

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Swanwick School and Sports College

Hayes Lane, Swanwick, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 1AR

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 November 2024

Outcome

Swanwick School and Sports College has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school. They feel happy and safe. Pupils and staff have positive and productive relationships. Pupils know there are members of staff who will listen to them if they have a concern. Staff help pupils to succeed.

Staff have high expectations of every pupil. The curriculum is designed to help pupils to thrive. They leave the school with a range of appropriate qualifications, including accreditation in both English and mathematics. Several gain GCSE grades in both subjects. Pupils are very well prepared for adult life.

Pupils enjoy their lessons and understand how learning in school will help them in the future. Staff help pupils develop their reading, writing, communication and mathematical knowledge and skills in a variety of situations.

Pupils behave exceptionally well in class and around the school. They are respectful and kind. Pupils understand the importance of coming to school often. Most pupils are rarely absent, and many have exceptional attendance. Pupils are keen not to miss their learning. They understand they will need excellent attendance when they move on to college and employment.

Pupils are supported to develop positive characteristics. They are keen to exhibit the 'Learning Heroes' of bravery, communication, creativity, independence, knowledge, resilience, responsibility and teamwork. Staff reward pupils when they display these important character traits.

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

The school identifies and meets the needs of its pupils very well. The curriculum is designed and delivered to help all pupils prepare for future learning and adult life. Staff focus on making sure pupils who are at the early stage of learning to read gain the knowledge and skills they need to become confident readers.

Staff work well as a team. They use their secure subject knowledge to present information clearly. Staff often check pupils' understanding, correct misconceptions and give useful feedback. Learning is often linked to life beyond the school, so pupils understand its relevance.

Pupils have extremely positive attitudes and commitment to their education. Staff have high expectations of pupils' conduct and, when very occasionally required, pupils get the support they need to behave well. Staff model positive behaviour. They make sure that pupils follow appropriate routines.

Most pupils attend school very well. However, improving attendance remains a school priority. All staff see it as their responsibility to reduce absence. Appropriate strategies help to secure demonstrable improvements in the attendance of some pupils.

Pupils are well prepared for life beyond the school. They are helped to become responsible, respectful and active citizens. The school consistently promotes the extensive personal development of all pupils. Every pupil has access to a rich set of coherently planned experiences that enhance their learning, develop their character and prepare them for adulthood. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are embedded within the curriculum. The school's 'Learning Heroes' are promoted throughout the school.

High-quality careers education begins in the primary-age classes. It continues to develop throughout pupils' secondary education. Pupils gain useful information from education and training providers. They receive helpful guidance and support about potential next steps. Pupils enjoy regular and meaningful opportunities to encounter the world of work. Since the last inspection, almost all pupils have moved on to appropriate education, employment or training.

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality education to all pupils. They have taken effective action to sustain performance across all areas of the school's work since the previous inspection. They make decisions that are clearly in the best interests of the pupils.

Leaders ensure that highly effective and meaningful engagement takes place with staff at all levels. Staff feel listened to and well supported. They value the training they receive and believe that leaders take workload into account when developing policies and procedures. Staff report high levels of support for well-being issues.

Governors have a secure understanding of their role and perform their duties effectively. They offer appropriate support and challenge. They hold leaders to account for all aspects

of the school's provision. Governors ensure that the school has a clear vision, manages resources well, fulfils its statutory duties and has a strong safeguarding culture.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 outstanding 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in March 2015.

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	113033
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10347387
Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Karen Hudson
Headteachers	Chris Greenhough and Danielle England (Co-Headteachers)
Website	www.swanwicksportscollege.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The leadership team has been restructured since the previous inspection. It now consists of two co-headteachers and two assistant headteachers.
- The school caters for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs, primarily autism; moderate learning difficulty; speech, language and communication; social, emotional and mental health; severe learning difficulty; specific learning difficulty and physical disability.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school has grown. The 'Nurture Pathway' has been introduced to meet the needs of pupils with more complex barriers to learning. It consists of three classes, and two new classrooms have been added to the school to accommodate these pupils.
- The school uses one registered and one unregistered alternative provision.
- 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

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education 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 spoke to the co-headteachers, the assistant headteachers, other leaders and staff. The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector spoke to a representative of an unregistered alternative provision by telephone.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors looked at 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 considered responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Simon Mosley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sue Wood

Ofsted Inspector

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