

Inspection of Spalding Primary Academy

Woolram Wygate, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE11 1PB

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

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

The executive headteacher of this school is Andrew Raistrick. This school is part of Infinity 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, Gavin Booth, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sean Westaway. There is also a head of school, Samantha Beresford, who is responsible for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Spalding Primary Academy is a friendly, nurturing and welcoming school. Pupils are happy and kept safe. One pupil, typical of many, said, 'Our school is like a big family.' The school has created an atmosphere where everyone shows respect, trust, curiosity, pride and determination.

The diversity of the school community is celebrated, threaded through the curriculum and represented in the books that pupils read. Pupils know the school values well and demonstrate these in their interactions. There is a culture of support and kindness to others, which all the school models well.

The school has high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils meet these expectations and understand, appreciate and respect difference. They report, 'In this school, everyone should be treated the same. You don't know what they have been through in life.'

Pupils benefit from a wide range of trips and visitors that enrich the curriculum. Pupils contribute to their local community, for example by visiting the local care home and decorating the Christmas tree in the local church. They enjoy positions of responsibility, including their roles as school councillors and being 'Wombles', as litter pickers.

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

The school has developed a curriculum that is relevant and ambitious. The curriculums for most subjects, including English and mathematics, are well sequenced. The knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in these subjects are identified clearly. However, the changes to the curriculum did not have sufficient time to impact on the outcomes of previous cohorts. Historic published outcomes do not reflect how well current cohorts of pupils are doing. Leaders continue to make further pertinent refinements to some subjects to ensure they are equally well-designed.

Pupils revisit learning often and link this knowledge to new ideas and concepts. This helps them to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Where this is successful, the school uses information about what pupils know and can do to build their knowledge further. However, in some subjects, learning is not adapted to enable some pupils to develop a deeper understanding. As a result, some pupils do not build their knowledge as well as they could.

Reading is prioritised across the school. The school has implemented an effective reading programme. This starts in the early years and continues into key stage 2. Teachers check pupils' progress regularly to ensure that they build their phonics knowledge well. They use this information to provide extra support to pupils who need it. Pupils become fluent readers. Staff are well trained to deliver phonics

effectively. Pupils enjoy the books their teachers share with them. The school has developed a reading list to widen pupils' cultural understanding.

The school quickly identifies the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff work with parents and carers and external agencies to secure appropriate support for pupils. Pupils with SEND are supported well to learn and progress through the curriculum alongside their peers.

Children in the early years get off to a flying start, where their interests help to shape the curriculum. There is a focus on communication and language development as soon as children begin school. They learn to be ready for reading in the Nursery by recognising sounds and singing songs. Staff are skilled at developing children's language, knowledge and social skills through their play. As a result, children grow in confidence and are happy, curious learners.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils love to earn 'stars' and 'sparks' for trying their best. Pupils typically behave well and respect each other. They show positive attitudes to learning and conduct themselves well around the school. The pastoral support for pupils is a strength of the school. Pupils value their time in 'the nest' where they receive support from skilled adults.

The school places pupils' wider development at the heart of what it does. The curriculum, along with wider opportunities, supports pupils to develop a strong moral code. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and understand the importance of keeping themselves physically and mentally healthy. They benefit from a range of after-school clubs. These include football, netball and reading clubs.

Staff care about pupils and their families. They work hard to engage with parents. The school recognises that this could be further strengthened, to ensure that parents are clear about the improvements and changes made recently.

The trust knows the school's strengths and areas for improvement well. It provides a wealth of effective support and challenge to the school. The trust and the school continue to drive improvements with great determination. Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel well supported to manage their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the range of subject knowledge that pupils should learn is too broad. The most important knowledge and skills are not always clear. This means that pupils struggle to secure the knowledge they need for the next stage in their learning. The school should refine the subject knowledge and vocabulary they

want pupils to remember and identify the small steps of learning that will help pupils embed this knowledge.

- In some subjects, curriculum plans are not consistently adapted well to meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, pupils sometimes do not get the opportunities to apply their learning in depth, and so achieve less well. The school should continue to develop staff expertise to implement and adjust the curriculum as required.
- Some parents feel that the school does not communicate with them well enough. As a result, some parents do not have clarity around the changes and improvements in the school. The school needs to ensure that it has effective communication with all stakeholders so that parents and carers are fully informed about school improvements and changes.

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

Unique reference number	148373
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10288390
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	500
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sean Westaway
CEO of trust	Gavin Booth
Headteacher	Andrew Raistrick (executive headteacher) Samantha Beresford (head of school)
Website	www.spalding-pri.lincs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Spalding Primary Academy converted to become an academy in March 2021. When its predecessor school, Spalding Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of Infinity Academies Trust.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school does not make use of 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.

- 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.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the executive headteacher, head of school and a range of staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, members of the board of trustees, the trust education director and governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education (PE). For each deep dive, the 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. The inspectors also discussed the design and technology and religious education (RE) curriculum. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- 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.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. They considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspectors met with groups of staff and pupils and considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Kirsty Norbury, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Cat Thornton	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Fearn-Davies	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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