

Inspection of King's Meadow Academy

Wakefield Road, Fitzwilliam, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF9 5BP

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are committed to King's Meadow. They are working hard to improve the school. They have successfully focused on safeguarding pupils, improving standards of behaviour and developing pupils' reading ability.

However, aspects of the wider curriculum are not good enough. The quality of the curriculum and its delivery has not been strong in subjects other than English and mathematics. Consequently, pupils have gaps in their knowledge in these subjects.

Nonetheless, pupils enjoy coming to school and say that it is a safe place to be. Leaders have established a calm and orderly environment in which to learn. There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond well to these expectations. When pupils move from one activity to another or from one part of school to another, they do so in a sensible and orderly fashion. Pupils say that bullying used to be an issue but that teachers now deal with any issues quickly.

Pupils understand respect and have learned about this in assemblies. Their understanding of other fundamental British values is less well developed, however. For instance, pupils do not have an age-appropriate understanding of the protected characteristics (the nine groups protected under the Equality Act 2010). Pupils can talk about fun educational visits and chances to take part in extra-curricular activities that have happened in the past. However, they cannot recall any learning linked to these.

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

Learning to read is a priority at King's Meadow Academy. In the early years, children get off to a good start in learning to read. Staff are well trained in the teaching of phonics. The books that pupils are given are well matched to their ability. This allows them to be successful. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite books and authors.

The wider curriculum is less well developed. Curriculum leaders are passionate and ambitious, but many areas are still under development. New curriculum plans have been introduced in some subjects and others are being written. Some of these are still in their infancy, however. These schemes have identified the important knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn.

However, some pupils have gaps in their learning, and these are not being clearly identified. In physical education (PE), for example, pupils are expected to apply skills without being secure in the learning that comes before. Pupils have gaps in their knowledge in several subjects other than English and mathematics. Teachers do not always check what pupils do and do not know effectively.

The curriculum in early years prepares children well for their learning later in school. Teachers focus effectively on children's vocabulary and their understanding of key knowledge. They know the children's abilities well and ensure that activities help them build on their knowledge of the world step by step. Children get off to a very good start in school.

In addition, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is knowledgeable about pupils in school and staff know pupil's individual needs. The SENCo works with staff and creates clear targets to support pupils' achievement. Staff use these targets to inform their planning. Pupils with SEND are fully integrated into the life of the school. They remain in class and are supported through resources and support from other adults.

Pupils' good behaviour means that the school is a calm place in which to learn. Pupils are polite, courteous and welcoming. Leaders recognise that there are still too many pupils who are not attending school regularly and often enough. These pupils miss out on important learning.

There are limited opportunities for pupils to have wider experiences beyond the classroom. They talk about clubs and activities that they have attended in the past and leaders say there are plans to reintroduce these. Pupils can recall educational visits that they have made but are unable to link these to any learning. Pupils' understanding of fundamental British values is also limited. While they understand respect and differences between people, they are less clear about concepts, such as individual liberty and protected characteristics including race, gender and disability. Leaders need to ensure that the personal development offer is widened, so that pupils are better prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders are committed to improving the quality of education at the school. They know what the next steps are to further improve the school. They have many plans in place. These plans have not been in place long enough to bear fruit. Trustees, governors and school leaders have not ensured that everyone is held to account for these planned improvements at this point.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff are well trained and there are robust processes for reporting concerns. Pupils describe school as a safe place. They know that they can speak to a trusted adult if they feel worried about themselves or others. Leaders make suitable checks to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with pupils. Staff know pupils well and recognise when they are vulnerable. When there are concerns about pupils, they are dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders initially prioritised reading as a focus for improvement. Some subjects are further behind. Planning in these subjects is less precise and curriculum delivery has been inconsistent. As a result, pupils' knowledge in some foundation subjects is less secure than others. Leaders need to ensure that the pupils' achievement is strong in subjects across the curriculum.
- The offer to promote pupils' wider development is currently limited. This means that pupils have little opportunity to develop understanding of aspects, such as protected characteristics, and fundamental British values. Leaders need to ensure that the personal development offer is widened.
- Leaders have developed many plans for further improvement. Many of these have not been implemented at this point. Inconsistencies remain in pupils' achievement and provision for their personal development. Leaders at all levels, including trustees and governors, need to ensure that these plans are implemented successfully and monitor their impact.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	146034
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10241409
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gareth Mann-Tighe
Headteacher	Robert Cochrane
Website	www.kingsmeadowacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The predecessor school joined the Waterton Academy Trust in June 2018.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.

- Inspectors met the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders, the chair of governors and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. During deep dive activities, inspectors met with subject leaders, considered curriculum planning from early years through to Year 6, visited a

sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their learning and heard pupils read with familiar adults.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and staff at breaktime and during lunch and in separate focus groups.
- Inspectors reviewed documentation, including school improvement plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body, documents linked to pupils with SEND, records of behaviour and exclusions, and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, including any free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead to consider how staff log concerns and the actions that leaders take in response. Inspectors also met with a range of staff about the training that they have received for safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils playing at lunchtimes and at breaktimes.

Inspection team

Dughall McCormick, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Trudi Bartle	Ofsted Inspector
Andrea Batley	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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