

Inspection of John Flamsteed Community School

Derby Road, Denby, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 8NP

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 January 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The headteacher of this school is Helen Frost-Briggs. The school is part of East Midlands Education Trust (EMET), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Rob McDonough, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ann Witheford.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school provides a welcoming and supportive environment. Clear routines and high expectations create a calm and purposeful atmosphere. Strong relationships between staff and pupils build trust. Staff address issues quickly and effectively, fostering a positive culture where pupils can thrive.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils, rooted in the school's vision of wanting them to be 'nothing short of remarkable'. The 'JF Way' helps teachers inspire pupils to become 'ambitious, committed, and proud'. This approach supports all pupils, encouraging them to believe in their potential to succeed.

The school promotes equality and inclusion, with a clear message that bullying and derogatory language are not tolerated. Pupils are confident in using systems to report inappropriate behaviour and know it will be addressed.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, including sports, music and leadership roles, such as sitting on the school council and being an anti-bullying ambassador. These experiences, alongside unique clubs such as the 'Warhammer Club', support personal development and build pupils' confidence, preparing them for life beyond school.

Parents agree that the school's community feel and well-organised curriculum help pupils achieve well. They appreciate the inclusive environment and the school's commitment to high aspirations for every pupil.

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

The curriculum is ambitious, ensuring that all pupils can achieve their best. Subjects are carefully organised to identify the key knowledge and skills pupils need to achieve well. For example, in English, Year 7 pupils study monstrosities in literature to prepare for the complex themes in 'Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' at GCSE. In history, pupils develop a strong understanding of chronology in Year 7, starting with the Normans and medieval power structures, before exploring global perspectives like the Kingdom of Benin through the 'meanwhile, elsewhere' approach. This helps pupils build on prior knowledge while developing broader thinking and connecting ideas across time and place.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong, enabling them to deliver the curriculum effectively. This ensures that pupils gain both knowledge and skills over time. Teachers use assessment purposefully to check understanding and guide teaching. This helps pupils consolidate and apply their learning. For example, teachers often revisit key concepts to ensure retention. However, on occasions, some teaching activities are not broken down sufficiently for certain pupils, which can hinder their ability to learn as effectively as they should.

The school identifies pupils' needs effectively, ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported in lessons. For instance, teachers use

methods such as sentence starters and targeted questioning effectively to help pupils access the curriculum and succeed in their learning.

The school supports pupils who are at the early stages of reading through phonics interventions and buddy reading with older pupils. Reading is embedded across the curriculum, with initiatives like 'disciplinary literacy' encouraging pupils to read as scientists or historians. This approach helps pupils develop a lasting appreciation for reading.

Personal development is coherently planned. Pupils learn about careers, relationships and online safety through dedicated lessons and registration time. The 'culture code' and 'culture shots' help build character and resilience, while 'inspiration days' provide enriching opportunities to explore key themes. However, some aspects of personal development are more strongly embedded than others. Older pupils' understanding of world faiths is not as detailed as it could be. This can limit their ability to fully appreciate commonalities across different communities.

The school is calm and orderly, with pupils demonstrating positive behaviour in lessons and around the school. They enjoy attending and value the supportive environment, often reflecting a sense of gratitude towards staff. The school promotes strong attendance through targeted initiatives, including rewards and regular monitoring. Kindness cards further encourage respect and foster positive relationships across the school community.

Those responsible for governance understand and fulfil their duties well. Trustees have a robust and accurate evaluation of the school, enabling them to prioritise key areas for improvement. Leaders provide strong support for staff, considering workload and well-being effectively. Staff report feeling well supported and proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasions, teaching activities are too broad for a small number of pupils. For these pupils, these activities are too much to process. They lose focus and do not learn as well as they should. The school should ensure that teaching activities are organised for all pupils to engage effectively.
- Some aspects of the provision for pupils' personal development in certain year groups are not as well embedded as they are in other year groups. As a result, some older pupils do not develop strong understanding of a range of faiths and cultures. Leaders must ensure that all opportunities for personal development are well embedded and of equal high quality across all year groups.

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	142710
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10347609
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	834
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ann Witheford
CEO of the trust	Rob McDonough
Executive Headteacher	Helen Frost-Briggs
Website	www.jfcs.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of East Midlands Education Trust. The chair of trustees took up post in September 2024.
- The executive headteacher took up post in September 2022.
- The school uses one registered and one 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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, head of school, senior leaders and trust officers. The lead inspector met with trustees and representatives from the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, English and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited sample lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- Inspectors considered the curriculum and visited lessons in a range of other subjects, including physical education, modern foreign languages, business studies, food technology, computing and design and technology.
- To review the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents submitted via Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. They considered correspondence received during the inspection. They reviewed the responses to Ofsted’s survey of school staff.

Inspection team

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Christine Horrocks	Ofsted Inspector
Farhan Adam	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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