

Kirk Sandall Junior School

Address: Magnolia Close, Kirk Sandall, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN3 1JG

Unique reference number (URN): 141684

Inspection report: 28 April 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.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils consistently achieve well from their starting points, particularly pupils who are most disadvantaged. Staff ensure that pupils, especially those at the early stages of reading, writing and mathematics, gain accuracy and fluency in the basic skills they need for future success. Pupils' work in books is of a consistently high quality. The school has established robust systems to check how well pupils remember what they have learned across all subjects. Pupils develop a secure and detailed understanding of what they have been taught. They recall previous learning with clarity. This helps them to build their knowledge securely over time.

Outcomes in external tests reflect the impact of staff's work over recent years. Pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 sit above national averages in most areas. Disadvantaged pupils achieve better than their peers nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make impressive progress from their starting points. This leads to pupils being very well prepared for their next stage of education.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Attendance is a clear priority. Leaders' approaches to help pupils to attend well are successful. Leaders have created a very welcoming and calm school. Consequently, pupils enjoy school, attend well and arrive on time, keen to learn. Leaders use rigorous regular analysis to spot patterns of absence early and to put in place timely and targeted support to work constructively with families to remove barriers. These actions are improving attendance overall, with a positive impact on many individual pupils.

Pupils consistently behave very well. Leaders' expectations are clear and applied consistently by staff. Pupils' learning is not disrupted by the behaviour of others. Staff recognise and celebrate pupils' positive behaviour. The well-established inclusive and supportive culture creates a clear sense of belonging. Social times are joyful and harmonious, with pupils playing cooperatively and making good use of the space and equipment available. Pupils are intrinsically motivated to do their best and behave well. Incidents of bullying are very rare and, when they occur, staff deal with them quickly. Discrimination is not tolerated. Where pupils need additional help with their behaviour, this is identified early and the well-considered support provided enables them to meet leaders' high expectations.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have made astute decisions about curriculum design and teaching over time, informed by a clear understanding of how pupils learn. The curriculum is high quality across all subjects. Leaders have prioritised the needs of pupils, who face additional barriers to their learning. As a result, the work that pupils do is precisely adapted to their needs and enables them to progress through the curriculum well.

Leaders have also made changes to the curriculum to increase ambition and raise expectations for how well pupils achieve. Pupils receive the teaching they need in reading, writing and mathematics from the start. Pupils who need extra practise receive it regularly to catch up quickly.

Teaching is consistently highly effective. Teachers explain new learning clearly. They build subject-specific vocabulary so pupils can discuss and secure important concepts. Additional staff contribute skilfully. They work closely alongside teachers to help pupils grasp new learning. Pupils demonstrate a pride in their work and confidently talk about their learning. Staff check understanding and provide the right help at the right time, so any errors are corrected quickly and any gaps in learning are addressed.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Inclusive practice sits at the heart of the school's work. The school has established highly effective systems so that pupils' needs are quickly identified and carefully understood. Leaders review pupils' progress in great detail, regularly monitoring the provision in place for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities closely and for pupils who attend alternative provision. The school makes sure that all staff have the necessary expertise to support pupils to achieve well over time.

Leaders work effectively with external agencies to ensure pupils receive the right help. Partnerships with parents and carers are positive. Each time progress is reviewed, the views of the pupil and their parents are considered. This means that pupils' evolving needs are widely understood and the progress that they make is celebrated.

Leaders use well-considered approaches to make effective use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. The school enhances pupils' academic and wider opportunities, and participation in extra-curricular activities is high among disadvantaged pupils. This funding has a notable impact on their achievement. Over time, these pupils achieve better than disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders at all levels know the school well. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and how to continue to support its work most effectively. Leaders provide clear direction and a well-shaped vision that drives the continuous improvement of the work of the school.

Leaders maintain strong oversight of each area of the school's provision. They make regular checks to see how well things are working, identifying strengths and next steps. Their actions are well researched and often informed by well-regarded expertise.

Leaders ensure that there is consistency in expectations across subjects and classes. Their commitment to inclusion, achievement and high-quality provision for pupils who face barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing is deeply embedded and impactful. Governance is highly effective; this oversight is rigorous and supportive. Governors and trustees challenge leaders appropriately. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively.

The school's priorities have informed a carefully planned programme of professional learning. Staff have the opportunity to suggest their own training pathways. They value the training they receive. Ongoing training and coaching consistently enhances their expertise.

Leaders consider staff wellbeing and workload, when making decisions. They remove unnecessary tasks and focus on things that make the greatest difference for pupils.

