

# Inspection of Spring Hill High School

C/O 28 Slade Road, Erdington, Birmingham, West Midlands B23 7PG

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Inspection dates: 8 to 10 July 2025

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| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | <b>Good</b> |
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| The quality of education | <b>Good</b> |
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| Behaviour and attitudes | <b>Good</b> |
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| Personal development | <b>Good</b> |
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|---------------------------|-------------|
| Leadership and management | <b>Good</b> |
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| Sixth-form provision | <b>Good</b> |
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|----------------------------------------------|------|
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |
|----------------------------------------------|------|

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|--------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Does the school meet the independent school standards? | <b>Yes</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------|

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Many pupils had negative experiences of education or missed a lot of school before they arrived at Spring Hill. All pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). Staff build strong and effective relationships with pupils. The strong focus on relationships, that the school has adopted, results in pupils feeling safe and well cared for.

The school is ambitious for pupils to do well. It has designed an effective curriculum to meet the needs of each pupil. The school has high expectations of what pupils will learn. Pupils rise to these by working hard. They learn a lot.

Pupils benefit from positive relationships with staff. Staff promote care, tolerance and respect. Discriminatory or unkind behaviour is not tolerated. Pupils say that bullying is very rare, if it ever happens. They know who they can speak to if they are worried. Typically, pupils behave well. Many recognise the positive difference this school is making in their lives.

The school encourages pupils to develop resilience and take on responsibilities. For example, pupils are elected to the school council by their peers. Pupils put forward the idea of creating well-being ambassadors. A number of pupils have entered applications for these roles.

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

The curriculum is broad, ambitious and well sequenced. Staff identify as much information as possible about pupils' individual needs when they join the school. They carefully align outcomes from pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans with short-term targets. From these starting points, pupils achieve well. Many gain qualifications, including GCSEs and functional skills. Pupils engage well with learning. Work in their books reflects this. Pupils learn well over time.

Pupils arrive with varying gaps in their knowledge across different subjects. They are at different starting points in their education. There is a relentless drive to ensure the curriculum is implemented consistently. This is a particular challenge in this school with pupils learning in four different settings. The school has put systems in place to secure high expectations and standards. External support and challenge are rigorous. However, there is a recognition that further work is needed to address variability across some subjects. For example, pupils' recall of their prior learning is stronger in some subjects than in others. As a result of some inconsistency, some pupils do not learn the curriculum as well as they could.

The school prioritises reading. It places emphasis and priority on pupils being able to read well, with fluency, expression and understanding. Texts are chosen carefully to support reading for pleasure and the English curriculum. Pupils are happy to share book choices and talk about books that they have read. The school identifies when

help is needed for pupils in the early stages of reading. The school provides additional phonics teaching to pupils who need it.

Many pupils have had long periods out of education. The school uses a range of strategies to ensure that pupils' attendance improves markedly. As a result, nearly all pupils attend more regularly than was previously the case. For some, their attendance is significantly better than in the past. However, the attendance of some pupils is still not as high as it should be. As a result, some pupils miss valuable learning opportunities. This is hindering their progress. The school is effective in helping pupils learn strategies to reduce their anxiety and manage their behaviour. Restrictive physical intervention is used as a last resort. When this happens, the school follows its policies closely to keep pupils safe. Pupils' behaviour improves the longer they attend the school.

The school offers pupils frequent independent careers advice. This advice is effective in helping pupils to identify their next steps. Students in the sixth form benefit from strong support with transition to the next stage of education or employment. For example, staff help pupils secure work experience placements and complete independent travel training. The school tailors the curriculum in the sixth form to students' individual needs and aspirations.

The promotion of pupils' personal development is strong. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is wide ranging. Pupils learn about healthy relationships, consent and respect. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain as they learn about the importance of democracy, equality and tolerance. This helps to develop pupils' moral compasses and preparation for adult life. Pastoral support for pupils is strong. Pupils feel confident to talk to staff about any worries or concerns they have because they know that staff will help them. They feel a sense of belonging and acceptance of who they are.

Staff are proud to work at the school. The proprietor and governors have prioritised staff's professional development. Consequently, staff feel empowered and valued. They have a growing skill set which is used, with increasing success as the school continues to grow. For example, staff are well trained to check on pupils' understanding during lessons. This gives pupils useful feedback about how they can improve their learning.

The proprietor is highly ambitious for pupils. There is a commitment to provide the highest quality of education. Importantly, pupils sit at the very heart of decision-making. The proprietor has several ways of checking that the school meets the independent school standards consistently well. This includes compliance with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and its safeguarding duties.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- The implementation of the intended curriculum is not yet fully consistent. As a result, pupils do not yet build their knowledge as well as they could. The school should ensure that the curriculum is implemented effectively to enable pupils to know and remember more over time.
- The school's systems for managing and improving pupils' attendance are not as effective as they could be. As a result, some pupils do not attend school regularly enough, including some particularly vulnerable pupils, which means they miss valuable learning and personal development opportunities. The school must strengthen its work to improve pupils' attendance so that all pupils are able to maximise their time at school.

## **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.

## School details

|                                                   |                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                    | 134982                                                                                       |
| <b>DfE registration number</b>                    | 330/6112                                                                                     |
| <b>Local authority</b>                            | Birmingham                                                                                   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                          | 10391738                                                                                     |
| <b>Type of school</b>                             | Other Independent Special School                                                             |
| <b>School category</b>                            | Independent school                                                                           |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                        | 11 to 19                                                                                     |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                           | Mixed                                                                                        |
| <b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>         | Mixed                                                                                        |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>        | 42                                                                                           |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b> | 9                                                                                            |
| <b>Number of part-time pupils</b>                 | 0                                                                                            |
| <b>Proprietor</b>                                 | Lee Baillie                                                                                  |
| <b>Chair</b>                                      | Barbara Scrivens                                                                             |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                                | Gary Edmunds                                                                                 |
| <b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>                   | £66,200 to £103,230                                                                          |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                           | 0121 240 0992                                                                                |
| <b>Website</b>                                    | <a href="http://www.springhillhighschool.co.uk">www.springhillhighschool.co.uk</a>           |
| <b>Email address</b>                              | <a href="mailto:gedmunds@springhillhighschool.co.uk">gedmunds@springhillhighschool.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>               | 4 to 6 October 2022                                                                          |

## Information about this school

- Spring Hill High School is an independent day special school situated across four sites in Birmingham. The school operates from the following addresses: 141 Wood End Lane, Birmingham B24 8BD; 113 Orchard Road, Birmingham B24 9JE; 36 Hunton Road, Birmingham B23 6AH and 28 Slade Road, Erdington, Birmingham B23 7PG.
- The school is registered for up to 50 pupils.
- All pupils who attend the school have education, health and care plans.
- Many pupils have been out of education for prolonged periods of time before joining this school.
- Pupils are referred to the school by local authorities.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- As part of their work to check compliance with the independent school standards, inspectors met with the headteacher, the proprietor and representatives from the governing board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics, computing, and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 considered pupils' behaviour throughout the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with leaders to consider how they support pupils' behaviour.

- Inspectors carried out a detailed tour of the site and premises to consider whether the school meets the independent school standards. Inspectors considered documents, policies and plans linked to the health, safety and welfare of pupils, including the fire risk assessment, checks on fire safety equipment and site safety.
- Inspectors talked with pupils and staff to gather general information about school life. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including school policies, curriculum documents and the school's website.

### **Inspection team**

Matt Fletcher, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andrew Madden

His Majesty's Inspector

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