

# Inspection of Scissett Middle School

Wakefield Road, Scissett, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD8 9JX

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Inspection dates: 22–23 October 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

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

This is a happy and caring school and staff have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They attend well. Pupils show respectful and tolerant attitudes towards each other and staff. They are proud of their school.

Looking after pupils' mental health and well-being is important. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the 'mindful mile'. This is where they walk or run in the school grounds and take time to talk to each other. This happens weekly in the winter and daily in the summer. Pupils also enjoy the time that they have every week with the school's therapy dog.

When pupils arrive in Year 6, they are well supported and settle in quickly. Leaders place high importance on preparing pupils for attending high school in Year 9. Pupils speak highly of the careers advice they are given.

Pupils conduct themselves well around the school and in lessons. Corridors are calm. Most pupils behave well at all times. Low-level disruption is not tolerated.

Bullying is rare. When it does happen, staff sort it out. Pupils have a trusted adult who they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns.

Leaders have prioritised improving reading. Most pupils enjoy reading aloud in class. However, leaders do not ensure that the weakest readers catch up quickly when they join the school in Year 6.

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

Leaders have focused on improving the curriculum in all subjects. Subject plans set out the crucial knowledge and skills that pupils will learn. However, leaders have not considered opportunities to make links at appropriate times across subjects.

Most teachers have good subject knowledge. Most are specialists in the subjects they teach. Teachers ensure that pupils revisit previous learning so that they can remember more over time. The curriculum is effective in ensuring that pupils achieve well by the end of Year 8. They are well prepared for high school. Occasionally, teachers do not give pupils time to develop their knowledge in more depth, particularly during discussions.

Leaders are working to improve reading. Every day, pupils engage in a reading activity. In a reading lesson, Year 7 pupils read an extract about women's rights. They discussed the words they were unfamiliar with. They explained the new knowledge they had gained from reading the text. Pupils enjoy reading books together every week as a whole class. These books include the classics and contemporary novels.

Some pupils, when they join the school in Year 6, are not fluent readers. Leaders do

not ensure that these pupils catch up quickly enough. Not all staff are well trained to support pupils who find it difficult to decode words. Leaders have plans in place to address this.

Leaders expect pupils to work hard and behave well. Pupils show positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils want to do their best. Most pupils produce work of a good standard. In an English lesson, Year 8 pupils produced written work of a high quality when writing about the novel 'Of Mice and Men'. Pupils take pride in their work.

Pupils understand how to be responsible and active citizens. There is a range of opportunities for pupils to contribute to their school and the wider community. Pupils raise money for charity. They relish taking on extra responsibilities. Pupils can become prefects, playground buddies and student council representatives. Some Year 8 pupils said, 'We love being prefects and having responsibility'.

The personal development programme supports pupils to keep themselves safe outside school. Pupils learn about healthy relationships, the dangers of drugs and alcohol, and the importance of online safety. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. They enjoy discussing topical issues. In a geography lesson, Year 8 pupils discussed with confidence the effects of globalisation. Pupils' understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism is less well developed.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Teachers understand what they need to do to help pupils with SEND to achieve well.

Governors have a wide range of skills. They visit the school regularly. They understand the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders and governors consider staff well-being. Recent initiatives to reduce staff workload have been well received. Staff enjoy working at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The leader for child protection ensures that staff are regularly updated on any local safeguarding risks. Staff understand the local risks. They are clear about the systems they have to follow if they have any concerns about a child. Any concerns are followed up quickly. Record-keeping is detailed. Leaders work proactively with outside agencies to help pupils and their families when needed.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders do not ensure that the weakest readers in Year 6 catch up quickly enough. Not all staff are trained to deliver the school's phonics programme. This means that pupils who struggle to decode words and read fluently are not as well

supported as they should be. Leaders should ensure that their plans to train staff to deliver the school's phonics programme are implemented effectively so that all adults can help weaker readers to read fluently.

- Subject curriculum plans are well sequenced. However, there is a lack of planned opportunities for pupils to benefit from embedding their knowledge and skills in other subjects. For example, in key stage 3 where pupils study 'Of Mice and Men', links with the great depression in history are not taken. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans include opportunities for cross-curricular learning, where appropriate, to enhance pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills further.
- Pupils understand the importance of British values. They have a less well-developed understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Leaders should ensure that pupils understand the dangers of radicalisation and extremism so that they are even more well prepared for life in modern Britain.

## 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'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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143792
<b>Local authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	10110666
<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	10 to 13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	599
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Martyn Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Natasha Greenough
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.scissettmiddle.com/">www.scissettmiddle.com/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This is the first section 5 inspection since the school became an academy in December 2016. The school is part of the Mast Academy Trust.
- The headteacher is also the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.

## Information about this inspection

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

- We met with the headteacher and the head of school. We met with other members of the senior leadership team and curriculum leaders. We also met with leaders responsible for safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and personal development. The lead inspector held a discussion with members of the governing body and a member of the board of trustees.
- We scrutinised a wide range of documentation relating to the school's work to safeguard pupils. This included pupils' welfare records, behaviour records and pupils' attendance records. We also checked pupil exclusion rates. We talked to

staff about their role in keeping pupils safe. An inspector reviewed the school's central record, which includes the checks made on staff to ensure that they are safe to work with children.

- We took account of the views of members of staff who responded to Ofsted's staff survey and the responses to Ofsted's parent survey, Parent View. We also took into account pupils' responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. We spoke to a number of pupils, both formally and informally, to get their views about the school. An inspector talked to some parents to get their views about the support the school provides for pupils with SEND.
- The inspection focused particularly on English, mathematics, history and music. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection, such as geography and science. We visited lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers. We also listened to some pupils read.

### **Inspection team**

Michele Costello, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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