

# Inspection of Portland Spencer Academy

Westwick Road, Bilborough, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG8 4HB

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Inspection dates: 22 and 23 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>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

The executive principal of this school is Kate Green. This school is part of the Spencer Academies Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Paul West, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Donna Kinderman.

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

This school is a community of like-minded staff and pupils committed to the school's 'ASPIRE' values. Pupils gain rewards for demonstrating that 'everyone is important', for example. However, the school values and the actions of staff help pupils to learn to respect others because it is the right thing to do, not simply to gain a reward. Pupils celebrate difference and show empathy to their peers. One pupil said, 'There are lots of people who are different here, they are welcome and everyone has equal rights.'

There is an unwavering ambition for what all pupils can achieve academically and socially. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are known as individuals. The school works tirelessly to create the conditions for all pupils and staff to be successful. Pupils enjoy school and feel safe.

The school provides an expansive range of opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and interests. Pupils take part in knitting and catering clubs. They play a significant part in the life of the school, bringing about change through the pupil parliament. Pupils have secured changes to the school's reward system and the lunch menu.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious and intelligently designed. Teachers know precisely what to teach and when. Pupils benefit from opportunities to think about the most complex aspects of the subjects they study, such as how to think like a scientist. The curriculum is designed to enable teachers repeatedly to remind pupils of previous learning. As a result, pupils develop detailed knowledge exceptionally well.

When achievement does not meet the school's high expectations, the school is quick to identify the reasons for this and take effective action, so that current pupils can achieve highly. This is evident in the school's immediate, and successful, response to the 2023 published outcomes for reading.

Teachers make lessons interesting and accessible. They check for, and quickly address, any misconceptions. Teachers regularly reflect on how to adapt their teaching based on pupils' strengths and areas for development. This helps to ensure that their teaching enables all pupils to learn new concepts thoroughly.

The curriculum places particular emphasis on subject-specific vocabulary. Pupils can talk about the meaning of terms such as unitising in mathematics, tone in art and mourning in English. Pupils connect their learning from different parts of the curriculum. They make dreidels in design and technology and link this to their understanding of Judaism, for example. These connections between different areas of their learning help pupils to deepen their understanding.

The early years curriculum is ambitious and personalised. Staff get to know the children as soon as they start at the school. Children in the nursery quickly settle into routines. Staff tailor the learning to children's interests. This ensures that children learn everything they need to be ready for Year one. Children confidently share their knowledge of the local area as well as of religious and community events.

Reading is prioritised. Pupils develop a love of reading. Well-trained staff provide expert support to those at the earliest stages of reading. Pupils who need extra help are quickly identified and receive precise support. This helps them to develop their reading skills rapidly, so that they become confident readers.

Pupils with SEND are expertly supported to learn the curriculum. Staff provide precise support well to help these pupils feel comfortable and build their knowledge. This is a highly inclusive school. Pupils with SEND are involved in every aspect of school life.

Pupils experience a calm and orderly school. They develop respectful relationships with one another and with staff. Pupils who need extra help to manage their behaviour benefit from personalised support. Children in the early years quickly learn how to behave well.

The highly effective programme for pupils' personal development helps pupils to understand themselves and the world around them. They are active in the community, playing in the orchestra at the Albert Hall in Nottingham and singing in local care homes, for example. They develop their leadership skills in the Eco Club, and as sports leaders and safety ambassadors. Pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs. They discuss current affairs. They are very well prepared for their next steps when they leave the school.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working at this school. They say that leaders are considerate of workload and cater for staff's well-being. They value the wide range of training the school and the trust provide. The school welcomes the community in to their 'marketplace' and for cultural events such as the Moon Festival.

## **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>	140550
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10254786
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	408
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Donna Kinderman
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Paul West
<b>Executive principal</b>	Kate Green
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.portlandspenceracademy.co.uk">www.portlandspenceracademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 and 26 January 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## 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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive principal, head of school, other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff, the chief executive officer, representatives of the trust executive, the chair of trustees and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science, history, art and design and technology. 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 also reviewed curriculum documentation in geography, music and modern foreign languages and viewed samples of pupils' work in geography and religious education.
- Inspectors visited lessons in subjects other than those that were the focus of deep dives.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for pupils' behaviour and attendance, and pupils' personal development. They also met with leaders responsible for the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with the leader responsible for the early years, visited the early years and spoke with children.
- 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

Karen Slack      Ofsted Inspector

Janis Warren      Ofsted Inspector

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