

Kirkburton Church of England Voluntary Aided First School

Address: School Hill, Kirkburton, West Yorkshire, HD8 0SG

Unique reference number (URN): 107745

Inspection report: 12 May 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils' workbooks and their recall of their learning demonstrates that pupils generally achieve well across the curriculum. This includes in mathematics where the updated curriculum is having a positive impact on pupils multiplication and timetables knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged make good progress through the curriculum from their starting points. Children in the early years develop appropriate knowledge across the 7 areas of learning. They are generally well prepared for Year 1.

The work that pupils produce is generally in line with that expected for their age and phase. Leaders have correctly identified that pupils do not achieve as well in writing as they do in other areas of the curriculum. Leaders have responded to this by revising and adapting the writing curriculum. This is a work in progress and the full impact is not consistently clear in pupils' work. That said, pupils are generally well prepared for their next steps in education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils are clear that, in order to do well at school and achieve in the future, they need to attend school regularly and on time. They enjoy coming to school and feel a sense of belonging in their school community. Leaders relationships with parents and carers are positive. They quickly identify when attendance rates begins to drop for individual or groups of pupils. Bespoke support is provided for pupils and their families to help them overcome barriers to regular attendance. This support is highly effective. As a result of this culture, pupil attendance rates are high, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. The agreed behaviour system is understood by pupils and staff. Pupils typically behave well across the school. They are respectful and kind to one another and to adults. Staff provide effective support for pupils who may need support to improve their behaviour. Bullying rarely happens. If it does it occur, is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils are celebrated when they meet the schools' behaviour expectations. Friday reward assemblies are popular with pupils, parents and carers. Here, pupils receive recognition for displaying the school values of 'love, learn and shine'.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The curriculum is well designed and ordered. The knowledge that pupils need to learn and the end points that they are working towards are clearly identified. Leaders have an accurate and informed view of the curriculum. They make adaptations and changes when necessary. In response to Year 4 multiplication and timetables scores historically being below national averages the mathematics curriculum has recently been updated with a clearer focus on number and calculation. The positive impact of this is evident in pupils' understanding and workbooks.

Staff have secure subject knowledge. They generally choose effective activities to deliver the agreed curriculum. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged can access their learning alongside their peers through the use of appropriate adaptations. Assessment is typically used well. Leaders regularly monitor pupils' progress through the curriculum. This allows them to identify gaps in pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills. Pupils who need help to secure this important knowledge are provided with effective support to catch up with their peers. However, in lessons, checks made on pupils' understanding do not consistently identify and address their misconceptions. As a result, some pupils move onto new learning before they have consolidated current and prior learning.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years are happy and interact positively with each other and adults. They benefit from well-established routines and consistent expectations. Statutory care requirements for the early years are fully met. Leaders quickly identify pupils with barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. They have responded to an increasing number of children with language and communication barriers joining the early years to ensure that their needs are met. Children in the early years and pupils across the school are taught to communicate non-verbally as part of this work. This ensures that all children feel a sense of belonging as they join the school.

Children develop appropriate knowledge across the curriculum. They are generally well prepared for Year 1. The early years curriculum is well designed and considered. Leaders have identified the key knowledge that children will learn across the 7 areas of learning. They have prioritised children's communication and vocabulary development within this. The teaching of phonics is effective. Children quickly develop their early reading knowledge. The curriculum is generally well taught. Overall, staff support children's learning well. However, they do not always maximise opportunities to engage children in high-quality interactions. As a result, at times, opportunities are missed to extend children's learning.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders swiftly and accurately identify pupils who face barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. They work with staff, using robust processes, to ensure that effective support is out in place for any pupil who needs it. This work starts during children's transition into the Reception Year. Leaders identify bespoke targets for each pupil with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) based on their starting points. Pupils' progress through the curriculum is closely monitored in line with these targets. Where necessary, the support that pupils receive is adapted to ensure that it is effective. Staff receive effective training to help them to support pupils with SEND access the curriculum. As a result, pupils are generally well supported in the classroom. Many pupils with SEND are supported to secure positive outcomes from their starting points as a result of this process.

