

Inspection of Kirk Hallam Community Academy

Godfrey Drive, Kirk Hallam, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 4HH

Inspection dates:	22 and 23 October 2024
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Sixth-form provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Chris Turner. This school is part of Nova Education 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), Ashfaq Rahman, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Margaret Monckton.

What is it like to attend this school?

Kirk Hallam Community Academy is a caring and welcoming school. Most pupils enjoy learning here. Staff and pupils said that the school has improved. Many parents and carers appreciate the care and support the school provides for their children. There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils feel safe and are supported well. The school is calm and orderly. Pupils are respectful to each other and staff. Most pupils behave well in lessons and at social times.

The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, the school has not ensured that all pupils receive a high-quality education. The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good across the school. Pupils and students in the sixth form do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils have a range of opportunities to contribute to the school. Some pupils enjoy being well-being, reading or subject ambassadors. Some students in the sixth form also support younger pupils with reading. There are a range of extra-curricular activities that an increasing number of pupils take part in. For example, pupils enjoy attending sports clubs, well-being club, dance, drama and animal care club.

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. The school has detailed the knowledge, skills and vocabulary pupils will learn in each subject. Most teachers use the school's agreed approach to delivering the curriculum well. Teachers have good subject knowledge. In the main, they explain new topics clearly. However, some teachers do not check pupils' understanding carefully enough. This means they are unaware of, and do not address, any gaps in learning or misconceptions pupils have. As a result, some pupils do not progress well through the curriculum. Published outcomes at the end of key stage 4 and for sixth-form students are typically lower than expected.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. Some pupils with more complex needs have bespoke support. This is starting to help them gain the knowledge and skills they need to be successful. Teachers get detailed information about how they can meet the needs of these pupils. Some teachers do not use this information effectively. They do not ensure that they adapt their teaching or resources to support these pupils to access the curriculum. This means that some pupils with SEND do not learn as well as they should.

The school has ensured that pupils have more opportunities to develop their reading skills than previously. Pupils in key stage 3 have weekly library lessons. Staff carefully teach pupils new vocabulary. The school regularly assesses pupils' reading ability and identifies those needing extra reading support. Some of these pupils get the help they need. However, those pupils at the early stages of reading are not getting the support they need to improve their reading fluency and accuracy. This makes it difficult for them to access

the curriculum. The school is aware of this and has plans in place to ensure that these pupils get the support they need.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and has developed the 'Kirk Hallam way' so that pupils know what is expected of them. There are clear routines that pupils understand and follow. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Students in the sixth form work well in lessons. The school supports pupils who need help to improve their behaviour effectively. The number of pupils who are suspended from school is reducing. The school has prioritised improving attendance. Staff give effective support to pupils who need to attend school more regularly. Pupils' attendance rates are improving.

The school has ensured that there is a well-thought-out programme in place for pupils' personal development. Pupils learn how to be safe online and in the community. They learn about healthy relationships and lifestyles. Pupils understand to be respectful and tolerant of those who may be different from them. However, the school has not ensured that pupils are developing their understanding of fundamental British values well enough. As a result, some pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they should be. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about the world of work. Students in the sixth form learn about different universities and apprenticeships. They are prepared well for their next steps.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They said that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. Those responsible for governance carry out their statutory duties effectively. The trust provides appropriate support and challenge. This has helped the school improve in some areas. Trust and school leaders, and those responsible for governance are aware that more still needs to be done and are committed to bringing about the necessary improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not check pupils' understanding well enough. This means that gaps in pupils' learning and misconceptions are not identified or addressed. Pupils do not learn as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers systematically check pupils' understanding so they can identify when pupils need to revisit learning.
- Some teachers do not adapt their teaching or resources to support pupils with SEND to access the curriculum. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not learn as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers know how to use the information and strategies the school provides to support pupils with SEND so that these pupils can access the curriculum and achieve well.

- Pupils at the early stages of learning to read are not getting the support they need to improve their reading. This makes it difficult for these pupils to access the curriculum. The school should ensure that these pupils get appropriate support to improve their reading accuracy and fluency.
- The school has not ensured that pupils are developing their understanding of fundamental British values. As a result, some pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they should be. The school should ensure that pupils have opportunities to develop their understanding of fundamental British values so that pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain effectively.

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	146374
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10347681
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	757
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	97
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Margaret Monckton
CEO of the trust	Ashfaq Rahman
Headteacher	Chris Turner
Website	www.kirkhallamacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 July 2022

Information about this school

- The school is part of Nova Education Trust.
- The school uses two registered and three unregistered alternative provisions.
- 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

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the CEO of the trust, other trust leaders, the headteacher, other senior leaders, staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with a trustee and the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, met with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- 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 the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and Ofsted's Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at social times.

Inspection team

Paul Halcro, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
John Morrison	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Roche	Ofsted Inspector
Dick Vasey	Ofsted Inspector

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