

Kirk Sandall Junior School

Magnolia Close, Kirk Sandall, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN3 1JG

Inspection dates

21–22 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Although improving, the quality of teaching and learning is not consistently good.
- Actions being taken to improve reading outcomes are not checked by leaders frequently enough to be sure that pupils' progress in reading is improving.
- Leaders do not report progress against the school's priorities for improvement to the trust and governors often enough throughout the year, to check that actions are having the intended success.
- Adults' expectations of pupils' behaviour are not consistently high. When pupils leave classrooms, their behaviour in corridors and on the playground deteriorates.
- Leaders' plans for improvement in writing are not consistently applied across the school. As a result, some pupils are not as clear about how to improve their work and, therefore, do not make strong progress.
- Assessment systems and processes are still being adapted. Not all teachers are confident in making accurate judgements of pupils' attainment against age-related expectations throughout the year.
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics overall is improving, but the higher-ability pupils are not consistently challenged to deepen their understanding, for example by selecting the strategies they apply to a task.

The school has the following strengths

- The leadership team has been strengthened. School leaders, governors and the trust have a shared vision that they communicate clearly. All senior leaders have the skills and knowledge to successfully direct school improvement.
- Middle leaders have good subject knowledge and a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in their subject.
- Staff are committed to the hard work needed to improve teaching and learning.
- Clearly defined plans for improvement are honest, accurate and highlight the right priorities.
- The trust has ensured that pupils make a smooth transition between schools.
- Attitudes to learning in class are generally positive. Where expectations are high, pupils are polite, well-mannered and eager to engage in conversations about their learning.
- There is some strong teaching in the school which is being used successfully to improve teaching overall.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - making sure work in mathematics is well planned to challenge and deepen the understanding of all pupils so that a greater proportion reach higher standards
 - supporting teachers in making accurate assessments of pupils' attainment across subjects
 - ensuring that leaders' direction to improve writing is consistently applied across classes, including having a high expectation of the presentation and quality of work, and giving clear direction to pupils of all abilities on how to improve their work
 - continuing to use the strong practice already existing in the school to support teachers and teaching assistants in ensuring that pupils of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, make strong progress throughout their time in school.
- Improve the frequency and thoroughness of leaders' checks on the progress of the strategies they have put in place to improve reading, to ensure that pupils are making more rapid progress from their starting points.
- Ensure that all staff have guidance and support in delivering a consistent approach to managing behaviour, so that pupils show the same respect, good manners and positive behaviour that they display in class at less structured times of the day.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The substantial changes that have taken place in leadership since the school became an academy, with the most recent being the appointment of the head of school in September 2017, have resulted in a strong, outward-looking team. Although there is still a way to go in ensuring that the quality of education is good overall or better, leaders have a wide range of skills and experiences they can draw on to fulfil this ambition.
- The new team shows vision and dedication to making the improvements in the school that are needed. They have a very honest and accurate view of aspects of the school that are working well and those that most need improvement. They know that outcomes for pupils, particularly in reading, require further improvement.
- Leaders at all levels, including governors, say that becoming part of the Kirk Sandall Academy Trust has strengthened the capacity for improvement. The trust has created a shared and consistent approach to school improvement. Staff say that it has not only ensured a smooth journey for pupils from their early years in the infant school to the junior school, but also beyond, to the secondary school. Learning time does not stall and expectations of what pupils can achieve remain high. There is a cohesive approach to assessment, shared training and development and a purposeful approach to school improvement.
- The trust provides focus, support and challenge to leaders in bringing about improvement. The chair of the board has a comprehensive and passionate view about the things the school does well and where leaders need to focus their energies on improvement.
- The appointment of the new head of school in September 2017 has brought a renewed energy for improvement and a shared determination to make the quality of education the best it can be. Staff feel very well directed and supported under her leadership and she has made sure the team is united in and committed to improving outcomes for pupils.
- The experienced executive headteacher provides a dual role in supporting leaders in accurately identifying priorities for school improvement and in quality assuring their work. She gives astute and comprehensive information to the trust about the progress of improvements. She and the head of school agree that, now their effective partnership is established, they want to make sure that their findings about the progress of actions and their impact on the school improvement plan are shared with governors and the trust more frequently across the year.
- Knowing the huge task to be undertaken in school improvement, the trust and governing body have extended the senior leadership team. This team is skilled and knowledgeable about each area of leadership. They share the head of school's clear vision and make accurate assessments of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. They evaluate new strategies carefully before deciding which to select to best support the pupils.
- Although the trust is made up of two schools, its leaders are outward-looking and make

