

Inspection of Thrybergh Academy

Park Lane, Thrybergh, Rotherham S65 4BP

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 September 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is David Burnham. The school is part of Wickersley Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Helen Claire O'Brien, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steve Calvert.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils follow an ambitious curriculum. In most subjects, the curriculum is well planned. The school has implemented improvements recently to ensure pupils acquire sufficient understanding and knowledge in each subject. However, in some subjects, the curriculum is delivered inconsistently. Pupils that have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified and in most cases, lessons are adapted to meet their needs.

Pupils are benefitting from recent improvements to the curriculum. The Trust has been instrumental in supporting the school to make these improvements.

The school cares about its pupils. Pupils feel safe and the majority are happy. Bullying is rare. Pupils are encouraged to develop their life skills and citizenship. The school ensures that all pupils have opportunities to experience a variety of different trips, clubs and cultural events.

The school has clear strategies to improve both attendance and attitudes to learning. For example, the school has introduced new approaches such as the 'Thrybergh Way' and 'Thrybergh Pledges' to build the character and values of pupils so that attitudes to learning improve. Despite this, some pupils do not attend school regularly enough.

Pupil behaviour varies at this school. The majority of pupils behave well. However, some pupils have not developed positive attitudes to learning. Their behaviour sometimes disrupts the learning of others.

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

The school has ensured that the curriculum is ambitious. Most subjects are well planned and sequenced. In a minority of subjects, some curriculum content does not take account of prior learning and lacks challenge for pupils.

The quality of curriculum delivery in lessons is variable. In some lessons, pupils develop a thorough understanding of what they are learning. In other lessons, pupils learn curriculum content at a superficial level. The school recognise this and is strengthening the programme of curriculum training and support.

The school has planned for suitable assessment of pupils' learning. Across the school, this planning is used inconsistently. Misconceptions sometimes remain uncorrected. Some pupils are not clear about what they have learned or should have learned.

The school has prioritised reading in the curriculum. New strategies to develop a culture of reading across the school and to support the weakest readers are being introduced. It is too early to see the impact of these strategies.

The majority of pupils are polite and behave well in and out of lessons. Those who do not behave well cause low-level disruption in some lessons. Teachers do not challenge this consistently well. The number of suspensions at the school remains high. These pupils miss too many lessons. Their learning suffers. They are not making the progress of which they are capable.

Pupils' attendance is low. A large proportion of pupils miss a significant number of lessons. These pupils make poor progress across the curriculum. Leaders are working closely with families to ensure all understand the importance of regular attendance at school.

The school encourages pupils to complete Thrybergh Pledges. The pledges challenge pupils to develop their life skills, cultural experiences and active citizenship. For example, pupils have opportunities to volunteer, undertake charity work, demonstrate independence and participate in extra-curricular activities. They learn about the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships, different faiths and how to keep themselves safe. Although comprehensive, the personal development curriculum is in its infancy.

Pupils benefit from a careers programme which provides valuable work experience. They have opportunities to consider the different training routes available post-16. The school offers a variety of funded clubs, activities and experiences to pupils. All pupils have the opportunity to participate, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND. For example, pupils participate in outdoor climbing tournaments, boxing, theatre visits, rock bands and other activities to broaden their horizons. The school is keen to increase pupils' participation in extra-curricular activities.

The school has introduced new strategies to identify and support pupils who are disadvantaged, including those with SEND. Teachers understand the specific needs of pupils. However, in some lessons, learning is not adapted consistently well to meet the needs of all pupils. The school is in the process of establishing a new specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision), specifically social, emotional and mental health needs.

Leaders have made significant progress in improving the school. There is a clear vision to support further improvement. The school has invested in training for staff. Leaders support staff to manage their workload. Many new strategies to improve the school and work with parents and the local community have been started. These are in the early stages of development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is too much variability in the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. As a result, in some subjects, pupils do not develop a thorough understanding of what they are learning. Pupils have misconceptions that staff do not address quickly enough. The school should ensure that they provide the support and training that teachers need to enable them to deliver the planned curriculum effectively.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. These pupils miss lessons and do not make as much progress through the curriculum as they should. The school should ensure that they continue to build strong relationships with families and that both school and families work together to improve attendance.
- Teachers do not challenge pupils' poor behaviour consistently well. The number of suspensions for behavioural incidents is high. Low-level disruption impacts the progress that pupils make through the curriculum. The school should ensure that high expectations of pupils' behaviour are reinforced consistently in all lessons.
- Some pupils do not show the resilience, character and self-regulated behaviour that is appropriate for their age. This hinders the progress that they make in school. Leaders should ensure that all staff implement the new personal development curriculum consistently well to enable all pupils to develop the personal attributes and values that will help them to succeed.

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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	148547
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10297540
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	529
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steve Calvert
CEO of the trust	Helen Claire O'Brien
Headteacher	David Burnham
Website	www.thrybergh.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school has not previously been inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.
- The school converted to become an academy school within the Wickersley Partnership Trust in February 2020. Since joining the Trust, the school has changed from being an all-through school to a secondary school.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative providers of education.
- The school is in the process of establishing a specially resourced provision to offer provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs across the trust and the local authority. At the time of this inspection, the provision was operating as a special educational needs unit and serving 20 pupils from across the trust.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders, staff and pupils. They met with leaders from Wickersley Partnership Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: physical education, science, information technology, history and English. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited lessons and looked at pupils' work in other subjects. They visited the school's specially resourced provision, reading lessons and tutor time. They observed pupils at various times of the school day.
- Inspectors spoke to representatives of both alternative provisions used by the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including those relating to behaviour and attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The lead inspector held meetings with members of the local governing body and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and carers, and staff through discussions during the inspection and the Ofsted surveys.

Inspection team

Chris Carr, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul Greenough	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Willacy	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Cummings	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023