

Lydgate School

Kirkroyds Lane, New Mill, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire, HD9 1LS

Inspection dates 11–12 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors have worked hard to ensure that the school has improved rapidly since the previous inspection.
- The headteacher leads with integrity and vision and provides clear direction for further improvement.
- Middle leaders share the vision of the senior leaders and governors. They work hard to ensure that teaching continues to improve and that pupils achieve well.
- The governing body has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. It also oversees closely all safeguarding policies and procedures and ensures that they meet statutory requirements.
- Achievement is good overall. From their significantly below typical starting points on entry all pupils make good progress in developing their reading, writing and numeracy skills.
- Pupils supported by additional funding make good progress in all subjects.
- Teaching over time is good; its impact is sometimes outstanding in Key Stage 4.
- The exciting and enriched curriculum is skilfully adapted to meet the needs and abilities of every pupil. Activities promote pupils' understanding of British values successfully and prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- A good range of learning activities are provided for the youngest children. As a result, children in the early years make good progress in all areas of learning.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding. Pupils enjoy school and their behaviour is managed exceptionally well. This, together with their above average attendance, contributes significantly to the very positive ethos within school. The school is an oasis of calm where pupils feel safe, are highly respected and treated with the utmost dignity.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some year groups in the lower school do not make as much progress as they should. Expectations and the pace of learning are not always matched to pupils' abilities and interests sufficiently well. The level of challenge in the classroom is not consistently good.
- Staff do not use assessment procedures effectively across all classes to support new learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and carried out a joint observation with the headteacher.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and a representative from the local authority.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke formally and informally to pupils about their experiences at school and listened to their views. They also visited an assembly.
- Inspectors looked closely at documentation relating to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour. They also considered the school's view of its performance. In addition, they scrutinised the school's website and took account of the views of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the feedback from the staff questionnaires and from the 22 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Maureen Coleman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Henry Moreton

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lydgate School admits pupils with complex needs, the complexity of which has increased significantly over the past five years.
- Admissions are for pupils with a vast range of impairments, including co morbidity, physical, medical and emotional difficulties.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school refers to Reception to Year 8 as lower school, and Years 9 to 11 as upper school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision, nor does it use early entry for GCSE.
- Children in the early years attend full time.
- The school has introduced a school-wide nurture approach to managing behaviour and focuses on pupils learning in an active way that encourages use of their senses.
- Two thirds of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding.
- Pupils are drawn mostly from south of Kirklees including the areas of Holme Valley, Colne Valley, Holmfirth, Huddersfield, Honley and Shelley.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the achievement of some year groups of pupils in the lower school by:
 - ensuring that levels of challenge in the classroom are consistently good
 - ensuring that expectations and the pace of learning meet the abilities and interests of all pupils more closely.
- Ensure that staff apply the agreed assessment procedures across all areas of the school consistently.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Under the steadfast leadership of the headteacher, this is a good and still improving school.
- Senior, middle leaders and governors have worked relentlessly to address issues raised in the previous inspection. However, assessment procedures require further development because they are not applied consistently across the school.
- Pupils' health and well-being are paramount and leaders at all levels have worked hard to create an ethos where pupils are happy and thrive. Safeguarding procedures are well established and highly effective.
- Behaviour is managed exceptionally well and instances of bullying and discrimination are very rare. Highly effective provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development prepares pupils well for life in modern British society.
- Parents are strongly supportive of the school. They value the work it does and welcome the informative communication they receive on a daily basis from the teaching staff. This not only keeps parents well informed about how well their child is doing, but also fosters good relationships with everyone.
- The curriculum is well planned and provides memorable experiences to enrich learning. It is customised to meet individual pupils' needs. The 'Three Pathway Curriculum' in Key Stage 4 provides a strong emphasis on life skills and contributes significantly to pupils' learning.
- Careers guidance and support have improved significantly. All pupils in Year 11 leave with a wide range of qualifications and move on to further education or training.
- Early years provision is led and managed well. Children settle in quickly and get off to a good start with their learning and development.
- Additional funding, including the pupil premium and primary sport funding, invigorates and extends the curriculum. Many exciting and challenging outdoor opportunities, for example rock-climbing, cycling and walking activities, contribute significantly to the curriculum and have a positive impact on healthy lifestyles. This, together with additional support programmes to develop their literacy and mathematical skills, equips these pupils well for the next stage in their education or training.
- The headteacher and governors have eliminated weak teaching successfully. A robust system is in place for checking on the performance of staff with staff salary increases linked to pupils' progress. Good quality staff development ensures staff are well trained to teach effectively so that pupils make good progress.
- The individual approach the school adopts to addressing the specific needs of each pupil promotes equal opportunities well. Teachers work collaboratively with professionals from a range of agencies to provide timely, individual support for those pupils who need it. This helps each pupil to do well.
- Leaders and governors value the views of parents and give these very careful consideration in managing every aspect of school life.
- The local authority provides the school with good support and holds it in high esteem.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and holds the senior leaders fully to account. Governors ensure that the school's assessment of its performance is accurate and carefully linked to future training and planning. The governing body is committed to future development and determined to move Lydgate School towards outstanding status.
 - Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and have a good understanding of pupil progress data. They ensure that teachers are appropriately rewarded for good performance related to the effectiveness of their teaching and pupils' achievement. They know how leaders tackle any underperformance in teaching.
 - Governors manage the additional funding received by the school well. Checks are in place to make sure it is spent wisely and that it makes a positive difference to the performance of the pupils for whom it is intended.
 - The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties in relation to safeguarding and child protection.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Parents, staff and pupils are very supportive of the nurture approach used to manage behaviour. This has

