

# Inspection of Spalding High School

Stonegate, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE11 2PJ

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Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since June 2009. The school received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act on 4 and 5 February 2020.

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

Pupils thrive in the culture of high aspiration that exists at this school. They challenge themselves to be the best they can be. Pupils celebrate one another's achievements. They work together to the benefit of all.

Pupils describe feeling comfortable and confident. Staff and pupils have developed excellent relationships. Pupils say they can talk to any member of staff should they need help or have a concern. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the personalised support they need to participate in school life alongside their peers. Students in the sixth form, including those new to the school, talk about the welcoming atmosphere that helps them to feel part of the school community.

Pupils' contributions to the life of the school make it the exceptional place it is to learn. The school council gives pupils a voice. Pupils support their peers as well-being champions and anti-bullying ambassadors. Pupils produce a very high-quality school magazine called the 'High Quarterly'. The pupil authors of the magazine celebrate pupils' achievements and capture the essence of pupil experiences. They describe the vast array of wider opportunities and events that pupils take part in. They also share recipes, games and humorous articles.

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

The school's curriculum has been deliberately planned to help all pupils achieve their potential. The curriculum identifies the important knowledge that pupils should learn and specifically sets out how pupils will connect their learning. Pupils regularly revisit prior learning in such a way that they not only recall what they have studied but also enhance their understanding. Pupils develop detailed and sophisticated knowledge. They achieve very well. Pupils help one another to reflect on their learning from different perspectives. Pupils in a year 9 history lesson discussed the relative importance of factors that impacted upon women's experiences in 1950s Britain.

Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to provide pupils with work that motivates and challenges them. They regularly check pupils' understanding. Teachers ask pupils carefully crafted questions. The work that pupils produce reflects their detailed knowledge of subject-specific vocabulary as well as their commitment to their education.

Students in the sixth form enjoy their learning. They value the respectful and focused atmosphere in which they study. In many lessons, students benefit from thoughtfully designed work that helps them to build their knowledge.

Pupils with SEND have their needs promptly identified. Staff are knowledgeable about these pupils in their classrooms. They make adjustments to their teaching so that all pupils can learn about the most sophisticated aspects of the subjects they study. Pupils with SEND develop excellent subject knowledge.

The school is committed to helping pupils develop their love of reading. Pupils have their reading ability checked so effective support can be provided when necessary. Those who have fallen behind their peers receive effective support to improve their reading confidence and fluency. In key stage 3, pupils read a carefully chosen selection of texts during tutor time. Pupils can enjoy discussing their reading in one of four book clubs.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They treat one another, staff and visitors with respect. Pupils are resilient. They are eager to learn. They help one another to overcome challenges.

The school provides multiple experiences to help pupils to broaden their horizons. Pupils take part in battlefields trips connected to their study in history. They visit Iceland, Italy and Austria to help them experience their subjects outside the classroom and to build social and cultural understanding.

Pupils take part in a wide range of clubs and activities, including singing in the chamber choir, performing in school concerts and playing for sports teams. They feel listened to and take full advantage of opportunities to develop their own interests. Some pupils successfully petitioned for the creation of an ancient Greek club. Pupils take up opportunities to be active citizens. For example, pupils in year 9 organise bake sales to raise money for charity. Pupils vote to decide on which charities to support. Such opportunities help to prepare pupils exceptionally well as active citizens.

Students in the sixth form are not as consistently helped to develop a secure understanding of issues related to their study of personal, social, health, citizenship and economic education. They would appreciate more time to learn about topics such as government and democracy as well as tax and personal finances.

Pupils enjoy opportunities to learn about next steps and future careers. The school ensures that pupils understand all the options open to them before they make choices about their futures.

Governors play an active part in the life of the school. They challenge and support the school to maintain and develop the high standards that have been set. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working at the school. They say they are listened to and value the opportunities for professional development.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are 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](#)' 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>	120642
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10254801
<b>Type of school</b>	Grammar (selective)
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	940
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	191
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Diane Mulley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michele Anderson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk">http://www.spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 and 5 February 2020 under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school makes use of one registered alternative provision.
- 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 education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff, and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, science, religious education, history and physical education. 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 pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the curriculum leaders for drama and geography. Inspectors visited a range of lessons in subjects other than those that were the focus of deep dives. They also looked at samples of pupils' work in French and German.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for pupils' behaviour and attendance, personal development and staff professional development. They also met with leaders responsible for the provision for pupils with SEND and the provision for pupil premium pupils.
- Inspectors met with the leader responsible for the sixth form, visited the sixth form and spoke with sixth-form students.
- Inspectors met formally and informally with groups of pupils.
- 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 considered responses received on Parent View, including free-text responses. They also considered responses to the Ofsted surveys for school staff and pupils.

## Inspection team

Matthew Fearn-Davies, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sean Kelly	Ofsted Inspector
John Morrison	Ofsted Inspector
Julie McBrearty	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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