

Inspection of Kirkstead Junior Academy

Kirkstead Road, Pinxton NG16 6NA

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 June 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Kirkstead Junior Academy has become a great place to learn. Leaders have brought the staff and community together to create a team that is ambitious about what pupils can achieve. Parents praise this transformation. They say they are 'really pleased by the improvement in this fantastic school.'

Pupils become immersed in their enquiries. Their 'learning journeys' fill the corridors. These include high-quality artefacts that pupils have made with their families at home. Staff value the different communities that make up the school. There are close links with feeder infant schools to support smooth transition.

All staff have high expectations of what all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), will know and be able to do. Parents value the support that their children get. They say that 'nothing is too much trouble' for the staff at school. Leaders make sure that pupils are in school as much as possible and support pupils effectively when they cannot attend in person.

Pupils take pride in their work. Typically, they listen well in class and work hard. They say that staff address unkind behaviour. They recall little bullying. Playtimes and lunchtimes are harmonious times that pupils share together.

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

Reading permeates the school. There are attractive displays of books that motivate pupils to read more about the topics that they are finding out about. The 'book of the month display' encourages pupils to widen their reading horizons. Pupils value these recommendations and choose books from new authors. They read with fluency and stamina. Pupils who are at the earlier stages of reading get the right help to catch up.

All staff use the same approach to teaching using the 'learning mine'. Pupils 'load their carts' with important knowledge before they work by themselves. Pupils with SEND work alongside their peers. Staff make subtle adaptations to their teaching to help pupils with SEND work independently wherever possible.

Teachers identify the important words that they want pupils to know. They plan opportunities for pupils to learn what they mean and practise using them. Pupils use words such as 'horizontal' and 'isosceles' correctly during mathematics lessons. Pupils 'reactivate' their learning at the beginning of each lesson. They use this when they work out the internal angles of a triangle.

The curriculum identifies the small steps of knowledge in each subject. Teachers use this to plan exciting learning for pupils. Staff demonstrate different techniques in art with confidence. Pupils learn to use cross hatching or smudging techniques. They work with great enjoyment. However, they do not always make connections about

what they are learning. For example, they cannot explain how learning these techniques will improve the quality of the artwork that they produce.

Pupils can explain how periods of history fit within a chronological sequence. Some younger pupils can remember what they know about the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age. However, not all pupils can recall prior learning. They do not consistently build on this knowledge and think more deeply.

There are some opportunities for pupils to get involved in helping other pupils. Mini leaders help to organise games for others. Some pupils enjoy sports clubs after school. Pupils understand what fundamental British values are. They know that everyone should be treated equally and have the freedom to make their own decisions. They also know that not all people around the world have these opportunities. Pupils learn about significant figures from around the world who have made a stand for what they believe in.

Leaders, including those from Flying High Trust, have helped subject leaders to become more confident in undertaking their roles. Staff value the wide range of opportunities they have had to build their subject knowledge and focus on what they are teaching. They feel that they have been exceptionally well supported throughout challenging times. They say that leaders give them the right help to manage their workload and staff morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know the safeguarding risks that pupils face. They make sure that staff know the potential dangers in the local area and check that they remember this. Leaders act swiftly when concerns are raised. They are tenacious in making sure that children and their families get the right help.

Pupils feel safe in school. Teachers make sure that pupils know how to stay safe online and how to report unwanted messages. Governors and leaders in the trust make sure that the right checks are in place before an adult starts to work with pupils at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes pupils cannot remember the important knowledge that they have encountered. They are not always able to use this knowledge to explore more complex ideas or deepen their understanding. Leaders should continue to refine the curriculum so that pupils have more opportunities to recall and use prior learning. They should check that pupils can consistently recall this knowledge over time.

- Pupils who join after-school clubs or are responsible for others welcome these opportunities. However, not all pupils have the chance to pursue their interests and talents. Leaders should continue to develop further opportunities for pupils to encounter and explore a wider range of talents and interests beyond the taught curriculum.

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

Unique reference number	145403
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10227545
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	215
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Neil Robinson
Headteacher	Anne Ingle
Website	www.pvacademies.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- There is a shared leadership structure across Kirkstead Junior Academy and the two feeder infant schools.
- Senior leaders have taken up their roles since the previous inspection.
- The school became an academy on 1 February 2018 when it joined Flying High Trust. When the predecessor school, Pinxton Kirkstead Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted, in February 2017, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- 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 with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector spoke with leaders from the trust and the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into the following subjects: art and design, early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed

the curriculum with leaders, spoke to teachers and pupils, and visited lessons. The lead inspector heard pupils read.

- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke with parents and staff. They scrutinised documents that the school keeps and spoke with leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the end of the day. They considered the views expressed on Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of staff and considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in groups and at less structured parts of the day.

Inspection team

Hazel Henson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Phil Abbott

Ofsted Inspector

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