resulted in a rapid improvement in behaviour across the school since the previous inspection.

- Highly effective behaviour management strategies make a strong contribution to the exceptionally positive climate for learning found in many lessons, promoting good progress in reading, literacy and mathematics.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary and help them to deepen their understanding and develop a thirst for new knowledge. They particularly enjoy the opportunities to work in small groups.
- Behaviour outside lessons is often impeccable and pupils are fully aware of the very high expectations the staff have of them. This, in turn, impacts strongly on their contribution to the wider life of the school.
- Pupils display a pride in their work. They are keenly aware of how good attitudes and behaviour contribute to creating harmony in school and to positive relationships outside in the wider world.
- All adults work together to provide a calm, peaceful environment in and outside the classroom. This allows pupils, particularly those who are autistic and have other complex medical needs, to thrive.
- The school frequently receives spontaneous feedback from the general public praising the pupils for their exemplary behaviour while on school trips.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Parents, pupils, as well as staff, confirm this view.
- Pupils are happy to come to school. They attend well and say instances of bullying, including homophobic, racist and other forms of bullying based on prejudice are rare. Older pupils are excellent role models for younger pupils.
- Detailed and comprehensive safety policies and procedures are in place which promote the safety of pupils and staff exceptionally well.
- Pupils are well aware of what constitutes safe and unsafe situations and feel very confident to approach adults in school if they have worries or concerns.
- Pupils are taught about internet safety and say adults are always around to listen to them so they always feel safe.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good in all key stages, including the early years. There are examples of teaching having an outstanding impact in the upper school. As a result, pupils make good progress overall in all subjects, including reading, writing, mathematics and communication.
- Staff teach early reading skills well, including the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters and combinations of letters make) across the curriculum.
- Staff use practical mathematical problems creatively to enable pupils to explore and investigate possible solutions to challenging tasks. In turn, these relate well to real-life situations.
- The quality of teaching in the upper school is sometimes outstanding in its impact on learning and achievement. Teachers and teaching assistants are well trained to deal with the extremely challenging behaviour of pupils with complex needs. Furthermore, the skilfully adapted curriculum provides bespoke experiences and enrichment to meet the specific needs of every pupil. This was especially effective during a drama session on *Macbeth* for pupils in the upper school. Through the creative arts, their social, emotional and spiritual development was promoted exceptionally well.
- Teachers use a range of methods to record pupils' progress. For example photographs, video clips and the work in pupils' books show accurately the progress pupils make across all subjects. However, staff do not use these assessments in all classes consistently and effectively to inform planning and the next steps in pupils' learning.
- Regular praise and feedback encourage pupils always to try their best. This deepens and consolidates their understanding and skills successfully, particularly in using a range of methods for communication.
- Teachers know their classes well and are adept at helping pupils to settle quickly. They readily show that they listen to, and value, all pupils' opinions and suggestions. The development of pupils' social and concentration skills is given high priority. Staff encourage pupils to share their ideas and develop their communication skills.
- Arrangements for specialist teaching of pupils in receipt of additional funding help them learn exceptionally well. For example, an adapted writing task for pupils in the upper school targeted their knowledge of adverbs successfully and enabled them to participate in a whole-class writing activity particularly well.
- Staff make best use of the very well-supervised outside area to support and extend pupils' learning. There

