

# Inspection of a good school: Sevenhills Academy

Second Avenue, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire DN33 1NU

---

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 October 2023

## **Outcome**

Sevenhills Academy continues to be a good school.

The interim executive principal of this school is Jo Indian. This school is part of Wellspring Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Mark Wilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Cheryl Hobson.

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

Pupils at Sevenhills Academy enjoy life at the school. When inspectors visited, the site was calm and settled. Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive. Pupils are not concerned about bullying. Regular routines provide stability and familiarity. For example, the nurture breakfast creates an informal start to the day which helps pupils to prepare for the subjects to come.

When poor behaviour occurs, as it sometimes does, leaders have clear systems to support pupils. Adults take the time to help pupils understand their emotions and feelings. They use the information they collect to make constant adaptations to the running of the school. Some of this work is in its early stages, but pupils know their teachers want to help them. The school's approach is underpinned by unconditional positive regard for pupils. Leaders constantly collect and use information to help them support pupils to meet their expectations.

The curriculum which pupils experience is designed to take account of their specific circumstances. The different pathways in the school help to build positive attitudes for pupils who have previously had mixed school experiences. The checks that leaders conduct to find out what pupils know need further refinement so that the curriculum becomes even more tailored to the needs of specific pupils.

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

The curriculum at Sevenhills Academy is organised around English, reading, mathematics and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils also receive advice about careers. A large part of the school week is devoted to helping pupils understand and

manage their emotional and mental well-being. This curriculum is helping pupils to progress both academically and socially. For example, in English, pupils develop greater understanding of how to create emotion in their writing. In one-to-one sessions, to support pupils with their mental health, they are helped to understand their feelings and behaviour. This means that they are more able to regulate their emotions.

Pupils are encouraged to read and develop their vocabulary, for example through 'word of the week'. Lessons that inspectors visited made clear the technical subject vocabulary that pupils need to use. Teachers receive clear information through personalised learning plans. This helps them to understand and meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders check what pupils know, for example through 'enquiry assessments', to help them ensure that lessons are appropriate for pupils. This system is not precise enough in its use to ensure that teachers can consistently plan learning activities to help pupils from their specific starting points.

Many pupils at Sevenhills Academy have had turbulent experiences of education. Self-regulation at school has been an issue for many pupils in the past. All staff at Sevenhills share a vision of a child-centred approach, designed to help pupils engage positively in education. This approach is having an impact. When talking to inspectors, pupils were positive about attending this school. Many pupils have significantly better attendance than was the case in their previous schools. However, leaders are aware that overall rates of attendance remain an issue.

Leaders' record-keeping allows them to identify patterns of behaviour in order to make constant improvements to the experience of pupils. For example, a rise in suspensions and incidents of poor behaviour have led to leaders redesigning the foundation pathway for pupils. This pathway helps to integrate pupils into school life at a pace which supports them to attend and engage. There are early signs that this is having a positive impact for pupils.

PSHE lessons are taught often and to all. This helps to prepare pupils to re-engage with mainstream education when they go back to their 'home school'. Some pupils, for example those on the foundational pathway, experience lessons which are designed to give them experiences outside the classroom. This helps pupils to create positive feelings towards school subjects as they transition to pathways which have more traditional classroom time. Parents who completed the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire also commented on the positive impact the school has had on their children.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They are well supported by leaders, for example through daily morning and afternoon briefings. This allows for safeguarding issues to be discussed and actions implemented. Leaders share adaptations to strategies and support plans for individual pupils. In this way, there is a constant flow of information, both to help pupils and to support staff. Governors receive clear information and, through the trust assurance framework model, share this information with trustees. This helps to support strategic developments in the school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The enquiry assessment at the beginning of subject topics is not used with enough precision to identify what pupils know and can do. This means that learning activities and interventions for pupils may not help to develop the most sophisticated subject knowledge of which a pupil is capable. Leaders should ensure that they refine the assessments they use so they provide clear information to staff and allow for more precise learning activities to be planned for pupils.
- There has been a rise in incidents of poor behaviour in recent months. This means that learning time is lost as staff deal with these incidents. It also affects pupils' attitudes to school. Leaders should continue to take steps to tackle this issue, including developing and embedding the new foundational pathway designed to improve pupils' attitudes to school, encourage better attendance and reduce instances of poor behaviour.

## 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 predecessor school, Young People's Centre, to be good in September 2011.

### 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141585
<b>Local authority</b>	North East Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255905
<b>Type of school</b>	Alternative provision
<b>School category</b>	Academy alternative provision converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	38
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Cheryl Hobson
<b>Principal</b>	Jo Indian (Interim Executive Principal)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sevenhillsacademy.co.uk">www.sevenhillsacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Sevenhills Academy is part of the Wellspring Academy Trust.
- Sevenhills Academy is a pupil referral unit which caters for pupils who have been permanently excluded from mainstream education or are at risk of permanent exclusion. Some pupils are registered solely at Sevenhills Academy. Some pupils are on short-term placements and are dual registered at both their 'home' school and Sevenhills Academy.
- Since the last inspection there has been a change of executive principal at the school.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses no alternative providers of education.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the interim executive principal, other senior leaders and leaders from the Wellspring Academy Trust, including the chief executive officer. Inspectors also spoke with the local governing body and trustees, including the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, English and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed social times and regular routines in the school, such as the nurture breakfast and lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of staff about their experiences of the school and took account of the views of parents and staff through surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Matthew Vellensworth, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

James Duncan

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023