

Inspection of Sandal Magna Community Academy

Belle Vue Road, Agbrigg, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 5NF

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud and happy to be part of the Sandal Magna family. The school is a calm place, where adults and pupils show respect for each other. Pupils understand that everyone is different. One pupil said that lots of pupils come to this school from different places in the world. Pupils say, 'It is ok to be different here.'

Pupils feel safe in this school. They behave well in lessons and at playtimes. They say that bullying is very rare. If it does happen, pupils say that staff will deal with it quickly. Pupils who need additional help to manage their behaviour are well supported. They say that staff are kind and fair.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for pupils. They want pupils to achieve academically and personally. Pupils enjoy learning. They talk with enthusiasm about subjects such as mathematics and computing. They are proud when leaders recognise their hard work in assemblies each week. Classes are proud to receive prizes, such as movies and popcorn or extra playtimes, for regular attendance. Pupils know that learning is important.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum which is coherent and well sequenced. They are determined to ensure that pupils achieve better than in the past. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and confident. They have identified the important knowledge that they want pupils to remember, in all subjects, from the early years to Year 6.

The well-designed curriculum means that teachers are clear about what to teach and when to teach it over the year. In some subjects, such as mathematics, teachers use consistent approaches, such as 'flashback four', where pupils recall previous knowledge to help them with new learning. However, in other subjects, some teachers are not clear about the best approaches to use to ensure pupils revisit and remember learning. Consequently, some pupils cannot recall prior knowledge and use it to help them learn more. While teachers regularly collect and record information on pupils' progress, some are not confident to use assessment effectively to plan future lessons.

Leaders have prioritised reading across the school. Staff are trained to use the school's chosen approach to teaching phonics. This helps pupils to make a great start to learning to read. Pupils read regularly. Leaders aim to enable pupils to practise their phonics knowledge by reading books which contain the sounds that they have been taught. This helps them gain fluency with reading. However, sometimes these books are too easy for them. Some pupils would make swifter progress by reading more challenging texts.

In key stage 2, pupils read daily. They know reading is important. The curriculum is well planned. Staff use drama to help pupils learn and remember new vocabulary, such as 'aftermath' or 'collision', by adding actions to the words. Leaders identify

pupils who need extra help with learning to read. Pupils in both key stages receive extra phonics lessons or support to improve fluency. This enables them to catch up quickly.

Teachers adapt learning to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access the same curriculum as their peers. Staff are suitably trained to help pupils with SEND achieve well.

Staff in the early years are knowledgeable about how young children learn. They focus on supporting children to develop language skills. Staff use questions and modelled talk to encourage children to share ideas with each other. The provision for learning outside the classrooms is exciting and stimulating. The environment inside Nursery is bright and spacious. Leaders recognise the challenge the smaller classroom in Reception creates. They are seeking solutions to this.

Leaders have a well-planned curriculum to support pupils' personal development. They teach pupils effectively about areas such as online safety and managing finances. Pupils talk with confidence about different cultures and the importance of respecting others. They are less confident to recall learning about healthy relationships and equality.

Many pupils have excellent attendance. However, a significant number of pupils do not attend regularly enough. Many are absent due to extended holidays taken in term time. These pupils miss out on too much learning. Leaders work tirelessly to improve this. However, their actions are not always effective.

The trust works closely with governors and leaders at the school. The trust facilitates effective professional development for leaders and staff. More experienced staff in the school model effective practice in subjects such as mathematics and reading. Governors are fully involved in school life through regular visits. They hold leaders to account effectively and are very mindful of staff's well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils and families well. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained and know what they need to do to keep pupils safe. Staff are clear about how to report any concerns. The safeguarding team keeps robust records and takes timely action to support pupils and families when this is needed. It works with other agencies effectively to help families access any support needed.

Pupils trust adults in the school. They know that they can talk with them about any concerns or write concerns down and place them in a 'worry box'. They are confident that adults will help them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not implemented as well as it could be. Some teachers do not have sufficient subject knowledge or understanding of effective approaches to teaching some subjects. Consequently, some pupils are not learning effectively. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum is consistently well implemented in all subjects, and that all staff are equipped with secure subject knowledge and sound pedagogy.
- In some subjects, teachers do not use assessment rigorously to check that pupils are remembering the curriculum. This means that pupils are not always clear about what they have learned, and that lessons are not planned to build on prior learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers are clear about what they are assessing and about how to use assessment effectively to plan subsequent learning.
- Despite leaders' actions, the attendance of some pupils is not high enough. As a result, these pupils are falling behind in their learning. Leaders should continue to work with these pupils and their parents to improve their attendance and engagement with school.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	139280
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10227194
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	248
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Archdeacon Peter Townley
Headteacher	Craig Elliott
Website	www.sandalmagna.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a member of Enhance Academy Trust.
- The headteacher took up post in 2019.
- The pupils moved into the school building in April 2022, following extensive repair work to the school roof.
- Several new governors have joined the local governing board since the last inspection.
- There is nursery provision for three- and four-year-old pupils.
- There is a breakfast club provision at the school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. Meetings were also held with the assistant headteacher, who has responsibility for the early years, subject leaders and class teachers.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body and trustees. A separate meeting was held with a representative from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into reading, religious education, history, computing and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors looked at curriculum planning, conducted joint lesson visits with leaders, spoke to pupils about their work and looked at pupils' books and samples of their work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, around the school and at playtime and lunchtime on both sites. They spoke with pupils about their views of the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- During the inspection, a range of safeguarding information was scrutinised, including the school's policies and records. Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed relationships between pupils and pupils, and pupils and adults. Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. This included comments received via the free-text facility.

Inspection team

Andrea Batley, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Emily Stevens	His Majesty's Inspector
Jane Clayton	Ofsted Inspector

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