

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Scissett Middle School

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

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 February 2025

Outcome

Scissett Middle School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The executive headteacher of this school is Chris Taylor. 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.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Scissett Middle School are happy in their school. They are part of a friendly and welcoming community. Pupils value their positive relationships with one another and staff. The school creates a supportive environment where pupils develop the confidence to do well. The school sets high expectations for what pupils should achieve. The majority of pupils achieve well.

The school's systems and high expectations for behaviour mean that pupils' conduct is excellent in lessons and during social times. As a result, the school is calm and orderly, and this allows pupils to concentrate on their learning. Pupils are taught how to keep safe in the community. Year 6 pupils settle in quickly. There are many supportive spaces where they can make friends. Pupils feel safe and listened to.

Pupils value the many opportunities to develop their interests, such as participating in clubs like 'Book and Biscuit' and 'Big Think Club'. They also go on exciting trips that broaden their horizons, for example trips abroad or watching the Sheffield Steelers ice hockey team play.

An exceptional number of pupils involve themselves in a large pupil leadership programme. As a result, pupils make an active contribution to shaping the school. For example, reading ambassadors have recently assisted in the design and layout of the school library.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has carefully identified the knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which they should learn it. This allows pupils to build on their prior knowledge.

In the main, the curriculum is delivered as intended, with regular checks on pupils' learning. However, at times, the information gained from these checks is not used as effectively as it could be to address gaps in pupils' learning. This results in some pupils not progressing as well as they could. Most pupils achieve well in national tests at the end of Year 6, although some disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as their peers.

Pupils with SEND have full access to the curriculum. Teachers identify, know and understand the needs of pupils with SEND well. Staff use the information and guidance that they receive to help them to make the right adaptations to learning for individual pupils. Pupils who need to catch up with their reading skills receive the help that they need. This supports their learning across the curriculum. The school works closely with experts to ensure that pupils receive the support that they need.

The school supports pupils to have the knowledge and skills to read fluently and well. They have meaningful opportunities to practise these skills regularly. Pupils respond well when exploring the high-quality texts they read together in lessons and form time. Pupil 'reading mentors' support weaker readers. They also relish the opportunity to share their love of reading with younger pupils.

The school's caring and inclusive ethos is evident in the support on offer to pupils who may need something more than the high-quality pastoral care that all pupils benefit from. Through mentoring support, pupils gain a stronger understanding of how to manage themselves and develop greater confidence and resilience. Staff work closely with the families of those pupils whose behaviour and attendance needs to improve. As a result, the number of suspensions has reduced. Overall, pupils' attendance is consistently higher than that seen nationally. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is not improving at the same rate as that of other pupils.

The way that pupils are supported with their wider development is noteworthy. The rich personal development curriculum equips pupils with the knowledge that they need about important issues such as relationships. Many pupils engage in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, performing arts and writing competitions. Pupils learn the value of contributing positively to their immediate community and beyond through many successful charitable contributions.

Leaders are determined to provide the very best opportunities for all pupils to be successful learners. Staff are proud to work at the school. Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. The governing body is loyal and committed. It carries out its statutory duties effectively. The trust provides valuable support and challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, some of the school's methods for checking pupils' learning are not used as effectively as they could be to help pupils consolidate their knowledge and reinforce learning. As a result, some pupils struggle to understand new concepts fully and to develop secure understanding over time. The school should ensure that information from these checks is used effectively to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning before introducing new topics and concepts.
- The school has not ensured that staff have a precise enough understanding of how they should support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, some disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as their peers. Their levels of absence are higher than those of other pupils in the school. The school should ensure that all staff have the knowledge and skills to fulfil their roles and responsibilities in securing the best outcomes for these pupils.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 good for overall effectiveness in October 2019.

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	143792
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10346666
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	10 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	590
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Philip Marshall
CEO of the trust	Natasha Greenough
Executive headteacher	Chris Taylor
Website	www.scissettmiddle.com
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Scissett Middle School is part of The Mast Academy 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.
- The school provides before- and after-school clubs for pupils.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

- 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 spoke with the executive headteacher and other senior leaders. They also spoke to representatives from the governing body and board of trustees.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons across key stages, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about the provision for pupils with SEND.
- 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 a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, published information about pupils' performance and minutes of trustees' meetings.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including free-text responses. They also took account of the responses to the staff and pupil surveys and gathered the views of parents, staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes.

Inspection team

Tudor Griffiths, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Erica Hiorns

Ofsted Inspector

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