links with many other providers, to seek the best forms of professional development and the sharing of best practice. The STEP (the standards and effectiveness partner) from the Partners in Learning Teaching School Alliance visits to evaluate the provision and discuss areas for improvement. Leaders say that this partnership provides further support and challenge for the actions they are taking.

- The school's own assessment systems have been revised and improved. Alongside a more defined tracking system, leaders have supported teachers in gaining a better understanding of how to make judgements about pupils' attainment in relation to age-related expectations. They know that they have more work to do in ensuring that teachers know what this looks like at particular points throughout the year, so that their assessments are better correlated to the work in pupils' books and that seen in lessons. Leaders know that they need more evidence to instil confidence in their view that some teachers' assessments are simply overcautious.
- The leaders responsible for English have undertaken a careful evaluation of good practice in reading in other schools and engaged with different training. They have then made considered decisions about the strategies they should put in place to best support the pupils at Kirk Sandall Junior School.
- Leaders introduced a new curriculum in September 2017 to ensure that pupils not only improve their knowledge, skills and understanding in English and mathematics, but in other subjects too. Curriculum leaders have a good understanding about which aspects of their subject need to be further developed. They know that they now need to check that pupils are making clear steps of progress through each subject as they move through key stage 2. Subjects such as sport and music are high profile and pupils speak confidently about their participation and enjoyment in these subjects. In addition, pupils have the opportunity to extend their skills through a variety of extra-curricular activities, such as dodgeball and craft club.
- School leaders are committed to providing a wider curriculum that will support pupils as they progress through school, to secondary school and beyond. They aim to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a range of lessons, assemblies and visits. For example, pupils have weekly sessions in empathy, some of which include working with a mother and her baby. The discussions and learning in these sessions are equipping pupils with life-long skills and understanding.
- Leaders use additional funding well to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. Leaders know that the recent work on checking pupils' needs and barriers to learning, and putting more defined assessment systems in place, is starting to have a positive effect on the progress pupils are making.

Governance of the school

- There is a clear sense of unity between governors, the trust and school leaders. There is an open and transparent sharing of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors say that the school has become far more outward facing and comment on the synergy between the infant school and the junior school. This is supporting pupils in making a seamless transition from one school to the other. Governors value the benefits that the new partnerships have brought.
- Governors use a wide variety of information to help them appropriately support and

