

Inspection of Springwell Alternative Academy Mablethorpe

Seaholme Road, Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire LN12 2DF

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The executive principal of this school is Lisa Ashcroft. This school is part of the Wellspring 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, Mark Wilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Cheryl Hobson.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's values of providing hope, genuine care, unconditional positive regard and nurture are evident at Springwell Alternative Academy Mablethorpe. The ethos captured in the school's 'golden threads' underpins the excellent work that staff do to support pupils.

Staff know and understand the pupils very well. Pupils develop strong working relationships with staff. Pupils know they can achieve here and respond well to the high expectations set for them. They feel safe and cared for. As a result, pupils engage with learning tasks with increasing resilience. Many spoke of feeling more settled, and several recognised the positive changes in themselves since joining the school.

Pupils follow learning programmes designed specifically around their needs. Staff focus on the things that will have the greatest impact in the limited time pupils attend the school. They ensure that the curriculum begins to fill any gaps in pupils' knowledge. They are passionate that all pupils should develop a love for reading.

Staff carefully guide pupils to understand their behaviours and give them the strategies they need to make positive choices. Pupils respectfully collaborate with staff to establish clear boundaries. Pupils know that their opinions are valued. They learn very successfully to manage their emotions and feelings. Almost all pupils see marked improvements in their attendance and behaviour over time.

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

Every aspect of the school's provision enables pupils to thrive. Carefully constructed timetables, targeted support and appropriate interventions all support pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. Therapeutic input and the use of the 'sensory pod' contribute towards helping pupils regulate their emotions. Strategies designed to help pupils improve and manage their behaviour are highly effective.

The school provides an exceptionally high-quality education for pupils, who often arrive with significant gaps in their learning. Staff prioritise getting to know pupils' needs quickly and making suitable provision for them. Pupils join the school at various points in the year. Some attend for a 16-week placement. Older pupils may remain at the school until the end of Year 11. The school's curriculum therefore prioritises helping pupils to be 'ready to learn'. It promotes pupils' personal development and supports their social, emotional and mental health needs. There is an equal focus on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and on the promotion of reading.

Staff assess pupils as soon as they join the school to identify any knowledge gaps. Teachers then plan individually for each pupil to address these gaps. They make precise checks on what pupils know and need to learn next. As a result, pupils rapidly develop the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for their next steps.

Most pupils successfully reintegrate into a mainstream school or move on to suitable specialist provision. As one older pupil stated, 'There is no way I'd have the opportunities I now have if I hadn't come here.'

A carefully planned reading programme seeks to urgently address any difficulties pupils have that may prevent them from being confident readers. All pupils benefit from daily 'reading to learn and learning to read' sessions. They are regularly exposed to a wide range of high-quality texts. Those at the early stages of learning to read are well supported through high-quality phonics lessons and one-to-one interventions. As a result, many make rapid progress towards becoming accurate and fluent readers.

The school's work to promote pupils' broader development is exceptional. The highly effective curriculum ensures that pupils know how to make safe choices. Pupils learn to take care of their mental and physical health. Pupils support each other through respecting their differences and celebrating everyone's achievements. Pupils benefit from a very strong careers programme. They have lots of opportunities to develop interests. They engage in visits to local places of worship and places of historical interest, which builds their cultural capital. Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff say they are well supported. They have access to a wide range of training, which helps to inform their practice. They appreciate the effort made to reduce their workload and improve their well-being. Governors and trust leaders know the school very well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	147196
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10298535
Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	38
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Cheryl Hobson
CEO of the trust	Mark Wilson
Principal	Lisa Ashcroft
Website	www.springwellalternativeacademymablethorpe.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Springwell Alternative Academy Mablethorpe provides education to pupils who have been permanently excluded from mainstream school or are at risk of exclusion.
- All pupils are pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Some pupils have education, health and care (EHC) plans. The primary needs of most pupils are social, emotional and mental health related. Some pupils arrive at the school with undiagnosed additional needs.
- There are currently no pupils at the school in the early years foundation stage.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 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 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 held various meetings with the executive principal, the senior executive vice principal, two executive vice principals and the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector also met with the CEO and a representative of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and personal, social, health and economic education. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered documents and pupils' work from foundation subjects taught through topic work.
- The lead inspector looked at the EHC plans of individual pupils and the school's 'pupil profiles' when considering the support for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the academy development plan.
- 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 took note of the responses received to the staff survey. Inspectors met with pupils to gather their views.
- The lead inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority to gather the views of key stakeholders, such as schools who refer pupils and parents/carers of pupils at the school.

Inspection team

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

James Laming

Ofsted Inspector

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