Inspection of Scissett Church of England Academy

Wakefield Road, Scissett, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD8 9HR

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 April 2025
The quality of education	**Outstanding**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Outstanding**
Personal development	**Outstanding**
Leadership and management	**Outstanding**
Early years provision	**Outstanding**
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Bart Cunningham. This school is part of Learning Accord Multi Academy 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), Elaine Watson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Baljit Birring.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Scissett Church of England Academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Scissett Church of England Voluntary Aided First School to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as Scissett Church of England Academy as a result of conversion to academy status.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Scissett Church of England Academy represent the physical embodiment of the school's aim to be 'a place where all succeed'. Pupils live out the school's values, including love, respect and kindness, in all they do. They thrive and flourish through the remarkable environment of nurture and care that exists within the school. Pupils are joyous and proud members of the school community. Their exceptionally positive attitudes contribute strongly to a tangible sense of harmony for all. Highly trained and vigilant staff ensure that pupils are safe.

Leaders establish the highest expectations for all. Pupils benefit from exceptional pastoral and academic support. This means they are able to meet these expectations. They achieve highly. Pupils of all ages enjoy exciting, engaging lessons. The quality of their work is often exemplary.

Pupils' empathy and care for one another is very well developed. Behaviour throughout the school is exceptional. Leaders have crafted an ethos within school where pupils are given every opportunity to grow, both academically and socially.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly proud of the school. They are highly supportive. Their feedback reflects the inspector's findings. Parents describe the school as 'fantastic' and the staff as 'caring' and 'kind'.

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

From pupils' earliest days at school, no stone is left unturned in the pursuit of excellence. Children in early years enjoy an ambitious, stimulating and engaging learning environment. Adults harness children's natural curiosity. They craft numerous opportunities for children to develop a rich understanding of their learning. For example, children create a 'garden centre' in the outside area. They independently use their writing and number skills to create signs, menus and price lists for their 'café'. Other children demonstrate a secure grasp of vocabulary when talking about what plants need to grow or the life cycle of a caterpillar. Skilled staff expertly deepen children's learning through their high-quality interactions.

The school's focus on pupils at the early stages of reading has significant impact. Well-trained staff identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Highly effective support ensures that pupils develop into confident, fluent and motivated readers. There is a tangible love for reading and books throughout the school.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has notable impact. The school is relentless in its identification of pupils' needs. Leaders and other staff ensure that appropriate and highly effective support is in place to allow all pupils to succeed.

Leaders have tailored the high-quality subject curriculums to the school and its context. Talented staff carefully choose absorbing activities to engage pupils. For example, older

pupils compose their own musical scores to match a piece of dramatic film action. Pupils' work in books is of exceptional quality. The school is dedicated to creating skilled writers across the school. Pupils' discussions of their learning are also of a very high standard. Younger pupils talk with commendable understanding of Ramadan and Eid. Older pupils demonstrate their love of art and design through knowledgeable discussions of different artists and styles. They are proud to showcase their work.

Pupils love to come to school. Their relationships with staff and other adults in school are warm and caring. As a result, classrooms are extremely positive environments for learning. The school's vision of 'excellence in learning' meets with no barriers. Attendance is high.

The school ensures that pupils' wider development is at the core of all that happens in the school. Through a well-planned programme of educational visits, visitors and other activities, pupils develop an exceptional understanding of safety, tolerance, respect for all and equality. Pupils across the school have their voices heard in many aspects of the school's work. For example, pupils in each class vote for their peers to receive a perseverance award. Class representatives then present these nominations to the school council. The school council then make their final decision. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is a high priority. Their attitudes towards others of different race, religion or sexuality are exemplary. Pupils develop into mature, respectful and socially aware individuals who are deeply committed to the school and the wider community.

Leaders instil the fundamental principle of education having a positive impact for all. This is consistently achieved. Governors and trustees have an astute understanding of their roles. They work in tandem to offer supportive challenge to school leaders for the benefit of all pupils. The school engages well with parents and staff. Staff are very well supported, including for their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	143232
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10346618
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	173
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Baljit Birring
CEO of the trust	Elaine Watson
Headteacher	Bart Cunningham
Website	www.scissettceacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy on 3 March 2017, joining Learning Accord Multi Academy Trust.
- There has been a significant change in leadership since the predecessor school's last inspection in September 2014. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2020. The deputy headteacher was seconded to the school at the same time.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is also inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last such inspection was in February 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due before February 2027.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and

management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 school staff, members of the local governing body, representatives of the trust, the CEO and a representative from the Diocese of Leeds.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design, music and science. 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 also spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- An inspector listened to some pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- An inspector looked at the school's plans for pupils with SEND and visited a sample of pupils in lessons to evaluate the provision for these pupils.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. An inspector spoke with some parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspectors considered the response to Ofsted's staff questionnaire, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Richard Beadnall, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Nick Coates	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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