are many well-planned activities to promote pupils' well-being and social interaction with others.

- Trusting relationships with pupils enhance the excellent management of pupils' behaviour, which is unobtrusive and highly effective.

The achievement of pupils is good

- All pupils achieve well from their low starting points as a result of good quality teaching. Some pupils, particularly in the upper school, make exceptional progress.
- In the upper school, a small number of pupils attain GCSE passes and all pupils leave with an average of four entry level qualifications. This prepares them well for further education and training and for life in modern Britain.
- There is some variation in the progress pupils make in the lower school. This is because work and expectations are not always sufficiently challenging and do not meet the needs of these pupils as well as they could. Inspection evidence indicates that most pupils make good progress, but the rate of progress for some year groups in the lower school is not as brisk as for those attending the upper school.
- Accurate and regular monitoring of pupils' achievements and progress provide staff with a good picture of how well the pupils are doing with their work. However, this information is not always used to full effect by all staff to support the planning of individual activities based on prior learning and achievement.
- Reading is taught well across all classes and even those pupils who find reading difficult are encouraged to read a wide range of texts. This supports their literacy and communication development well.
- Pupils make good progress in literacy and numeracy across a wide range of subjects. This is because teachers focus on creating good, supportive learning environments. They implement highly effective and sensitive strategies for managing pupils' behaviour which allow lessons to flow and promote good learning for all pupils.
- In mathematics, pupils tackle challenging work, as seen in a lesson where pupils changed fractions into percentages and decimals. This encouraged pupils to work collaboratively and develop their problem-solving skills and prepared them well for life in today's society.
- Pupils supported by additional funding make the same good progress compared to pupils with similar complex needs in the school. Leaders use additional funding creatively to make sure these pupils receive one-to-one and small-group teaching which support their learning well. The number of disadvantaged pupils who attain GCSE qualifications is small and so any comparison between their attainment and the attainment of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally is not statistically valid.
- The most able pupils achieve well because they are challenged to learn effectively.

The early years provision is good

- The early years is led and managed well. As a result, children make good progress from skills significantly below those typical for their age when they enter the provision.
- Children settle into the school quickly and begin to learn straight away. Parents say they value the letters, notes and phone calls they receive from staff. These keep parents up to date with their children's progress on a daily basis.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and teaching assistants focus on the specific needs of each child. Children respond well to an approach that encourages the use of their senses to learn. They make good progress in all areas of learning and are well prepared for the transition into Year 1.
- Careful checks on the impact learning activities have on children's progress enable staff to successfully address any weaknesses in both provision and children's learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely with professionals from external agencies. This contributes strongly to the learning of children with complex needs.
- Adults take every opportunity to talk to and engage with children. Careful planning for each day helps children to move on quickly and securely in their learning.
- Staff pay rigorous attention to safeguarding and children's welfare. This benefits their learning considerably. Children feel safe and secure as a result of highly effective daily routines and high expectations for their behaviour. Consequently, behaviour and safety are outstanding.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	107801
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	447937

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	75
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Thomas
Headteacher	Nicky Rogers
Date of previous school inspection	5 October 2011
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