

Kirkburton Middle School

Address: Turnshaws Avenue, Kirkburton, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD8 0TJ

Unique reference number (URN): 143791

Inspection report: 10 February 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ●
Expected standard	● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✓ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders' work to improve attendance has been highly successful over several years. Leaders and those responsible for governance maintain high ambitions for all pupils. They constantly seek new ways to reduce absence further. Rates of persistent absence are very low. Pupils' enjoyment of school as well as meaningful attendance strategies, including rewards and competitions, help to improve this figure further. Around the school, it is evident that attendance is a priority for everyone. Staff highlight to pupils the importance of attending school every single day.

Pupils behave with courtesy and kindness. They do not interrupt others' learning, and they listen to staff when required. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school, whether that be in lessons or at social times. Pupils apply themselves to their studies with great dedication. They ask meaningful questions and work well with their peers. Instances of poor behaviour are rare. These are dealt with well by staff so they do not escalate. Pupils experience a positive, caring and respectful school community. When pupils do not meet leaders' high expectations, especially around bullying or unkind behaviour, this is swiftly addressed. Incidents of this nature are rare and have reduced further over time.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Pupils develop a strength of character, confidence and respect for others that is well embedded. Pupils are extremely well prepared for life beyond school. They not only know the fundamental British values that underpin our society, they experience them every day. Pupils understand democracy through the active 'pupil parliament' and school council. They develop tolerance and respect as they learn about those who are different from themselves. Older pupils enjoy supporting younger pupils as they join the school. 'Kindness champions' and 'sports leaders' help pupils to develop a sense of accomplishment and belonging. Excellent pastoral care at the school ensures that any pupil who might feel anxious or unsure gets the help they need to succeed.

Leaders have created a culture of healthy competition but also effective collaboration. The 'house system' is an important part of school life. It encourages pupils to do their best. Everyone is included and has a chance to flourish. A varied enrichment offer is available to pupils to develop their talents and interests. Clubs catering for everything from crochet to cricket and books to basketball take place weekly. Educational trips and visiting speakers enhance pupils' educational experience. Pupils are actively involved in the wider community through fundraising, singing at concerts and remembrance activities. Pupils learn about jobs linked to different subjects. They also visit careers events and a local university and learn about apprenticeships.

Leaders have created a curriculum that ensures that pupils can learn about appropriate relationships, and older pupils receive relationships and sex education lessons. Staying safe in person and online is an important part of lessons. Pupils know the risks they might face on the internet, for example. Pupils understand how to stay physically and mentally healthy. Younger pupils get extra support to handle anxiety as examinations approach. Leaders

ensure that disadvantaged pupils get equal access to opportunities. Leaders act swiftly to remove any barriers if they appear.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils develop increasing confidence and understanding throughout their time at school. Some pupils enter school with significant gaps in their knowledge or skills. Leaders' actions help to address these effectively. Pupils make more progress from their starting points now than they did in the past. When this is not the case, leaders know the root causes and address them at pace. This helps pupils to know and remember more over time.

Disadvantaged pupils have not previously attained as highly as their peers nationally in external tests. Many of these pupils also have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As pupils begin this school a long way into their primary education, leaders have limited time to address any gaps in knowledge and skills. However, leaders' actions are ambitious, appropriate and have a positive impact. By the time pupils leave school in Year 8, most are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

An ambitious and varied range of subjects is available at the school. The primary and secondary curriculums blend seamlessly together. Leaders have created a well-considered and progressive learning journey. Where changes to curriculum content are needed, these are carefully considered. This prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. Staff are passionate about and knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. High-quality discussions often take place in classrooms, which engage and enthuse pupils. Leaders understand the importance of all pupils being able to read accurately and fluently. Support for any pupils at risk of falling behind their peers is timely and effective.

Lessons are generally well taught. Staff select activities that match the intended learning well. Pupils revisit and recall previous learning so that they can apply it to new topics. Staff check carefully what pupils do and do not understand. Typically, staff address any gaps in pupils' knowledge or skills well. However, there are times when this is not the case. Adaptations to lessons for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are inconsistent. There is a small amount of variation in how well reasonable adjustments are applied across subjects and key stages. Sometimes, pupils with SEND do not get the help they need to fully access and understand the curriculum.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that all pupils get equal access to the many opportunities on offer at the school. Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used to support enrichment activities such as music lessons and educational visits. Specialist training for staff is provided to help them enhance pupils' classroom experiences. Leaders and those responsible for

governance routinely explore ways to break down barriers to learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders prepare pupils well for adulthood and help them to build resilience.

