pupils have a firm grasp of new subject content. For many pupils, this helps them to have secure foundations on which to build new learning.

Leaders have clear systems to identify any additional needs that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) may have. Pupils receive strong support to access the full curriculum. Leaders and staff ensure that pupils with SEND achieve well across a range of subjects.

Reading is central to the school's curriculum. Leaders expect all pupils to become confident and fluent readers. Pupils read books regularly, and staff read aloud to pupils every day. Leaders have ensured that they have an appropriate phonics programme in place. Staff receive appropriate training to deliver the phonics sessions consistently well. Pupils get many opportunities to learn different sounds according to their stage of development. Pupils read books that match the sounds that they are learning. This helps to build up their confidence in reading.

Leaders ensure that pupils develop positive attitudes to school. Pupils take pride in their work. They are polite and welcoming. They rarely disturb each other or lack concentration in class. Rates of fixed-term suspensions are falling. This is because leaders have higher expectations of pupils' behaviour. Leaders have successfully given pupils the skills that they need to manage their behaviour more effectively.

The curriculum promotes pupils' broader development well. Pupils learn in depth about different faiths and cultures. They equally learn about various types of families. Pupils understand and respect the differences between different pupils and people in society. Leaders ensure that pupils are prepared for their future. For example, pupils develop skills for vocational training or learn about different careers that they may aspire to in the future.

Trustees, governors and leaders know the school well. They have acted decisively to address the issues identified at the previous inspection. This has set the school on an improving trajectory.

Leaders engage well with staff to consider their workload and well-being. Staff feel supported by leaders. This includes any teachers at the early stages of their career.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Across both school sites, there is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders ensure that staff have had appropriate training to help them to identify when pupils might be at risk of harm. All staff are aware of any risks in the local area that pupils may face. When staff spot any concerns, they report them to leaders swiftly.

Leaders work with a variety of external agencies to ensure that pupils get the timely support that they need. Leaders and staff record their safeguarding concerns and successive actions effectively.

Leaders ensure that pupils get many opportunities to learn about how to keep themselves safe. This includes how pupils keep themselves safe when online.

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

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

- In a few subjects, teachers do not deliver the curriculum as effectively as they should. This hinders how well some pupils learn new subject content. Leaders should train teachers to deliver these few remaining curriculums consistently well. This is so that pupils gain a deep and rich body of subject knowledge.

## 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>	143472
<b>Local authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268223
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Academy special converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	109
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Steve Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jennifer Dunne
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.springbrookacademy.org">www.springbrookacademy.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 to 19 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- A new executive headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan for their social, emotional and mental health needs. Most pupils also have secondary needs, including autism spectrum disorder and speech, language and communication needs.

## 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and personal, social, health and economic education. For each deep dive, they

met with subject leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils and looked at pupils' work. They also examined pupils' learning in two other subjects.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They met with the leaders for attendance and behaviour.
- The lead inspector met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority and he spoke with the chair of trustees.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils in Year 1 to Year 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe. They discussed safeguarding arrangements with leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtimes. They scrutinised leaders' records of pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at the school. They spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

Stuart Perkins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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