

# Inspection of a good school: Kirkleatham Hall School

Kirkleatham, Kirkleatham Village, Redcar TS10 4QR

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Inspection dates:

3 and 4 October 2023

## Outcome

Kirkleatham Hall School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Kirkleatham Hall School. This is because staff have extremely detailed knowledge of each individual pupil and have developed strong, caring relationships with them. Pupils rise to the high aspirations that adults have for them. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many expressed their views with comments such as 'the school adapts everything around my son's needs. They do this extremely well with such care, attention and professionalism'.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They move around school calmly and with great respect. Staff skilfully address pupils' behavioural needs. These pupils learn how to interact and communicate positively. Pupils and staff show great care for each other.

Pupils are safe in school. They trust the adults who work with them. Pupils always have an adult to contact if they need support with a concern. Pupils who find communication difficult demonstrate this trust through their interactions with their key staff. Pupils know what bullying is. Bullying is rare in school. Adults address the rare incidents quickly and successfully.

All pupils have special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND). The school has designed carefully planned routes through the curriculum which reflect the very different individual needs of the pupils.

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

Leaders know their pupils extremely well. They are acutely aware that pupils have a wide range of specific needs. Some pupils receive a highly specialised curriculum which reflects the school's focus that all pupils should 'unlock their potential'. The school ensures advice from therapists and other professionals is woven into teaching and learning throughout the school day.

The curriculum is highly ambitious for most pupils. Leaders have ensured that the school's

curriculum makes clear what individual pupils must know, and be able to do, in all subjects. Leaders have planned this learning carefully so that it can be taught in a way which helps pupils build up knowledge and skills sequentially over time. Leaders have thought carefully about the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. They have thought carefully about the ways that this can be made accessible to pupils who have difficulty accessing the curriculum in a mainstream school. For the majority of the pupils in school, the curriculum is implemented effectively. Leaders are continuing to develop adaptations to the curriculum for a small number of more cognitively able students. This will help them to make the aspirational progress that leaders plan for them.

Staff adapt the curriculum and provide suitable resources for pupils with more complex SEND. This provision helps these pupils to experience a broad curriculum. For example, pupils with visual impairments experience stories through the spoken word and 'raised illustrations' which they can feel. In physical development sessions, staff use the school environment, equipment and resources in creative ways to ensure all pupils experience the fullest learning opportunities.

Reading is a key focus of the school. Leaders have designed their reading programme to 'transcend individual learning barriers and provide every individual with a free magic carpet ride to anywhere on Earth or beyond'. Leaders have created a carefully planned programme of pre-reading experiences to help pupils link words with meaning and sensory experience. The school also has a clear phonics programme which staff use consistently throughout the school. Staff support pupils who are working beyond this level to read fluently. Each pupil, irrelevant of age, is taken on their own path through the reading programme. However, a very small number of pupils are given books to read that are not well matched to their reading ability.

Leaders and staff promote pupils' personal development highly effectively. Pupils enjoy the enrichment activities offered by the school. These include hatching chicks and residential trips, local area visits and college and workplace visits. These educational visits broaden pupils' knowledge of the curriculum and the world of work well. The school prepares older pupils well for adulthood. They learn about the opportunities in the local area and in how to shop and cook for themselves.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive for their workload and well-being. Governors support the school well and provide effective challenge to leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The curriculum is not matched well to the ability of a small proportion of pupils. This means that these pupils are not making as much progress as they could. The school

needs to complete its review of adaptations to the curriculum approach for these pupils to ensure their needs are met in a timely way.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2013.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>                    | 111777   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                            | Redcar and Cleveland   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                          | 10255912   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                             | Community special school   |
| <b>School category</b>                            | Maintained   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                        | 2 to 19  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                           | Mixed  |
| <b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>   | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>        | 185  |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b> | 21   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                      | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>                    | Derek Enderby  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                                | Paul Mclean  |
| <b>Website</b>                                    | <a href="http://www.kirkleathamhallschool.org.uk">www.kirkleathamhallschool.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>               | 15 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                               |

## Information about this school

- All pupils in school have an education, health and care plan.
- The school provides education for pupils with a range of SEND, including communication and interaction difficulties, sensory and/or physical needs, cognition and learning needs and visual impairment.
- The pupils are grouped into pathways which reflect their level of the SEND. Pupils move between the pathways on their journey through the school.
- The school does not use alternative education providers.

## Information about this inspection

- 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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteachers. The inspectors also met three governors and two local authority representatives.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and physical development. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of work or other evidence of the educational experience of the pupils.
- Inspectors visited pupils across the school, including children in the early years foundation stage and students in the sixth form.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff who responded to Ofsted's staff survey. Inspectors considered the views of parents through responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. Inspectors spoke to pupils in school.

### **Inspection team**

Catherine Beard, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Paul Barton

Ofsted Inspector

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