Staff assess pupils' needs quickly and accurately. Particularly for pupils who need extra help to access learning alongside their peers, staff provide the right support, at the right time. Leaders help pupils get off to a positive start by working with pupils' previous schools to get to know pupils and their needs. They collaborate with parents, carers and professionals to get pupils the specific support they require. This work is of high quality. Staff receive information and training about how to adapt their lessons well for pupils with SEND. At times, leaders' monitoring and evaluation of the impact of this work lacks precision. This is particularly the case in terms of classroom adaptations. Sometimes, barriers to pupils achieving more highly are not addressed as well as they could be.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

School development priorities are very well considered. Leaders typically understand what is working well and what needs further refinement. This has led to ongoing improvements to the curriculum, teaching and pupils' attendance. Leaders have established links with other schools in similar contexts to help shape school improvement strategies. This has given leaders important insight into where to focus their efforts, for example in relation to adaptive teaching and evaluating the impact of strategies to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Those responsible for governance both support and challenge leaders. They have a secure strategic understanding of what the school does well. Governors and trustees are ambitious. They undertake their duties effectively, for example, ensuring that additional funding is spent appropriately. Those responsible for governance have a positive impact on pupils' educational experience.

Leaders have created a culture of professional learning where staff reflect on their own practice. Development opportunities are varied, and ongoing training helps staff to understand the changing cohorts in the school. Staff and leaders work together closely to make decisions in the best interests of pupils, for example, ensuring that when additional help is provided to pupils outside of the classroom, that this does not deprive them of other valuable educational opportunities. Early career teachers feel well supported at the school. Leaders are mindful that some staff have multiple responsibilities. Workload is well managed. Staff report positively about leaders' consideration for their wellbeing. There is a shared sense of purpose and dedication to pupils' academic and personal success.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils' confidence grows over their time at school. They enjoy a vast number of experiences that enrich their education. Pupils relish being creative, taking part in sports and musical performances. They enjoy coming to school and attend very well. Each pupil's journey through education here is unique. Often, pupils discover new passions and talents they did not know they had. Leaders understand the school's context extremely well and provide

opportunities that enrich pupils' academic and social development. Pupils are mature and well mannered. Older pupils are excellent role models for their younger peers, helping them to overcome challenges and thrive at school.

Pupils and parents praise the pastoral support offered by staff. Pupils are confident that if they raise a concern with a member of staff, it will be dealt with effectively. Bullying is rare. If it does happen, leaders take appropriate action to address it. Pupils understand the importance of mutual respect. They feel safe among their peers and in the school community. When pupils welcome visitors or new pupils, they do this with kindness and sincerity. Pupils demonstrate individual responsibility and highly effective skills of collaboration. They are well motivated and resilient.

Pupils engage well in their lessons. They enjoy learning challenging new topics and skills. There is a high-quality academic and practical curriculum on offer at the school. Pupils typically achieve well in their studies. Barriers to learning are quickly picked up and addressed. Gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are identified. Staff help pupils to close rapidly any gaps in their knowledge. Leaders work alongside other schools in the local area to ensure that pupils are prepared well for their next steps in education. Pupils take pride in their achievements and their school. A friendly sense of rivalry exists, for example between the school 'houses', which encourages pupils to succeed together. Individual and group success is celebrated.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teaching strategies are systematically and skilfully adapted, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), so that any barriers to achievement are swiftly and effectively addressed.
 - Leaders should rigorously monitor the impact of their strategies to support pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils and ensure that they make a sustained difference to pupils' educational experience.
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About this inspection

This school is part of The Mast 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), Natasha Greenough, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Philip Marshall.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher, head of school, special educational needs coordinators, CEO and other trust staff. The lead inspector also spoke with those

responsible for governance. One inspector spoke to the headteacher of the virtual school about their work with the school.

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.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of no alternative provision.

Executive headteacher: Chris Taylor

Lead inspector:

John Linkins, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Barry Found, Ofsted Inspector

Gemma Dixon, His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew West, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.



This data is from 10 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

502

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

501

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

13.75%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2.59%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

16.93%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	61%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	62%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	56%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	65%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	76%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	73%	75%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	74%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	82%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	78%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	73%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	86%	71%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	71%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	66%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	70%	73%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	25%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	19%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	22%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	33%	44%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	51%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	43%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	52%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	57%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	51%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	43%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	52%	58%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	57%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	32%	60%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	24%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	30%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	43%	59%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	25%	68%	-43 pp
2024/25 (revised)	19%	69%	-50 pp
2023/24 (final)	22%	67%	-46 pp
2022/23 (final)	33%	66%	-33 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	51%	80%	-29 pp
2024/25 (revised)	43%	81%	-38 pp
2023/24 (final)	52%	80%	-28 pp
2022/23 (final)	57%	78%	-21 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	51%	78%	-27 pp
2024/25 (revised)	43%	78%	-35 pp
2023/24 (final)	52%	78%	-25 pp
2022/23 (final)	57%	77%	-20 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	32%	80%	-47 pp
2024/25 (revised)	24%	81%	-57 pp
2023/24 (final)	30%	79%	-49 pp
2022/23 (final)	43%	79%	-36 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	4.9%	8.1%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.0%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.3%	9.0%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	11.1%	21.9%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	13.0%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	15.5%	26.5%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard ●

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard ●

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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