challenge school leaders about their work. This includes reports from the head of school, reports that the executive headteacher prepares for the trust, reports and feedback from subject leaders, records of STEP visits and visits the governors themselves make in school. Consequently, governors have an accurate view of the school. Some systems school leaders have introduced to make checks on the progress of actions they are taking are relatively new. Leaders agree that more timely sharing of progress against the school's key priorities will help governors channel their questions even more precisely.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Policies, practice and record-keeping are all fit for purpose. Initial and refresher training is in place for all staff. However, leaders are very clear that they want to further embed the systems and practices they have in place, to ensure that a strong culture of safeguarding permeates all aspects of school life.
- The school has a number of strategies in place to support vulnerable pupils and their families. The head of school, who is also the designated leader for safeguarding, is confident that, through their good partnerships with external agencies, families are directed to the different types of support they need. The close links with the infant school ensure that there is continuity in care and support for vulnerable pupils and their families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Although improving, teaching in the school is not consistently good.
- Pupils' progress over time, from their starting points in Year 3 to the end of Year 6, has not been strong enough, particularly in reading. However, leaders are taking decisive action to address any aspects of teaching that are not consistently good. Teachers are working in teams, each supported by an experienced and effective leader. This is ensuring that teachers are well supported in improving their own practice and, subsequently, in understanding the best way to support the pupils in making stronger progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are clear about the strategies leaders have put in place to improve pupils' progress in reading. Comprehensive training and guidance for teachers is leading to some green shoots of success emerging in pupils' comprehension skills. Teachers deliver short, focused tasks that are designed to help pupils develop skills such as inference, prediction and retrieval. Pupils say how they enjoy the routines of this work – they know what is expected of them. Lower-ability pupils are given focused direction and support in reading, as well as frequent opportunities to read aloud to an adult. Some classes have topic-linked reading areas in their classrooms to encourage pupils to take time out with a book. One of the pupils in this class commented, 'I love reading. It takes you to a different world!' The strong focus that teachers give to developing language and extending vocabulary choices is also positively reflected in the pupils' written work. Leaders, and teachers themselves, know that this work needs to be fully embedded and consistently applied as pupils move

through school.

- In mathematics, work to improve pupils' attainment and progress is coming to fruition, due to focused direction to pupils in deepening their learning through activities that test out their skills. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to apply their skills to problems and reasoning tasks. They describe mathematics as 'challenging and exciting'. Lower-ability pupils are well supported in this subject, and teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations of what they can achieve. However, higher-ability pupils are not given the same challenge and direction. Sometimes, they spend time completing tasks they have already shown they are adept at.
- New strategies in place to improve writing are providing some classes with clear expectations, guidance and effective adult modelling that are having a positive effect on pupils' engagement and the progress they are making. Where these are applied consistently, dramatic results can be seen in pupils' accelerated progress. However, there is much variation in the delivery of these methods, and in the way that pupils are asked to edit and improve their work. As a result, progress and outcomes in writing are not consistently strong.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about topic work and the visits that are linked to topics, such as the recent trips to Tropical Butterfly House and Murton Park. Similarly, visitors are invited into school to enhance learning and engagement in work across different subjects. As well as supporting skills development in specific subjects, these events provide a good stimulus for writing, and pupils are eager to share their resulting work.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants, who are on hand to help pupils with their academic learning as well as addressing their social and emotional needs. It is only recently that clearly defined assessments and precise individual education plans have been put in place. The progress these pupils make is currently very varied.
- Disadvantaged pupils take part in additional sessions that address their individual needs. For example, there are extra sessions for pupils who speak English as an additional language and for those who need emotional support. As a result, these pupils are making better progress and starting to catch up with their national peers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. The care and guidance that pupils receive at different times of the day can vary. Sometimes, staff are not sure how to best support pupils.
- Many pupils are confident learners and proud of their achievements. Pupils of all abilities willingly engage in conversations with adults about their learning and their school.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of respect for everyone's differences. They are able to explain their learning about racism and different types of bullying. One pupil said, 'It doesn't matter what you look like, or who your family is made up of; everyone should be treated the same and made to feel welcome'. Pupils say that bullying does

happen, but that they are very well supported by teachers and support staff in school if a problem arises. They know what to do if they or someone else is being bullied.

