

# Inspection of The Springboard Project

2 Medtia Square, Phoenix Street, Oldham OL1 1AN

---

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 March 2024

**Overall effectiveness****Good**

The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Sixth-form provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5  
of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Andrew Howard. This school is part of the Newbridge Group trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Clare John, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steve Williams.

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

The welfare and education of pupils, including students in the sixth form, are at the heart of The Springboard Project. The school has high expectations for its pupils. It is ambitious for what pupils and students will achieve. Pupils work towards a range of formal qualifications, such as GCSEs. Mostly, pupils and students who attend the school are suitably prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.

The school provides a high level of care for its pupils and their families. It is a happy place in which to learn. Pupils feel welcome. Staff develop highly respectful relationships with pupils who have previously had a turbulent time in their education.

Pupils are generally motivated to try their best in lessons. The school celebrates pupils' achievements. Pupils understand that success requires hard work and commitment, which they show in their lessons. Staff support pupils to manage their behaviour. Typically, pupils have positive attitudes to their studies.

The curriculum to promote pupils' personal development is exceptional. The school is constantly looking for ways to engage pupils in the community. For example, pupils have opportunities for work placements within the local area. This allows pupils to practise some key life skills in a different context. The 'Friday experience' allows pupils to access a wide variety of additional opportunities including art, sport or computing.

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

The trust has worked well with the school to develop a bespoke curriculum to meet pupils' needs. This includes for those pupils with significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who often arrive with many complex needs, have their needs identified well. This enables many pupils to achieve well.

In a few subjects, the school does not have an effective oversight of the delivery of the curriculum. This means that occasionally, the school is unaware of how well pupils learn curriculum content in these subjects. This affects how well some pupils learn the intended curriculum.

Even though the curriculum is new, the school has thought carefully about the subjects that pupils will study. Within each subject, the school has considered the key content that pupils should learn. It has also set out in what order pupils will learn this content.

The way that teachers deliver the curriculum is consistent across most subjects. In various lessons, the activities that pupils complete support their learning of new

knowledge. In many subjects, teachers use assessment strategies to check on pupils' knowledge and understanding of the topics that they have studied.

Occasionally, in some lessons, teachers do not select well-chosen activities to support pupils' learning. This means that, from time to time, pupils do not acquire the knowledge that the school intended them to.

The school has a keen focus to ensure that pupils learn to read. It ensures that pupils have access to different texts. Staff ensure that pupils receive targeted support to develop their reading skills and their understanding of the different texts that they study. If pupils require any support with their phonics knowledge, the school uses a bespoke programme to help pupils to gain that understanding swiftly. Many pupils develop a more positive attitude towards reading as they move through the school.

Around the school, there is a caring and supportive atmosphere. Staff greet pupils in the morning when they come into school. This helps pupils to settle and have a positive start to the day. Pupils are welcoming to visitors. Previously, many pupils did not attend school as often as they should have. However, due to changes in the curriculum, alongside clear analysis of attendance patterns by the school, attendance for pupils is improving over time. In addition, the school has brought about noticeable improvements in pupils' behaviour. Effective actions have led to a reduction in more serious instances of disruption to lessons.

Pupils' wider development is exceptionally well thought out. The school ensures that pupils experience an abundance of opportunities. For example, pupils visit museums, go hiking outdoors or visit religious buildings. The school ensures that pupils receive effective support around money management. This helps to prepare them for adulthood and their next steps. As a result, pupils are becoming more prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils receive effective external careers guidance. This helps pupils to be ambitious for their future when they leave the school.

The trust and CEO work with the school to instil a strong sense of passion and teamwork. Staff are proud to work at the school and morale is high. Trustees and governors use their knowledge and skills to carry out their roles effectively. The school, including trustees and governors, supports staff workload and well-being. This is achieved through collaboration or carefully designed policies which support staff to have a manageable workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In a few subjects, the school does not have a strong oversight of how well curriculums are delivered. This occasionally means that the school does not act swiftly to address some deficiencies in the implementation of these curriculums. The school should develop its approach to evaluating the quality and effectiveness of the curriculum in these subjects.
- In a minority of subjects, the learning activities that pupils undertake do not help them to build a secure body of knowledge over time. This means that pupils sometimes do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that teachers have the guidance that they need to design learning that helps pupils to know and remember more over time.

## 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>	145922
<b>Local authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294407
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	102
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	37
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Steve Williams
<b>CEO</b>	Clare John
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Howard
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.springboardproject.org">www.springboardproject.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- All pupils who attend the school have an education, health and care plan. The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school uses several registered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Year 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 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics and vocational pathways, including hair and beauty and outdoor pursuits. 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 some of the alternative providers.
- 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 the headteacher and other senior leaders to discuss pupils' rates of attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders to discuss pupils' wider development.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body, including the vice-chairs of governors. He met with trustees from the trust. He also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. They scrutinised leaders' records of behaviour.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school development plan and the school's self-evaluation document.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and pupils.

## Inspection team

Stuart Perkins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Elizabeth Stevens

Ofsted 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 2024