

Inspection of The Springfield Centre

Pontefract Road, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF4 1LL

Inspection dates:

6–7 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy and safe at The Springfield Centre. They say that they like school because classes are smaller than at mainstream schools. Pupils say that staff 'try their best to help'. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive and respectful. This is especially the case in classrooms. At breaktimes and in corridors, pupils' behaviour is sometimes disruptive. There is too much swearing. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that leaders are quick to act to resolve any issues.

Pupils can study a range of academic and vocational courses. They also have access to high-quality, impartial careers guidance. Pupils say that this helps them to make positive decisions about their future and to be 'work ready'. Most pupils move on to college or employment when they leave school.

A significant number of pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Leaders are trying to improve rates of attendance and the majority of pupils attend more than at their previous school. However, low attendance has a negative impact on how well pupils achieve.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of enrichment activities. Sports, outdoor education, visits to local attractions and links with local facilities, such as an old people's home, help to widen pupils' experience of the world.

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

All pupils are taught a range of academic and vocational subjects. In some subjects, particularly the vocational ones, the information that pupils need to learn is well structured. This helps pupils to remember more and to build their skills. Other subjects do not have as clear an approach to organising what pupils should learn and remember.

Teachers do not always help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to achieve well. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) gives useful information to teachers about pupils' individual needs. However, leaders do not check that teachers are using this information to help pupils in class. Out-of-class support for pupils with SEND helps them to learn more quickly.

Teachers rely on exam-type tasks and questioning in class to check whether pupils are learning more. This does not always help teachers to pinpoint the specific things that pupils are struggling with. Leaders have designed a system which will give an accurate picture of what pupils still need to learn. However, this system is not currently being used by all staff to help their planning.

Pupils who attend school behave well in classrooms. They are respectful to their teachers, peers and visitors. Low-level disruption in class is managed well. Pupils are helped to make better choices about their behaviour. During breaktimes and lunchtimes, pupils are less well behaved. Here, there is too much swearing and some pushing and shoving in

corridors.

Relationships between staff and pupils are a strength of this school. Staff know the pupils extremely well and their care and compassion shines through. The pupils know that the staff are doing their best to help them. Pupils appreciate them.

Leaders have made sure that the curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils spoke confidently about how they learn to keep themselves safe. They access a wide range of sports, including football, swimming and bowling. Parents and carers are also pleased with the wider experiences that the school offers. One parent said that her children had the opportunity to 'try new things and make the right choices'.

Careers education has a high priority. This is a strength of the school. The careers leader works well with businesses and local colleges. This helps pupils to understand the world of work. Leaders ensure that pupils receive helpful advice about their next steps. As a result, pupils are well prepared to leave school after Year 11.

Leaders have made significant changes to the premises and curriculum over the past two years. The management committee (which is responsible for governance) has supported them in this. They know that there is still work to do and plans to help the school to improve are in place. Staff spoke highly of the leadership team and of the support they received.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding has a high priority. Staff are well trained in this area. All staff spoke confidently and knowledgeably about policies and procedures relating to keeping children safe.

The member of staff with responsibility for safeguarding is diligent and passionate about keeping pupils safe. Any concerns are looked into swiftly. Leaders work well with other agencies to keep pupils safe. Leaders make sure that pupils get the help and support that they need. Minor amendments to the single central record needed to be made during the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The way in which curriculum leaders map out what pupils should learn, step by step, is strong in some subjects, such as construction. This is not the case in all subjects. Leaders should ensure that the knowledge and skills that pupils need to acquire at each stage are understood by teachers. Teachers should revisit crucial knowledge and ensure that it is securely understood by pupils before moving on.

- The curriculum is not successfully adapted for pupils with SEND. Leaders should ensure that teachers use the guidance provided by the SENCo to meet the needs of the pupils that they teach.
- Leaders have developed a system for assessing pupils over time. The system helps teachers to analyse pupils' achievement and accurately plan to fill in any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that this system is embedded across the school and that teachers are fully confident in its use to ensure that pupils' achievement improves.
- School leaders must ensure that pupils' absence reduces. The school's work to improve attendance is having a positive impact on individual pupils whose attendance increases, in some cases significantly, from their attendance at their home school. However, too many pupils are still absent from school for too much time and do not benefit as much from the education provided.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	108139
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10110624
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	14 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	105
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of management committee	Nicola Brown
Headteacher	William Carpenter (executive headteacher)
Website	www.wakefieldprus.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 November 2018

Information about this school

- The Springfield Centre is a key stage 4 pupil referral unit that caters for pupils from the age of 14 to 16 years.
- The school is split over four sites across the Wakefield District: The Springfield Centre, The George Centre, The Hill Top Centre and SESKU. The majority of pupils attend The Springfield Centre.
- The Springfield Centre has moved into new accommodation. Significant building work has been completed to add additional classrooms, a pupil common room and a vocational centre. The number of pupils attending the school has increased by 21%.
- The school uses alternative provision for some pupils. These providers are chosen from an approved list from Wakefield local authority.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers and support staff.

The lead inspector met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body. No members of staff responded to the Ofsted online staff questionnaire.

- We met with pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally about the school. No pupils responded to Ofsted's online pupil survey. We took account of one response to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire.
- We evaluated the quality of education by looking in detail at English, mathematics, construction, and personal and social development. We discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers about the curriculum.

Inspection team

Tricia Stevens, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jane Nolan

Ofsted Inspector

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