

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Pennine Way Junior Academy

Pennine Way, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE11 9EY

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 November 2024

Outcome

Pennine Way Junior Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The Co-headteachers of this school are Caroline Hughes and Hannah Wallis. This school is part of Embark Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Matt Crawford, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David King.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and proud to attend Pennine Way.

Helped by effective communication, there are strong relationships between home and school. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They especially appreciate how well pupils are supported when they start in Year 3. The school works closely with the local infant school to provide continuity for pupils. Extra support is provided for pupils who are more anxious and for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, all pupils quickly settle as part of the 'Pennine family'.

The school promotes a positive environment where pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils understand the high expectations for their behaviour. They follow the 'be ready, be respectful, be safe and be proud' rules. Pupils are well supported when it is challenging to follow these expectations. At playtimes, pupils enjoy disco dancing together on the playground or playing 'fruity football'. Those pupils who need a quieter, calmer place can obtain a pass for 'Joey's Garden'.

The school is ambitious for all pupils. Pupils broadly achieve well. The school is focused on improving areas where pupils achieve less well. Since joining the trust recently, the school is well supported to fully realise ambitions for all pupils.

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

Since the last inspection, the school completed the work on developing the curriculum. The curriculum is mostly well designed, and pupils learn well over time. However, the school recently reflected on the impact of the curriculum for history and geography. Pupils' knowledge is still limited here. The school reorganised the curriculum, coherently linking knowledge between the subjects so it is revisited more frequently. The new curriculum design is just being implemented. The school has not ensured that teaching fully supports pupils to remember well what they have been taught in these subjects yet.

Teachers mostly have a clear and precise plan for what pupils need to learn. They develop lesson sequences that help pupils build on their knowledge. Through effective training, teachers model and explain new learning well. Pupils comment on how teachers' modelling of writing, for example, helps pupils write more competently. Teachers check pupils' understanding throughout lessons. They encourage pupils to identify successes and errors in their own work.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the school has seen a significant increase in the proportion of pupils with SEND. Staff have an in-depth knowledge of these pupils' needs. Individual learning plans provide precise targets for pupils with SEND to develop. The curriculum is successfully adapted for many of their needs. However, the school has not ensured that teaching and lesson activities are always well adapted. Sometimes, this is because the school has not ensured that staff have the right expertise.

Ensuring pupils become fluent readers and develop a love of reading is a priority. The school provides effective support for pupils who join school at the early stages of learning to read. Through daily whole-class reading lessons, teachers model expressive and fluent reading. Together, pupils reciprocate this and enjoy showing off their increasing expression. Pupils show great interest in the carefully selected class and weekly story assembly texts. These introduce pupils to a profound range of themes and cultures.

The school wants pupils to develop a broader understanding of life in Britain today. Opportunities for pupils to learn about equality and British values are woven throughout the curriculum. The school hopes for pupils to encounter them in a meaningful way. However, sometimes these opportunities are not effectively communicated to pupils. While pupils recognise that British values are important, they have not yet gained an age-appropriate understanding. This could limit how well they are prepared for life in modern Britain.

The new partnership of trustees and local governors are committed to securing the best for all pupils. The school has an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and its delivery. The school is taking action to make improvements. Signs of impact, in curriculum delivery and pupils' writing, for example, are evident.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Their workload and well-being have been carefully considered throughout the recent changes. Staff, at all levels, embrace support and

guidance from the trust. They are benefiting from increased training and opportunities for their professional development.

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 has not ensured that the curriculum and its delivery is designed well to help pupils remember what they are taught. Recently revised teaching plans are at the early stages of implementation and strategies for revisiting knowledge to support pupils' recall are not fully developed. Pupils' knowledge in these subjects is limited. The school should ensure the revised plans are implemented effectively and that revision and recall strategies are used consistently to enable pupils to secure an appropriate breadth of knowledge.
- Sometimes, the school does not ensure that teaching and lesson activities are successfully adapted to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. This can make it difficult for these pupils to secure the intended learning and build on what they know. The school should ensure that all staff have the skills they need to confidently adapt the curriculum when needed.
- The school's approach for teaching pupils about British values is not fully developed. As a result, some pupils do not have an age-appropriate depth of understanding of these. The school should ensure that all pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of British values that will prepare them for life in modern Britain.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding,

behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in November 2019.

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	137543
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10347514
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	369
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David King
CEO of the trust	Matt Crawford
Headteachers	Caroline Hughes and Hannah Wallis (Co-Headteachers)
Website	www.pennineway.derbyshire.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined the Embark Multi Academy Trust on the 1 April 2024.
- The co-headteachers were appointed in September 2024. They were previously the co-deputy headteachers.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This is the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspector held discussions with the co-headteachers and other members of the senior leadership team, as well as a representative from the trust.
- The inspector also met with members of the board of trustees and members of the local governing board, including the chair of the trust. She also met with the CEO.
- The inspector focused inspection activity on the following groups of subjects: early English and mathematics, geography, history and science. For each group of subjects, the inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. She also spoke to some staff.
- The inspector listened as pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site during breaktime.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils and staff. She spoke to parents and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Claire Stylianides, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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