Parents and carers are highly positive about the school's work. Leaders have created an ambitious and inclusive culture that prepares pupils well for the next stages and life in the wider world.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders have ensured that a comprehensive programme is in place for pupils' personal development. This is ambitious and tailored to meet the needs of the whole school community. The school's offer ensures that pupils gain the experiences they need to become confident and resilient learners. They understand the part they should play in the school, the local community and in the wider world. Pupils are particularly proud of their leadership roles and how they contribute to the life of the school.

Disadvantaged pupils are at the centre of all activities. Leaders ensure they benefit fully from a wide range of opportunities, including clubs, musical tuition, sporting competitions and activities beyond school. Leaders track pupils' involvement closely to make sure that all pupils have equal access to these opportunities.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education is tailored to meet pupils' needs. It helps them understand online and offline risks, healthy relationships and ways to manage their own health and wellbeing. Where needed, disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive targeted support to ensure they understand essential information and develop important life skills.

Pupils develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values, such as democracy and individual liberty. Pupils demonstrate the utmost respect towards others. They recognise the importance of treating others as they would wish to be treated. Pupils champion differences; they know about protected characteristics and understand that there are many differing family structures. Across the school, pupils show a clear understanding of different religions.

The school provides careful preparation for pupils' next steps, including supporting transition to secondary school. Pupils are well prepared and feel confident that they can rise to the challenges they may face. They say they have practised the school's 'learning powers' and always try to work hard, ask for help, never give up and do their best.

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

Pupils and their families experience a warm welcome at this nurturing and inclusive school. Pupils build positive relationships with staff. They know who to turn to for help if they need it.

Bullying is extremely rare and dealt with promptly if it arises. This helps pupils to feel safe. Pupils' behaviour is highly positive. They are expected to be kind, show respect, make the right choices and to always try their best. Pupils try really hard to rise to these expectations. They know it keeps everybody safe and happy. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they attend regularly.

Pupils enjoy learning because adults explain ideas clearly, ask thoughtful questions and make learning enjoyable. Securing pupils' skills in early reading, writing and number are central to the school's curriculum. Adults address any gaps or misconceptions straight away.

Over time, pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and disadvantaged pupils, are fully supported and included in all aspects of school life. Pupils enjoy learning. They are proud of their work. Pupils achieve extremely well across the curriculum and make secure progress over time. They talk enthusiastically about what they know. Pupils' work demonstrates pride and effort. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in every aspect of school life. Any barriers to learning are addressed swiftly so that every pupil can learn successfully alongside their peers.

Pupils thrive as a result of the school's extensive personal development programme. They value the wide range of experiences the school offers. Pupils enjoy many clubs, trips and visits that help them to discover new interests and broaden their horizons. For example, many pupils play musical instruments; sporting competitions are a regular feature of the school calendar and the annual residential visits support pupils' developing independence. Pupils are very well prepared for their future.

Next steps

- Leaders and governors should continue to work effectively towards their priorities for improvement, successfully overcoming the barriers and challenges that the school's changing context presents, in order to drive a transformational impact for all pupils. Leaders should continue to share this work across the trust and beyond.

About this inspection

This school is part of Brighter Futures Learning Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the co-chief executive officers (Co-CEOs), Helen Redford-Hernandez and Garath Rawson, and is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Pippa Dodgshon.

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 school and trust leaders, members of the trust board and the chair of the local governing board, parents, staff and pupils during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently makes use of 3 alternative provisions, including 2 that are unregistered.

Executive Headteacher: Carolyn Buckley

Lead inspector:

Tracy Duffy, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Elaine Watson, Ofsted Inspector

Hannah Cuddy, 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 28 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

344

Close to 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

360

Close to 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)

23.26%

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

2.03%

Below 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

16.57%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Above 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).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	68%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	73%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	66%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	63%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	75%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	79%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	72%	73%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	79%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	78%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	78%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	81%	71%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	76%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	82%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	77%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	69%	73%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	53%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	62%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	47%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	40%	44%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	58%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	62%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	58%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	65%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	69%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	58%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	70%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	67%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	73%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	63%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	60%	59%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	53%	68%	-15 pp
2024/25 (final)	62%	69%	-8 pp
2023/24 (final)	47%	67%	-20 pp
2022/23 (final)	40%	66%	-26 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	58%	80%	-21 pp
2024/25 (final)	62%	81%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	58%	80%	-22 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	65%	78%	-12 pp
2024/25 (final)	69%	78%	-9 pp
2023/24 (final)	58%	78%	-20 pp
2022/23 (final)	70%	77%	-7 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	67%	80%	-12 pp
2024/25 (final)	73%	81%	-7 pp
2023/24 (final)	63%	79%	-16 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	60%	79%	-19 pp

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)	4.2%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.6%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.9%	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)	9.5%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	10.2%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	12.6%	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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright