

Inspection of Bury Secondary PRU Spring Lane School

Spring Lane, Radcliffe, Greater Manchester M26 2SZ

Inspection dates: 10–11 March 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils who attend Spring Lane School have an opportunity for a fresh start in education. Many pupils have had turbulent and sometimes negative experiences of education in the past. Staff help to turn this around. They go the extra mile to help pupils find the things that they are good at. They help pupils to gain confidence in themselves so they begin to enjoy their learning again.

Pupils who are new to the school often struggle to manage their behaviour. However, the new improved systems and procedures in key stage 3 help pupils to develop responsibility for their actions.

Staff have high expectations of pupils in key stage 4. Pupils rise to the challenge of working in a more adult way. They take pride in their learning, and low-level disruption is rare.

Staff help all pupils to understand the impact of their words and actions on others. Staff help pupils to understand and respect each other's differences so that any conflict or bullying gets sorted out.

The pupils who we spoke to told us they are happy in school, feel safe and are well supported by the staff.

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

At key stage 4, leaders provide a well-planned curriculum that matches individual pupils' needs. Skilled teachers plan topics that inspire and engage pupils. Pupils become motivated to succeed. Pupils told us how well they are now learning in their subjects.

Leaders have broadened the curriculum at key stage 3 and introduced subjects that will engage and motivate pupils. However, the lack of a clear purpose and direction for the key stage 3 provision has slowed down the pace of improvement. Although there is now clear direction from the local authority, leaders are still in the process of ensuring that the school's curriculum at key stage 3 will meet the complex needs of pupils. The time available in lessons has also made it difficult for teachers to plan effectively so that pupils can know and remember more.

Pupils at key stage 4 achieve well. A wide range of academic, vocational and work-based options help pupils to gain the qualifications and experience they need to make a successful transition into post-16 provision. Pupils taking mechanics and construction courses understand how their skills and qualifications will help them to apply for an apprenticeship or a college place.

The number of pupils with education, health and care plans has increased at key stage 3. Most pupils have settled well in school. However, a small number of Year 7

pupils have struggled and are currently receiving one-to-one support, off site. The plans to improve this situation to ensure that these pupils are receiving a good quality of education are not clear.

New approaches in key stage 3 have improved behaviour. Pupils hand in their personal belongings, including mobile phones, on entry into school. Although pupils improve their behaviour and attendance over time, leaders do not capture information about this in a consistent way. This makes it difficult for them to monitor improvement over time.

The school's work to develop pupils' personal skills is threaded through all aspects of school life. Staff remind pupils about respect, tolerance and understanding. They get to know every pupil and use consistent praise, encouragement and challenge to help pupils to believe in themselves again. Pupils learn about current affairs and have opportunities to debate and discuss issues such as climate change. In food technology, pupils learn about food from other cultures. In art, pupils are encouraged to express their emotions and feelings through their work. In English, teachers plan opportunities for pupils to deliver presentations so that their speaking and listening skills improve.

The long-term absence and recent resignation of the headteacher have been a challenge for the school. However, other senior leaders have ensured that the school has continued to improve. Subject leaders are bringing a consistent approach to teaching across all sites. Governance has been strengthened with the appointment of skilled and suitably experienced governors.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Each site has its own safeguarding lead. Safeguarding systems and procedures at all the sites are thorough. Staff training is up to date, and they are quick to act if they have any concerns.

Leaders work closely with external agencies, including the local authority, police and the youth offending team, to keep pupils safe.

Leaders work closely with colleges and alternative providers to ensure that pupils are well supported, attend well and are safe in their placements.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The quality of education offered at key stage 3 and 4 differs. Although leaders have made some improvements at key stage 3, uncertainties within the local area have held leaders back, and pupils have not received a good quality of education.

A clear direction and vision for key stage 3 have now been secured and agreed with the local authority. Leaders must now plan an ambitious curriculum that will meet the needs of the pupils.

- The collection and analysis of data are inconsistent across the school. Each site has its own way of measuring pupils' attendance, behaviour and achievements. This information is difficult for leaders and governors to analyse, as some key information is not included, such as the number of pupils on part-time timetables. Leaders need to develop a consistent approach across the school to help inform self-evaluation and improvement over time.

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 are the school and you are 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	131506
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10135087
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Headteacher	Lee Harris
Website	www.springlaneschool.bury.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- An interim headteacher is in charge following the resignation of the previous headteacher.
- The school operates three sites. The Radcliffe site (at the main school address) caters for pupils in key stage 3 who are out of mainstream school due to permanent exclusion or their behaviour needs or who have an EHC plan. The Park House site (at 190 Chesham Road, Bury BL9 6HA) caters for pupils in key stage 4 with medical or mental health needs. The Milltown House site (at 6 Tenterden Street, Bury BL9 0EG) caters for pupils in key stage 4 who have been permanently excluded or are out of mainstream school due to their behaviour needs. There is also a small unit for Year 10 pupils.
- The school currently uses two alternative providers: Bury College and Achieve Training.
- The school caters for pupils with EHC plans for social, emotional and mental health needs.

Information about this inspection

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

- We held discussions with the interim headteacher, assistant headteachers, subject leaders, teachers, other members of staff and members of the governing body including the chair. We met with a representative of the local authority. These discussions considered the quality of education, the wider experiences of pupils at the school including personal development, aspects of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning, and leadership and management. There were no responses to Ofsted's Parent View; however, we spoke with a parent by phone.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: art, construction, English and mechanics. We discussed arrangements for the curriculum and teaching with the interim headteacher, assistant headteachers, subject leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. We visited lessons and talked with pupils about what they had been learning. We looked at pupils' workbooks and other evidence of learning in these subjects.
- We spoke to staff, governors, pupils and the local authority about how the school keeps pupils safe. We examined the single central record of the checks undertaken to make sure that staff are suitable to work in a school. We reviewed the school's safeguarding policy and looked at safeguarding records.
- We spoke to pupils and staff about the wider curriculum, including the school's work to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. We also discussed the school's work to support pupils' personal development and behaviour.

Inspection team

Julie Bather, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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