

Inspection of Spalding Grammar School

Priory Road, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE11 2XH

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The headteacher of this school is Mr Steven Wilkinson. This school is run by a single academy trust. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mr Craig Delaney.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy a broad range of academic subjects and extra-curricular opportunities at Spalding Grammar School. They are well prepared for their next steps in education and their lives in modern Britain. They achieve well and many go on to aspirational destinations to pursue their ambitions.

At lunchtimes and after school, many pupils enthusiastically take part in activities that include sports, games and performing arts. All pupils have opportunities to go on trips that include outdoor activities and foreign visits. Many take part in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. There is an active school council that represents pupils and influences decisions that affect school life. Sixth form students act as role models and take on responsibilities to support the school community.

Most pupils are happy at the school. They are polite and respectful. Most pupils try hard in lessons and participate in the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer. However, some pupils do not enjoy school life as much as they should. They told inspectors that they do not always feel that they are part of a supportive school community. Some pupils are concerned about the behaviour of a minority of their peers.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. In all subjects, important knowledge is clearly defined. It is well sequenced so that pupils can build on what they know already as the complexity grows. In almost all subjects, pupils learn securely and achieve well. In a small number of subjects, the school is continuing to develop the curriculum to make sure that all pupils gain the depth of understanding they need to reach their potential. The school identifies effectively how to provide extra support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are opportunities for pupils to read widely across the curriculum. Weaker readers receive support to gain fluency.

Specialist staff in all subjects are knowledgeable. They explain concepts clearly. Lesson activities focus sharply on the knowledge that pupils need to learn. In most lessons, staff challenge pupils to think deeply. They encourage pupils to make links between new knowledge and what they have learned before. For example, in mathematics lessons pupils keenly explain how they use the skills they have learned to solve well-designed problems. However, in some lessons, activities are not challenging enough. Where this is the case, some pupils become disengaged from learning.

Staff routinely provide opportunities for pupils to recall what they have learned previously. They use regular assessments to check how well pupils can remember knowledge and apply skills. However, in lessons, staff do not consistently check how well pupils understand new concepts. They do not always adapt activities so that all

pupils, including those with SEND, can participate fully. Sometimes staff do not give pupils feedback to address misconceptions or to help them to improve their work.

In the sixth form, there is a very broad range of subjects that supports students' interests and aspirations. The wider enrichment programme includes opportunities to take part in Young Enterprise projects or train to be sports leaders. Students are highly motivated and use their time well to meet the demands of the challenging curriculum. They are well supported academically and pastorally. This helps students to develop very mature attitudes and independence.

Throughout the school, there is a very well-considered personal and careers education (PACE) programme. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They gain a good understanding of British values. There are many opportunities for pupils to learn about their future choices. Pupils speak highly of the personalised careers guidance they receive. They also receive information from a range of employers and education providers.

The vast majority of pupils attend school well and display mature attitudes. However, at times, some pupils are impolite or disrespectful to others. In some lessons, a small number of pupils disrupt learning. The school has developed routines to address poor behaviour, but they are not consistently applied by all staff. This means that poor behaviour is not always dealt with effectively. When bullying happens, the school takes action quickly and effectively.

The school is ambitious to continue to develop and improve its provision for all pupils. Governors provide strong support and challenge to school leaders. Staff support the school's vision and enjoy opportunities to develop their expertise. However, some staff have concerns about their workload. They feel that improved communication about the school's priorities and routines would support them to be more effective.

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 lessons, staff do not check how well pupils have learned the intended knowledge. They do not routinely check pupils' understanding. Staff do not reliably provide feedback to address pupils' misconceptions or to stretch their thinking. As a result, staff do not effectively adapt lesson activities to meet the needs of all pupils. On some occasions, staff do not adapt lessons well enough to support pupils with SEND. When this happens, pupils sometimes become disengaged from their learning and do not try as hard as they might. The school

needs to make sure that staff routinely check pupils learning and adapt lessons to meet the needs of all pupils.

- The school's routines and procedures for managing poor behaviour are not always applied effectively. Sometimes disruption to learning is not challenged. Sanctions for poor behaviour are not applied consistently by all staff. As a result, some pupils' experience at school is not as positive as it should be. The school needs to ensure that high expectations for behaviour are shared by all staff and that routines are applied consistently and fairly.

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	139304
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10326784
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils on entry	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	999
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	256
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Craig Delaney
Headteacher	Steven Wilkinson
Website	www.spaldinggrammar.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses no alternative providers.
- 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.

- 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 headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair, and other representatives, of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep-dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, art, physical education, and modern foreign languages. 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 visited lessons in a number of other subjects.
- 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 met with pupils from a range of year groups, including pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with a range of teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Inspectors considered responses to pupil and staff surveys as well as responses to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

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