

Inspection of King's Meadow Academy

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

Inspection dates:	11 and 12 February 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Dan Gough. This school is part of Waterton 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), David Dickinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Johnson.

What is it like to attend this school?

King's Meadow Academy is a rapidly improving school. Staff know pupils and their families very well. Parents and carers appreciate the care and support their children receive. It is a school that welcomes visitors and the wider community warmly.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have made many positive changes. These have been timely and wide-ranging. For example, the 'well-being quad' is well resourced and is used to support pupils' mental health. The school has increased its ambitions for pupils' achievement. This is reflected in the improving curriculum. However, these changes are not fully embedded, and it is too soon to see the full impact of these changes on pupils' knowledge in the long term.

Pupils know the school rules, 'be ready, respectful and safe', and they follow them closely. The school is a calm and nurturing place in which to learn and develop. It is orderly because it ensures that all pupils, including those in Reception, follow the school routines consistently. Pupils are happy and safe.

The school offers pupils a range of opportunities to learn outside of the classroom. Pupils enjoy the trips and visits they experience, such as to local museums, wildlife parks and residential visits, where they learn to face different challenges.

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

After a challenging period, the school has started to make improvements to the quality of education. Where the curriculum is further improved and more ambitious, pupils are achieving more. Leaders are mindful of staff's workload and well-being. As a result, curriculum development is happening in phases, and some areas are more developed than others.

Over time, the impact of teaching has been variable. This has been compounded by a number of staffing changes. This has meant that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have not always achieved as well as they could, including in national tests. Leaders have now stabilised staffing. They have introduced a clear model for teaching, known as the 'KMA Way'. Teachers receive regular training; this approach is new. There is more to do to ensure that this model is used consistently and that pupils learn the curriculum securely as a result of it.

The curriculum is clearly sequenced. However, there are inconsistencies in the school's approach to teaching writing. There are weaknesses in pupils' handwriting, grammar and spelling knowledge. This limits the quality of pupils' written communication.

The school prioritises reading. There has been significant training for staff on teaching children to learn to read. This has helped to ensure that the chosen phonics programme is followed consistently. Pupils who fall behind in their reading are supported to catch up quickly. Pupils, especially in the early years and key stage 1, enjoy daily story time. The

school is developing a programme to support pupils with their reading fluency. This work is in its infancy.

Pupils with SEND are identified quickly and supported well. The school works effectively with different agencies so that pupils' needs are met, and it ensures that teachers follow pupils' support plans.

The school has prioritised improving pupils' attendance. Central to this work is the positive partnership between the school and parents and carers. The school works hard to understand the barriers that some families face so that it can put in place the most appropriate support. Rates of attendance have improved significantly.

Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. Teachers regularly reward pupils for their achievements and hard work. Pupils value this. Some pupils' resilience and skills that help them to learn independently are not as developed as they could be. This sometimes limits some pupils' academic achievement and personal development, including children in the early years.

From the start of Reception, children learn to be kind to each other and respect one another. The school is committed to equality and inclusion. Pupils are proud of the fact that everyone is welcome at their school. The school has developed a strong sense of community. For example, pupils enjoy being placed in houses named after the school's values: kind, motivate, aspire and achieve. Pupils enjoy working together in their houses and taking part in competitions to win house points. This motivates pupils. Pupils benefit from the range of opportunities to develop their interests and talents, such as in choir, sports and crafts.

Trustees and local governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities. They fulfil their responsibilities well. There is a strong sense of teamwork and demonstrable commitment from all leaders to the school's continued improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Recent positive changes to the school's curriculum and how it is taught are not fully embedded. This means that the full impact of the curriculum has not been realised. The school should embed the curriculum and ensure that it is implemented consistently. This way, pupils can learn and remember it and make the progress through it of which they are capable.
- The school's writing curriculum is not having the impact on pupils that it should. Some pupils' achievement in writing is hindered by weaknesses in handwriting, spelling,

punctuation and grammar knowledge, and this limits the effectiveness of pupils' written communication. The school should ensure that pupils' literacy skills are developed further and that pupils can use and apply fundamental writing skills accurately across the curriculum.

- Some pupils' resilience and skills to learn independently are not as developed as they could be. To an extent, this is limiting these pupils' academic and social development. The school should further develop ways to build pupils' resilience, sustained concentration and skills to learn independently, ensuring this impacts pupils' academic and social development positively.

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	146034
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10346711
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	245
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stephen Johnson
CEO of the trust	David Dickinson
Headteacher	Dan Gough
Website	www.kingsmeadowacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 September 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.
- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2023.

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 various leaders from the school and from the trust. The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body and the board of the trustees. Inspectors reviewed documentation relating to governance, including minutes from governors' meetings.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading and English, mathematics and history. 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 discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 met with groups of pupils formally during the inspection and spoke with them at social times and in lessons.
- Inspectors met with groups of staff formally during the inspection and spoke with them throughout the inspection. Inspectors also considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- The lead inspector took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Dan McKeating, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Adrian Fearn

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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