Leaders work closely with external partners, including the virtual school to support pupils. Their work is focused on pupils being supported to thrive at the school. This includes ensuring that funding such as, pupil premium is used effectively. Pupils in receipt of this

funding are well known to staff who support them effectively to access the curriculum and wider school offer.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the community it serves. They correctly identify areas for improvement and put effective actions in place to address these areas. For example, the recently adapted mathematics curriculum is having a positive impact on improving pupils' achievement. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities. For example, they ensure that safeguarding systems and processes are secure. Governors provide effective challenge and support, where appropriate. Leaders at all levels make decisions that are in the best interest of pupils. They are committed to the continued improvement of the school.

Leaders have created a cohesive culture in which staff feel valued, supported, and professionally empowered. Staff described leaders as highly visible, approachable, and responsive to both pupils' needs and staff wellbeing. This has created a positive professional climate where expectations are clear, communication is open, and staff feel part of a united team. Leaders consider staff workload in their decisions. Staff are unanimous in describing workload as manageable and leaders as flexible and understanding. Staff access a wide range of professional learning opportunities, including targeted training and access to external networks. This is closely linked to the school development priorities. Leaders have made a concerted and successful effort to build positive relationships with parents, carers and the community. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the education and care that the school provides for their children.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have devised a coherent and appropriate personal development programme. They ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are disadvantaged, have full access to this offer. In lessons, pupils develop their knowledge of topics such as fundamental British values, online safety and protected characteristics. They learn about a range of faiths and beliefs and can talk about characteristics of different faiths. This helps to build pupils' understanding and respect of diversity in the world, including different cultures and beliefs.

Pupils access a range of activities to develop their talents and interests. These include extra-curricular clubs for gymnastics, football and reading. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to take part in outside learning experiences. The school has an exciting and well designed outside area where pupils take part in bushcraft skills and develop an appreciation for nature. This helps pupils to develop their awareness of and respect for the environment and to build their teamwork skills. Leaders provide effective guidance and help for pupils' social and emotional needs. Pupils emotionally 'check in' with their teachers every morning. This allows teachers to identify any pupil who may need support. Where needed, bespoke support is provided through the school's 'nurture room'.

Pupil leaders play an active role in school. The eco council raise awareness about issues such as littering. They confidently lead whole school assemblies to raise the profile of such matters. The school council raise money for local charities. Wellbeing champions raise

awareness of ways to take care of mental health and dealing with emotions. These opportunities increase pupils' confidence through being active citizens in both the school and local community.

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

Pupils are happy at this caring and welcoming school. They experience a real sense of belonging during their time here. The school's values of 'love, learn and shine' are well understood by pupils. They can describe how these values are important to them in their daily lives. This starts in the early years where children learn non-verbal communication techniques. This is to ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are welcome and included. Staff know the pupils and their families well. These positive relationships ensure that pupils want to come to school. As a result, pupils attend regularly.

Pupils behave well across the school. They mix together positively at social times, independently sharing sports equipment at lunch times. Pupils feel safe at school. Bullying and other forms of discrimination rarely happen. When they do, this is swiftly and effectively dealt with by leaders. Pupils access a carefully considered offer beyond the academic. They extend their talents and interests through clubs, such as drama, dance and art. Children begin to learn about different work and jobs in the Reception Year. They learn about people who help us, such as nurses and firefighters. This awareness of different career opportunities builds as pupils continue their journey through school.

Pupils enjoy their learning, particularly lessons in the exciting outdoor learning area. Here, they learn about bushcraft and nature. Pupils generally achieve well. In the Reception Year and Year 1 pupils quickly develop their phonics knowledge. In key stage 2, pupils' work and recall of knowledge reflects their positive learning. They are typically well prepared for their next steps.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge are identified and addressed consistently and effectively.
- Leaders should continue their work to embed the new writing curriculum to ensure that pupils are supported achieve all that they can in writing.
- Leaders should ensure that opportunities for engaging children in high-quality interactions are maximised in the early years.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Gemma Berry.

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 headteacher, the chair of governors and two other members of the governing body.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is part of the Diocese of Leeds. The school last received a Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools in April 2024.

The school uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Will Adams

Lead inspector:

Chris Sergeant, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

John Davie, 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 12 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

120

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: 272

School capacity

144

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: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

18.33%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 26.3%

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

3.33%

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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

20.83%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well below 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).

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 (3 term)	4.5%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.2%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.1%	5.9%	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 (3 term)	8.7%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.4%	14.6%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (3 term)	13.9%	16.2%	Close to average

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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