

Inspection of Dixons Allerton Academy

Rhodesway, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD8 0DH

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 May 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

The executive principal of this school is Danny Carr. This school is part of Dixons Academies 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), Luke Sparkes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Michael Blackburn.

What is it like to attend this school?

Adults working in school have high ambition for all pupils. There is a clear, shared commitment to ensure that all pupils can be successful, irrespective of the challenges they may face.

The primary phase of school, including very strong early years provision, prepares pupils well for the secondary phase. Pupils who have attended the primary phase of school go on to attend the secondary phase more regularly, demonstrate more positive behaviours and achieve more highly in external assessments.

Pupils who have good attendance in the secondary phase of this school do well. However, many pupils do not attend school regularly. These pupils can struggle to access the new learning that is being taught. The school does not identify and address gaps in their learning quickly enough.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour which are clearly understood by pupils, parents and staff across all phases. Some pupils in the secondary phase struggle to maintain the expected high standards. Pupils feel safe. However, a significant minority of pupils and staff have concerns about behaviour. This is most often in the secondary phase of school. Some pupils are made to feel uncomfortable in school due to sexist or homophobic views being shared openly by a small minority of other pupils.

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

The school continues to face challenges as a result of the pandemic. Attendance overall is low. A significant group of pupils in the secondary phase of the school attend very poorly. The school has recently reviewed their attendance processes. The number of home visits has significantly increased. There is effective work with outside agencies. As a result, the proportion of pupils failing to attend school regularly, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is beginning to reduce.

Children get off to a very strong start in the early years. Leaders have thought carefully about how they can best support children's development through a range of purposeful and carefully planned activities and opportunities. Adults know the children very well. They interact expertly with children, working from their individual starting points to develop rich, and varied, knowledge and understanding.

Reading is prioritised from the start of school. Pupils read daily to an adult. There are strong systems for sharing information between those who listen to pupils read and class teachers. However, some important aspects of the school's early reading programme are not consistently used by staff. This limits the progress that some pupils make, particularly those who are finding learning to read more challenging.

Leaders have ensured that they have clearly identified the crucial subject knowledge

that pupils need to learn at each stage of their education. Teachers explain new concepts and ideas clearly. They provide many opportunities for pupils to recall important prior learning. This supports many pupils to be successful in external tests and examinations, including in the sixth form.

There are secure systems across school for identifying pupils with SEND. The SEND team know these pupils well. They work effectively with the attendance and behaviour teams to identify which pupils may need additional support. Detailed plans are in place that identify strategies to support pupils with SEND. However, staff do not use these plans consistently well in classrooms. The school has started to introduce a more accessible planning format. Where these plans are already in place, support is more closely matched to pupil need.

As a result of previous absences from school and inconsistent teaching, some pupils have gaps in what they know and remember. Some teachers do not routinely identify and address the crucial gaps in learning that these pupils have. This means that these pupils struggle in lessons, as they do not have the background knowledge to understand what is being taught.

The school has developed a well-planned personal, social, health and careers education (PSHCE) programme that develops pupils' understanding of important local and national issues in an age-appropriate way. However, some teachers in the secondary and sixth-form phases give insufficient time to allow open discussion and debate around these important issues. Many pupils do not develop the secure knowledge and understanding that the PSHCE curriculum intends. A small number of older pupils openly share negative views about others who are different to them.

The number of pupils suspended from school is high. Most of these suspensions are for persistent disruptive behaviour in the secondary phase. Many pupils who have been suspended receive support from the nurture team to help them improve their behaviour. For a significant number of pupils, this support is not as effective as it could be. These pupils have been suspended on further occasions.

Trustees have appropriate systems for gathering assessment and attendance information about the school. However, the school's systems to check on the impact of developments are inconsistent. There is an insufficient focus on the experience and support for groups of pupils, including those pupils whose attendance is poor. As a result, leaders' self-evaluation lacks precision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The number of pupils in the secondary phase who are persistently absent is very

high. These pupils are unable to fully access school life. Leaders should accelerate their work to improve attendance, working with outside agencies where necessary, to support these pupils to attend and participate in school much more regularly.

- Some pupils in the secondary phase of school struggle to meet the high expectations of behaviour. The support that these pupils receive to develop self-control is not always effective. A significant number of pupils have been repeatedly suspended. Leaders should review their approach to behaviour management to ensure that pupils receive the necessary targeted support and adaptations so that the behaviour of all pupils improves over time.
- The impact of the curriculum for PSHCE is variable. Some pupils in the secondary phase hold, and share, negative views about pupils who are different to themselves, including differences of gender and sexuality. Leaders should review the implementation of their PSHCE curriculum to ensure all pupils understand, and appreciate, difference and the importance of treating others with respect.
- Teachers do not check consistently whether pupils have secure knowledge of what they have already learned before starting new learning. Some pupils have significant gaps in knowledge. These pupils struggle with their new learning and the gaps in their learning grow over time. The school should ensure that teachers routinely check on pupils' knowledge and adjust their teaching appropriately to enable all pupils to learn successfully.
- Many of the school's quality assurance systems are disproportionately focused on checking processes rather than impact. This limits how well the school is able to evaluate the effectiveness of provision and consequently make any changes necessary. The school should ensure that leaders, at all levels, gather information from a range of sources to evaluate the effectiveness of their provision and make any necessary changes to maximise the impact of the learning offer that pupils receive.

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	135866
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10323020
Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,890
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Blackburn
CEO of the trust	Luke Sparkes
Principal	Danny Carr (Executive Principal)
Website	www.dixonsaa.com
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 March 2019 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school is part of Dixons Academies Trust.
- All phases of this all-through school are in the same building, with clearly separate entrances, classrooms and social spaces.
- The school uses two registered alternative provisions and one unregistered alternative provision.
- 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed the continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the senior leaders, including leaders responsible for behaviour and attendance, leaders in charge of personal development and careers, the safeguarding team, the early years leader and the sixth-form leader.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and looked at samples of pupil support plans. Inspectors looked at the provision that pupils with additional needs were receiving across all aspects of school life.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, religious education, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with trustees and the CEO of the trust.
- Inspectors spoke to teachers, teaching assistants and other staff over the course of the inspection.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils on both sites and spoke to others informally during the inspection.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the staff survey.
- Inspectors took account of a wide range of documentary information, including the school's policies, its self-evaluation, records of behaviour and documentation related to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Steve Wren, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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Kyrstie Stubbs	Ofsted Inspector
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