

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Dixons Kings Academy

Northside Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD7 2AN

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Inspection dates:

17 and 18 April 2024

## **Outcome**

Dixons Kings Academy continues to be an outstanding school.

The principal of this school is Richard Wilson. This school is part of Dixons Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Luke Sparkes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Michael Blackburn.

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

Pupils achieve remarkably well at this exceptional school. Leaders have extremely high expectations for pupils' behaviour and for the academic progress they will make. As a result, their progress and achievement are well above national averages. The mission statement of the trust is to 'challenge educational and social disadvantage in the north'. Dixons Kings is certainly achieving this.

The behaviour and attitudes of pupils are exemplary. Pupils behave with maturity and respect. They are quiet and compliant in lessons and thoroughly engaged in their learning. Pupils feel safe in school. The open safeguarding culture means that all pupils know the staff members of the safeguarding team.

During weekly cultural studies lessons, pupils debate topical local and national issues. They have an extensive knowledge of the protected characteristics. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and in the community.

Pupils have access to a wide and varied careers programme. They are fully prepared for their next steps in education. Pupils speak ambitiously about their future. One pupil stated that the school has 'prepared them for anything they may encounter during their next steps in education'.

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

Leaders have planned a highly ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A very high percentage of pupils follow the English Baccalaureate pathway. In some areas, the curriculum extends beyond

the national curriculum. For example, pupils complete a unit of work on health and disease in key stage 3 science.

Leaders have meticulously identified the most powerful knowledge that they want pupils to know. They sequence pupils' learning effectively and logically and allow time to revisit prior learning so that pupils remember more. Teachers check pupils' learning with precision during every lesson. They address misconceptions quickly and effectively. Teachers are experts in their subjects. They present information clearly and use resources very effectively to help pupils progress through the curriculum.

Support for pupils with SEND is highly effective. Leaders identify pupils with SEND through a whole-school referral system. Pupils, and parents and carers, help to plan the support that they will receive. Teachers pay particular attention to pupils with SEND to ensure that they are making the same progress as other pupils. A small number of pupils access a bespoke curriculum. Leaders have planned this curriculum to meet the needs of each individual pupil. The pupils who access it are flourishing.

The school quickly identifies pupils who need extra support with reading. Leaders ensure that these pupils receive targeted support. This includes phonics for those in the early stages of learning to read. The school promotes a love of reading through 'drop everything and read' activities and a form time reading programme.

The school has a clear behaviour system. Teachers apply the system consistently well. This contributes to classrooms being free from low-level disruption. Strategies to improve attendance range from whole-school systems to bespoke interventions to support families and pupils. These strategies are highly effective. As a result, pupils attend often and the number of pupils who are persistently absent is low.

The core values of integrity, diligence and civility are woven throughout the curriculum. Pupils talk in detail about why they are important and how they apply them in their everyday lives. Years 7 to 9 pupils have an enrichment programme within their school day. They take part in activities such as archery, first aid and British Sign Language. Pupils have access to a range of leadership opportunities, such as being school council members and peer mentoring and mental health champions. The school council directly affects change across the school by regularly reporting pupil voice to school leaders. For example, leaders have added a school sports day to the calendar this year.

The school considers the workload and well-being of staff. Access to shared resources and changes to the marking and feedback policy have reduced staff's workload. The local academy board, trustees and executive leaders have a thorough understanding of the school. They work together with school leaders to ensure that pupils receive an outstanding education at Dixons Kings Academy.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in January 2017.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137277
<b>Local authority</b>	Bradford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10242489
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	847
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Michael Blackburn
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Luke Sparkes
<b>Principal</b>	Richard Wilson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.dixonska.com/">www.dixonska.com/</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	26 and 27 January 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Dixons Kings Academy is part of the Dixons Academies Trust.
- This school currently uses one registered and three unregistered alternative education providers.
- 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

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 principal of the school and other senior leaders.
- The lead inspector spoke with the CEO of the trust and members of the trust board, including the chair of the trust board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils and teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in a range of situations, including in corridors, at lesson changeovers and in lessons. They also spoke with pupils about behaviour and bullying. Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers and pupils about the school's programme of personal development and careers provision.
- Inspectors considered the responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments submitted via the free-text facility. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online pupil and staff questionnaires.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Sergeant, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mark Hassack

Ofsted Inspector

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