

# Inspection of Holgate Meadows School

Lindsay Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S5 7WE

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Inspection dates: 23 and 24 March 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Previous inspection grade

Good

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

Some pupils at this school do not feel safe. Some pupils are being bullied. They say adults are not good at preventing bullying from happening. Some pupils told us they have been subject to racial abuse from other pupils.

Too many pupils are disrupting learning for themselves and others because of their poor behaviour. Pupils' behaviour often gets worse very quickly. Adults sometimes struggle to manage escalating poor behaviour without physically restraining pupils. Some staff say they lack confidence when dealing with the behaviour of pupils they are not familiar with. Where curriculums are well planned and delivered, pupils are more interested in their learning and pay attention to what is being taught.

Pupils' rates of attendance are generally low. School leaders have introduced strategies to try to encourage pupils to attend more often. These strategies have not been successful in substantially improving rates of attendance. Some pupils have struggled to return to school following the pandemic.

Some parents are not happy with the care and education their child receives.

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

There have been major changes across leadership at all levels. The school has been led by four different principals in the past three years. The current principal has been in post since January 2022. This ever-changing leadership structure has led to inconsistencies in behaviour management and the quality of education offered. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, in the midst of these leadership changes, has been huge.

The interim executive board does not have a clear strategic vision for Holgate Meadows. The board is not sure what the next steps should be to bring about rapid improvement.

Senior and middle leadership roles are not clear. Some leaders do not have the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully carry out their roles. Leaders do not check what is being taught, nor do they appropriately support teachers in delivering the curriculum.

Staff are enthusiastic about wanting to provide pupils with the best care and education possible. 90% of staff who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire said they are proud to work at the school. However, they lack the professional development to allow them to successfully deliver the curriculum and manage pupils' behaviour. For example, teachers do not teach phonics accurately because they have not received effective training in this area. As a result, too many pupils cannot read and/or lack confidence in reading. Pupils do not have regular access to different texts in order to encourage a love of reading and widen their knowledge.

In other subjects, the curriculum does not ensure that pupils' learning builds on what has gone before and becomes more difficult over time. Pupils do not have the previous knowledge needed to help them understand what they are currently learning. For example, in mathematics much of the knowledge that pupils need to understand is not identified in curriculum documents. Therefore, teachers do not teach what pupils need to know. This lack of effective curriculum planning and teaching means that pupils do not securely remember knowledge across the curriculum. For some pupils, teachers are not sufficiently effective in providing the support required to meet pupils' needs. A lack of assessment by teachers means the work pupils are given is not always appropriate for their ability. Therefore, many pupils lack opportunities to be able to work independently as they are unable to carry out tasks without further explanation or support from adults.

Most pupils get opportunities to take part in activities that enhance their daily learning. For example, some pupils receive boxing and swimming tuition and some attend forest school or go on residential trips. The pandemic has severely affected the ability of pupils to attend these types of events over the past two years. In key stage 4, pupils receive a range of good-quality careers advice that meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

In personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons pupils learn about issues such as how to keep themselves safe online and how they can access support for any health concerns they may have. However, these opportunities are not available to all pupils. Staff do not keep a log of who is accessing activities and so do not spot potential chances for extra learning. Therefore, some pupils miss out. School leaders have not planned for, so teachers are not delivering, all aspects of the relationships and sex education curriculum as required by the government.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Some pupils say they do not feel safe in school. Pupils tell teachers about issues that concern them, but are not confident teachers can help. Other pupils, and their parents, complain that too often pupils are subject to physical interventions to manage their behaviour. Some pupils say they have been subject to racial abuse from other pupils. The number of physical assaults on staff is high.

Leaders are making safeguarding a priority. All staff have regular training and appropriate recruitment checks have been made. The new principal is working closely with the local authority designated officer. They are reviewing action taken following parental concerns over physical interventions, to ensure the correct strategies have been, and will be, used. The members of the senior leadership team meet weekly with the safeguarding and care teams to consider the safeguarding

needs of pupils. They consider all incidents, assess the actions taken and review needs for the future.

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

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

- Staff do not consistently manage behaviour well. Some do not have high enough aspirations of how pupils should behave. The number of assaults on staff and the number of pupils being physically restrained are high. Some pupils do not have faith in staff to deal with incidents well so that they feel safe. Leaders need to implement effective strategies to support pupils in managing their behaviour to reduce the number of pupils being physically restrained, assaults on staff, and incidents of bullying and discriminatory language, so that pupils and staff feel safe in school.
- Leaders and managers do not have a clear vision or strategy to bring about rapid improvement. Therefore, staff do not have the guidance they need to adequately care for and educate the pupils. Those with governance responsibilities need to quickly establish how they can better support and challenge leaders to take the required steps to improve the curriculum and policies and processes in school, to ensure the quality of education is good and safeguarding is effective.
- Staff, particularly those with subject and curriculum leadership roles, do not know what their responsibilities are or lack the knowledge and skills to fulfil their role. This means the curriculum is mostly not well planned, delivered or quality assured. This prevents pupils from learning and remembering things they need to know. All staff need the professional development required to enable them to carry out their roles effectively.
- The curriculum has not been planned to ensure that it meets the needs of the pupils. Much of the curriculum lacks aspiration and is not planned to help pupils gain incremental knowledge over time. Pupils often do not find learning interesting and they do not have the necessary prior knowledge to make sense of what they are learning. Leaders need to ensure pupils receive an aspirational curriculum that is well planned and sequenced towards future knowledge and skills.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

## **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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	126712
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200294
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Maintained special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	6 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	93
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Interim executive board
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Kevin Corke
<b>Principal</b>	Claire Bailey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hphm.org">www.hphm.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	1 and 2 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has had significant change in its leadership team since the last inspection. Four headteachers have been in post since 2016. The current principal has been in post since January 2022.
- An interim executive board has been in place since September 2021.
- The school was supported by the Wellspring Academy Trust for a short period up until February 2022.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative providers: Sheffield Wednesday and OnBoard.
- The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to the senior leadership team, middle leaders and class teachers. The lead inspector also spoke to representatives of the local authority and the chair of the interim executive board.
- Inspectors studied the curriculum, particularly physical education, reading, mathematics and PSHE. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to teachers and pupils about safeguarding. They also spoke to members of the safeguarding team and care team about safeguarding. They reviewed documents, including the records of recruitment checks.
- The views of parents were considered through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Jo Sharpe, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tricia Stevens

Ofsted Inspector

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