- Pupils can talk confidently about how they are taught to keep themselves and others safe. They have taken part in a considerable amount of activities to help them understand the benefits and dangers of the internet.
- Most parents and carers are positive about the school and the support their child receives. Many say that their child enjoys coming to school and that any friendship issues are dealt with well. They say the school shares clear information about the progress their child is making. They appreciate the extra-curricular opportunities their child can engage in.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In lessons, pupils generally show very positive attitudes to learning. The changes leaders have made to the behaviour policy and the use of golden time have supported further improvement. Most pupils are on task and engaged in their learning. They are polite and well-mannered and respond quickly to the teacher's direction. However, when they leave the classroom, their behaviour starts to slip. Leaders agree that pupils see that the adults' expectations of their behaviour are not the same out of class. Supervision, guidance and direction is not as high profile. Behaviour in corridors and on the playground can be boisterous.
- Leaders have invested time and money in providing resources that will engage and entertain pupils during their lunch break, giving them positive ways of spending their time on their own or with others. Pupils are keen to share how this has made lunchtime a more positive time of the day. However, there are very mixed views from staff about whether or not this has addressed, or reduced, instances of poor behaviour. The way that adults manage their behaviour is not consistent. Pupils react differently to different adults in school.
- Where behaviour is challenging in class, it is managed well by teachers and teaching assistants. The learning mentor provides good support to pupils throughout the day, individually and in groups, to ensure that their needs are addressed. Staff and pupils value this support.
- Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is consistently better than the national average overall. Leaders are continuing to work with the families of a minority of pupils who are persistently absent to improve their attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- From their outcomes at the end of Year 2 at the infant school, which are generally in line with or better than the national averages, pupils have made slow progress over time through key stage 2 to the end of Year 6. However, improved action plans and direction from leaders are starting to have a positive effect on the progress pupils are making.
- The attainment level of Year 6 pupils in 2017 in writing and mathematics increased from 2016 and were in line with the national averages. Pupils' attainment in reading

has been consistently below the national average. Pupils' progress in reading has been in the bottom 20% nationally for the last two years. Their progress in writing and mathematics has also been below average. A carefully evaluated plan of training and support for teachers is resulting in this picture starting to improve.

- Pupils' current work and the school's own assessment information show that the school has not eradicated periods of time where pupils' progress slows or stalls. However, where teaching is stronger, pupils' progress accelerates across subjects.
- Recently refined school assessment information for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities demonstrates that there is variation in the progress that these pupils make from their starting points.
- Although many disadvantaged pupils in school have attainment in English and mathematics that is lower than the national average, the gap between these pupils and others nationally is diminishing.
- The proportion of pupils reaching greater depth in reading and mathematics is lower than that seen nationally. Leaders know that they need to keep this group of pupils high profile in their checks on pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics.
- While the new curriculum, implemented in September 2017, is motivating pupils and giving them opportunities to access learning across a wider range of subjects, it is too soon to be able to check the effect of this work on pupils' outcomes.

School details

Unique reference number	141684
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10042144

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	350
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Diane Dunn
Headteacher	Jayne McAllister (Head of school) Janet Foster (Executive headteacher)
Telephone number	01302 882827
Website	www.kirksandalljunior.schooljotter2.com
Email address	admin@kirksandall-jun.doncaster.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Kirk Sandall Junior School converted to become an academy school on 1 March 2015. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, in December 2013, it was judged to be inadequate.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who require support for their special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is slightly greater than the national average.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much smaller than the national average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons across a range of subjects in all classes. Almost all of these observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- During visits to lessons, inspectors spoke with pupils and looked at their work to find out more about how well they are learning.
- Meetings were held with pupils and inspectors talked informally with pupils around the school. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked with them about reading. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors met regularly with the executive headteacher and the head of school. They also met with other members of the senior and middle leadership teams, including the school business manager. They met with the staff, midday supervisors, and with two members of the local governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector met with the chair of the board of trustees and leaders from the infant school, and spoke to the STEP on the telephone.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including leaders' evaluation of school performance, school development planning, and documents relating to pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching and learning. Inspectors also reviewed the minutes of meetings of the local governing body and information relating to safeguarding and attendance.
- Inspectors met with parents and took into account the 59 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. They considered the 17 staff responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Kate Rowley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Helen Hussey	Ofsted Inspector
Karine Hendley	Her Majesty's Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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