

Inspection of Springwell Community College

Middlecroft Road, Staveley, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S43 3NQ

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 November 2024

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Ian Wingfield. This school is part of The Two Counties Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Wesley Davies, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Karen Potts. There is also an executive headteacher, Andrew O'Brien, who is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

Springwell Community College has been through a transformative change in recent years. This is reflected in the views of pupils and many parents and carers. Pupils know and demonstrate the school's values of 'ambition, commitment and kindness'. They value the rewards they receive, including the 'golden tickets' for demonstrating the school values.

The school has high expectations of all pupils' academic achievement. With a strengthened curriculum, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are now learning more successfully than they did in the past.

The school has worked hard and developed routines to promote a positive learning environment for all pupils. There is a consistent approach across the school to how behaviour is managed and there are high expectations for behaviour. Most pupils understand and meet these expectations. The school is calm and orderly. Pupils typically behave sensibly in lessons and at unstructured times. They are polite and well-mannered. They treat each other, and staff, respectfully. Bullying appears rare and pupils trust adults to deal with it. As a result, pupils feel happy and safe in this school.

One parent, typical of many, stated: 'The staff are kind and caring, and encourage the children to be the best they can be'.

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

Previous weaknesses in the school's curriculum failed to prepare pupils well enough for their next stages in education, employment or training. The school has redesigned and significantly strengthened the curriculum in all subjects. Improvements in the quality of education provided by the school are benefitting pupils, who have an increasingly detailed understanding of the subjects that they learn. However, the published outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 11 are lagging behind the strides that have been made in the quality of education that pupils receive.

Teachers are well-trained and knowledgeable. The school has identified consistent and effective strategies to deliver the curriculum through the 'Springwell lesson'. Teachers ensure that pupils regularly revisit the most important content in each subject.

Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge as a result of previous weaknesses in the curriculum. The school makes regular checks on what pupils know. In the most effective lessons, teachers use information from these checks to adapt their teaching well. In some lessons, teachers do not routinely use this information to close any gaps in pupils' knowledge or address misconceptions more quickly.

The school accurately identifies any additional needs that pupils may have, including for pupils with SEND. Teachers get clear information about how they can meet these needs. Most staff use this information well to support these pupils. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Their outcomes are improving.

The school quickly identifies pupils who need support to become confident and fluent readers. Staff use assessment strategies well to ensure that these pupils get the right level of support. This support helps these pupils to improve their reading skills.

Attendance is a high priority for the school. The school has taken action that has begun to improve rates of attendance. Pupils' attendance is slowly rising. Despite this, too many pupils continue to have high levels of absence from school, particularly pupils with SEND.

Suspensions have been higher than the national average. Suspensions have considerably reduced during this academic year as a result of the school supporting pupils to reflect and understand the impact of their conduct on others, and the consistent application of the school's behaviour policy by staff. This is a trend that leaders are determined to continue.

The school's personal development programme celebrates diversity. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to stay safe and be healthy. The extra-curricular programme includes house competitions and master classes. Pupils benefit from effective careers education and guidance. Events such as careers fairs provide pupils and parents with detailed information about the opportunities available to them.

The school and multi-academy trust are united in their vision to improve the school. They have brought about changes that are having a positive impact on many aspects of the school's work. This is underpinned by effective professional development, which includes a college-wide coaching programme for teachers. Leaders are considerate of staff well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, the school's use of assessment does not accurately check pupils' knowledge and how well pupils have understood important concepts. As a result, some pupils move on to new learning before they are ready, or there are gaps in their learning that impact on their progress. The school should ensure that assessment enables teachers to gain a secure picture of pupils' knowledge and understanding and adapt their teaching accordingly.
- Too many pupils, particularly pupils with SEND, have high levels of absence from school. While the school has taken action that has begun to improve rates of attendance and pupils' attendance is slowly rising, this is not yet having the impact it needs to. This restricts their progress, because they miss out on learning as well as the wider opportunities on offer. The school should continue to work with pupils and

families to ensure that they identify and overcome barriers to pupils' attendance, so that pupils attend school regularly.

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	147400
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10347687
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	899
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Karen Potts
CEO of the trust	Wesley Davies
Headteacher	Ian Wingfield
Website	www.springwell.ttct.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 June 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of The Two Counties Academies Trust.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- 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. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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.
- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: English; mathematics; science; and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work where available.
- To explore the wider curriculum, inspectors also discussed the curriculum in two other subjects with curriculum leaders and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, school senior leaders, staff from curriculum learning areas and senior leaders from the trust.
- Inspectors met with pupils to discuss their views.
- Inspectors observed social times.
- The lead inspector met with representatives the trust, including the chair of trustees and the CEO of the trust.
- The lead inspector met governors, including the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation on the school website and documentation relating to the governance of the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents and records linking to attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and a consideration of their responses to the online surveys, including the free-text facility in Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also had telephone conversations with several parents.

Inspection team

Anne Maingay, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Julie Sheppard	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Sammy	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Stevens	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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