

Inspection of Kirkburton Middle School

Turnshaws Avenue, Kirkburton, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD8 0TJ

Inspection dates: 1–2 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school and say that they feel happy and safe. Yet, leaders do not always follow their own policies to keep pupils safe. This means that pupils can be at risk of serious harm even after they have spoken with an adult about safeguarding concerns. Leaders have made some serious errors of judgement. Safeguarding is ineffective. Consequently, leadership and management and behaviour and attitudes are inadequate.

Parents and carers praise staff for being welcoming and friendly. This makes it easier for parents to raise any issues they may have. The headteacher makes sure that this friendly feeling flows throughout the whole school. Pupils say that there are the odd instances of bullying, but that staff stamp this out quickly.

Pupils do better in some subjects than in others. Some subject leaders have a much better grasp of how to design and deliver a quality curriculum.

There are a wealth of different clubs and activities. The display cabinet is straining with the number of trophies that the school has won. This, alongside the work to develop pupils' mental and emotional well-being, makes this school distinctive.

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

Pupils enjoy studying a wide range of subjects. They are doing better by the end of Year 6 than they have done in previous years. Leaders have done this without narrowing the curriculum.

Pupils learn more in some subjects, such as English, mathematics, science and physical education, than in others. This is because the leaders of these subjects have thought more about what they want pupils to know and be able to do. They check this regularly. Other subject leaders do not have a good enough understanding of the essential knowledge and skills they want pupils to have. Sometimes, teachers only check whether pupils have remembered the latest topic they have been taught.

Teachers can usually get on and teach without pupils disrupting the lesson. Pupils say that there is the odd example of shouting out or being silly, but staff deal with it. Pupils are polite to visitors and each other. They say 'good morning' and hold doors open for others. They are often heard thanking the teacher for the lesson they have had. One parent spoke for many when they said, 'a happy child is an achieving child'. Yet several older pupils said that these standards of behaviour can slip on the school buses. Without adult supervision, a few pupils can be loud, use bad language and be overly physical during this time of the day.

There is a good range of different clubs and activities, including football, Nerf Ball, musical activities, chess club and Warhammer. The school was the first in Kirklees awarded the School Games Platinum Award.

Pupils are also encouraged to become young leaders, 'Befrienders' to new Year 6 pupils and house captains. This is helping them to develop their character and confidence. Pupils also develop their understanding of the world around them. For example, pupils created ceramic poppies for the centenary of the First World War. They received a lovely letter of acknowledgement from those attending the ceremony. There are visits to France, bush craft, camping and a wide range of fund-raising events. Leaders recognise that they need to do more to help pupils to encounter the world of work and careers.

Leaders know that they have not done enough in some areas to improve the curriculum over the past 18 months. Staff welcome the meetings they attend and training they receive. However, there has not been enough support and guidance for teachers in improving the curriculum. Advice from the trust and external consultants is not always taken on board.

Leaders have been mindful of staff workload pressures. Teachers now submit pupil progress information three times a year rather than six. Staff have welcomed this.

Parents rightly comment that some of the information they receive from the school could be more helpful. It is not clear enough to parents what their children are learning each term. When the mid-year reports are sent home, they are not always well understood.

Governors do not have a good enough handle on how to carry out their key responsibilities. For example, they do not focus on equalities enough. They do not have a good grasp on how extra money is being spent or the difference it is making. Some of the school's plans for improvement are unclear. This is making it difficult for governors to hold school leaders to account.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

When pupils raise serious concerns about their safety and well-being, staff do not deal with these in a consistent way. This potentially puts pupils at risk of serious harm.

Leaders do not maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' when it comes to safeguarding. They do not always follow their own safeguarding policies and guidelines. They are not involving appropriate professionals and agencies when they need to.

School surveys show that many pupils would not raise worries with an adult. This is worrying feedback and leaves pupils at risk. These serious errors of judgement mean that while pupils may feel safe, they may not actually be safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders do not consistently follow their own safeguarding policies and guidelines. As a matter of urgency, the school should review its policies and procedures for safeguarding and ensure that all staff are clear about what they should do when a pupil alerts staff to serious safeguarding concerns.
- Some curriculum leaders do not have a good enough grasp of how to construct a curriculum that enables pupils to learn effectively and remember what they have been taught. This means that pupils are getting a better deal in some subjects than they are in others. Leaders need to make sure that more support, training and checks are carried out to help some subject leaders to improve more rapidly.
- During their time in school, pupils should start to learn more about the world of work and be provided with age-appropriate information about careers that will help them when they move on to their next school. This has not been happening and puts pupils at a potential disadvantage when they leave Kirkburton. Leaders need to make sure that pupils better understand their potential next steps and the world of work.
- Parents have said that they do not have a clear enough view of what their children are learning in school. We agree. The reports that go home to parents can be confusing and unhelpful. Leaders need to review the quality of the information they send home, so parents are clear on what pupils are learning each term and how well they are learning it.
- Governors are keen to ask questions. However, they are not always the right ones. This means that some of their key responsibilities are not carried out well enough. The trust needs to ensure that all governors are clear on their core responsibilities, including those duties laid down in law.

How can I feedback 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

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| Unique reference number | 143791 |
| Local authority | Kirklees |
| Inspection number | 10110665 |
| Type of school | Middle deemed secondary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 10 to 13 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 514 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Martyn Jones |
| Headteacher | Gary Johnson |
| Website | www.kirkburtonmiddleschool.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- This is the first inspection of the school since it became part of the MAST Academy in 2016.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- We met with a wide range of senior staff. These included the headteacher, assistant headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator. We also met with two governors, the chief executive of the trust and the chair of the trust board.
- We focused on mathematics, science, history, physical education, French, design technology, music and geography. We visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils, teachers, subject and senior leaders to consider the quality of

education.

- When we inspected safeguarding, we met with a wide range of pupils, both formally and informally, including those with SEND. We met with the designated safeguarding leaders and checked a wide range of documentation, including school surveys of teachers, parents and pupils, as well as Ofsted's Parent View. We also had several discussions with a range of colleagues from Kirklees local authority.
- We also spoke individually to newly qualified teachers, supply staff and other non-teaching staff to check their views on pupils' behaviour and attitudes.

Inspection team

Phil Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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