

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: South Charnwood High School

Broad Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire LE67 9TB

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 December 2024

Outcome

South Charnwood High School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Simon Andrews. This school is a single academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Rachael Underwood.

What is it like to attend this school?

The culture at South Charnwood High School is based on strong relationships and a sense of community. Everybody gets along. Pupils feel safe and cared for. They know who they can turn to if they need help or support.

Pupils respond well to the school's high behaviour expectations. They are guided by the '3 Ps' to be polite, prepared and productive. There are few disruptions to learning. Staff deal with any poor behaviour consistently and fairly.

The school's aspirational curriculum is designed to give pupils the knowledge and skills they need for their next stage in education and beyond. The vast majority, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well in external examinations.

Beyond the academic offer, the school provides well for pupils' personal development. In key stage 3, pupils complete a range of character-building activities to earn their 'futures awards'. There are opportunities for them to be sports leaders or part of the pupil voice team. Pupils proudly get involved with charity fundraising events, including an annual sponsored walk. A range of clubs support pupils to develop their talents and interests in sports, games and the performing arts.

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

The school provides a broad and ambitious curriculum. At key stage 3, this meets the

requirements of the national curriculum and extends further in some subjects. At key stage 4, the school offers the full suite of English Baccalaureate subjects, although the number of pupils studying modern foreign languages is low. The curriculum identifies precisely what pupils will learn at every stage. This important knowledge is clearly ordered so pupils deepen their understanding over time. The school accurately identifies when pupils have additional needs. Almost all pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as their peers. When this is not the case, they follow personalised pathways designed to help them be successful and achieve well.

Teachers are subject specialists. They use their expertise to explain concepts clearly. Most of the time, teachers check pupils' learning carefully. They make sure pupils can recall what they have learned previously and that they understand new knowledge. Activities help pupils link new ideas to what they already know. However, sometimes, pupils' misconceptions or gaps in their knowledge are not identified accurately or corrected. When this happens, pupils struggle to make connections, and their learning is less secure.

Pupils attend school well and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They try hard in lessons. Most of the time, teachers provide thoughtful guidance that helps pupils to improve their work. Staff know the needs of pupils with SEND well. They provide extra help, when necessary, so these pupils can be successful. The majority of pupils consistently produce work of good quality. However, on occasions, this is not the case. Sometimes, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough, and work of poor quality is accepted too readily.

The school promotes reading across the curriculum. Weak readers benefit from effective support so that they develop their reading fluency and gain confidence. Pupils read often from interesting texts. These are well chosen to include a range of genres and encourage pupils to think about diversity and other faiths and cultures.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education prepares pupils well for living in modern Britain. It helps pupils understand how to look after their physical and mental health. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and maintain positive relationships. Lessons and assemblies develop pupils' understanding of equality and fundamental British values. Pupils receive detailed careers advice and are well informed about their future choices.

The school has worked effectively to maintain high standards in all aspects of the provision. Staff told inspectors they are proud to work at the school. They value how leaders help them manage their workload and continue to develop their expertise. Trustees know the school well. They provide strong support and challenge to school leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Routines for checking pupils' understanding are not applied consistently. This means that, at times, pupils develop misconceptions or have gaps in their prior learning that are not identified or corrected. As a result, pupils sometimes struggle to connect knowledge together, and their learning is insecure. The school should ensure that teachers check pupils' learning carefully and adapt activities accordingly.
- Sometimes, staff accept poor-quality work without offering effective guidance about how pupils might improve. On these occasions, pupils do not achieve as well as they might. The school should ensure that all staff share the highest expectations of pupils and provide effective support so that pupils achieve well.

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 June 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	139442
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10347563
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	869
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rachael Underwood
Headteacher	Simon Andrews
Website	www.southcharnwood.leics.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in 2022.
- The school uses nine unregistered alternative provisions.
- 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.
- The school is a single academy trust.

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 met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and with other school leaders.

- The lead inspector met with representatives of the board of trustees.
- 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 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 held discussions about, and scrutinised records relating to, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff and pupils. They considered parents' responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, as well as responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

John Spragg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Janis Warren

Ofsted Inspector

Alison Davies

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children’s social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024