

# Inspection of Ecclesfield School

Chapelton Road, Ecclesfield, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S35 9WD

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Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

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

Pupils are kept safe and learn well in this friendly, welcoming school. Four core values are evident in everything that happens: work hard, be kind, aim high and show grit. Pupils are keen to do well. They enjoy sharing their knowledge and their achievements.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Behaviour in lessons is calm and focused. Bullying does happen occasionally. Leaders resolve it quickly. Inappropriate language is heard sometimes but is not tolerated. Pupils' behaviour is typically respectful and kind. They value being part of the school community.

Pupils study a wide range of subjects, including engineering, computer studies, drama and photography. The planning and delivery of most subjects is highly effective. However, religious education (RE) is significantly weaker. In the past, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were not consistently well supported. However, this has improved significantly. A small number of pupils with SEND follow an alternative learning pathway (ALP). This provision broadly meets pupils' needs but some aspects of the curriculum lack ambition.

There is a range of extra-curricular activities to choose from, including boxing and art club. There is a particularly strong performing arts offer. Pupils speak proudly about the school productions. During the inspection, some pupils took part in an exciting geography field trip to Holderness.

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

Leaders work with staff to plan an effective curriculum. Planning is detailed. Teachers are clear about the knowledge and skills pupils should develop. In most subjects, the curriculum builds carefully so that pupils have the best chance of understanding and remembering what they have been taught. However, this is not the case in RE. There is too little coverage of this subject. What is there is poorly organised. Pupils do not have enough opportunity to study world religions.

Staff check pupils' understanding in lessons. They challenge misconceptions to keep pupils on the right track. Staff use assessment to check what pupils know and can do. They also use assessment to improve curriculum planning. Gaps in pupils' knowledge are filled. The curriculum is strengthened so that next time, gaps do not occur in the first place. Pupils with SEND are supported well in lessons. A small number of pupils in Years 7 and 8 follow the ALP. This curriculum lacks ambition in some areas. As a result, pupils struggle to reintegrate into mainstream lessons in Year 9.

Leaders have made reading a high priority. Pupils who need help to develop their reading are well supported through a range of strategies. This includes opportunities

to practise reading aloud. Pupils also take part in shared reading and discuss texts together.

Pupils generally behave very well in lessons. Lessons are occasionally disrupted but this is not the norm. Where poor behaviour does occur, staff follow the behaviour policy consistently. Pupils know what is expected of them. The vast majority are keen to learn and stay focused. Pupils nearly always report bullying. There is an online portal that pupils use to report occurrences anonymously. Most are comfortable speaking directly to a member of staff. Staff address concerns quickly and effectively.

Staff place a high value on pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about how to stay safe, including online. They develop knowledge of their own community and the wider world. Pupils learn about other cultures. They are taught to treat other people fairly and with respect. There is ongoing work to help pupils better understand misogyny. However, they do not consistently remember what they have learned in personal, social and health education (PSHE).

There is a strong careers programme. Pupils are prepared well for the world of work. There are frequent opportunities for them to find out about jobs in the local area and further afield. Pupils explore their own individual strengths and interests. Some take up opportunities to lead aspects of school life. For example, they are active councillors in the thriving school council. Some Year 10 pupils help the younger pupils with their reading.

Governors and trustees have supported leaders to transform the school. Staff have ongoing training in important aspects of education, including curriculum planning. Teachers work together to develop the curriculum and share good practice. This happens regularly in most subjects, including English and mathematics. This approach is very effective in motivating and inspiring staff. Staff morale is very high. They enjoy coming to work and are proud of the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are deeply committed to keeping pupils safe. Pupils know how to seek help. The relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful. Staff act quickly to help pupils stay safe when they need it. Leaders follow up any concerns raised about pupils' safety or well-being. This work is highly effective. Leaders keep in close contact with families who are struggling to cope and offer lots of support. They seek help from external agencies, such as mental health agencies, when needed.

Leaders carry out the appropriate checks on new staff to make sure pupils are kept safe.

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

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

- In most subjects, pupils remember important aspects of what they are taught. However, in some subjects, for example RE and PSHE, they do not learn and remember enough. There are gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders should continue to develop these subjects to make sure the curriculum is covered in depth and that pupils' understanding is secure.
- The ALP is not sufficiently ambitious in some areas. Pupils do not have the chance to learn the concepts they need in order to access mainstream lessons in Year 9. Leaders should continue to develop the provision so that pupils are better able to integrate back into mainstream.

## 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>	145191
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227638
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1687
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Ed Wydenbach
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Walkden
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ecclesfield-school.com">www.ecclesfield-school.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Ecclesfield School converted to become an academy in 2017. It became part of the Minerva Trust. When its predecessor school, also called Ecclesfield School, was last inspected by Ofsted in 2017, it was judged to be inadequate.
- A new headteacher took up post since the predecessor school was inspected. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2018.
- The school makes use of alternative provision. Five providers are used. One of these, Becton School, is registered with Ofsted. Four providers are unregistered. These are Unity, Treehouse, Pastways and Hive.
- Through its careers programme, the school 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.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, maths, science, music, geography and RE. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 visited specific lessons to check provision for pupils with education, health and care plans.
- Members of the inspection team met with those with responsibility for pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors met with two trustees, including the chair of trustees. Inspectors met with the two governors, including the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors took into account 58 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 182 responses from parents and carers to Parent View. This included 146 free-text responses from parents.
- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils to discuss their views about the school. Inspectors also took into account three responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- An inspector made contact with five providers of alternative provision who are currently educating a small number of pupils who usually attend this school. An inspector visited two of these providers.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks. They spoke to governors, the designated safeguarding leader and the behaviour lead, and looked at how incidents are logged and followed up. Inspectors explored a range of case studies in detail. Inspectors also spoke to a range of teaching and non-teaching staff to check their understanding of safeguarding training.

## Inspection team

Zoe Helman, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lynne Selkirk	Ofsted Inspector
Stuart Voyce	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tim Jenner	Her Majesty's Inspector
Bernard Clark	Ofsted Inspector
Gordon Watts	Ofsted Inspector

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