

# Inspection of Rawmarsh Ashwood Primary School

Ashwood Road, Parkgate, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S62 6HT

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Inspection dates: 12–13 November 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Not previously inspected

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The school has been through a period of considerable staffing and leadership change. Pupils' achievement has declined. The multi-academy trust has now secured a stable school team. This is creating greater capacity to bring about the improvements needed. Pupils, parents and carers welcome the difference they can see. However, many changes are recent and so have not taken full effect on improving pupils' achievement.

Leaders have made sure that a range of experiences broaden pupils' horizons. For example, after-school clubs include cheerleading, gymnastics and circus skills. Pupils take part in events such as Young Voices and community sporting competitions. During the inspection pupils and parents at family cookery club were learning to make a healthy and economical meal.

Pupils say that they feel safe and well looked after by staff. They understand the 'Ashwood Way' behaviour system. They say that the rewards motivate them to do the right thing. If pupils make the wrong choice, they are helped to think about the impact of their actions on others. This is supporting them to take responsibility for their behaviour. Pupils said that bullying is rare but assemblies and personal, social and health education lessons make sure that they know how to deal with it should it happen.

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

There has been a decline in pupils' achievement in the last two years. In 2019, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard by the end of key stage 2 was in the lowest 20% nationally for reading, writing and mathematics. This was also the case for writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1.

Leaders' actions have started to make a positive difference to the teaching of phonics and early reading. However, some pupils are not reading with age-appropriate fluency and this affects their ability to learn to the full in different subjects across the curriculum. Staff have been trained in the school's phonics programme but are in the early stages of applying it consistently. A more stable team and a full-time early years leader mean that improvements to the teaching of phonics in Reception are starting to take effect.

Extra help for those who are struggling to learn to read in key stage 1 is not effective enough. Staff attempt to hear these pupils read individually each week when time allows. However, this does not always happen. This means that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are not reading with accuracy as soon as they should do. Some of the books which these pupils read are not well matched to their phonics knowledge. This means they struggle to read them accurately.

Pupils in key stage 2 enjoy the new reading approach. However, some pupils are not

reading with age-appropriate fluency. Pupils said that the lessons help them to develop their understanding of more-challenging vocabulary. For example, one pupil proudly told me how she used the word 'inconspicuous' in her writing after it was introduced in class. Pupils understand the importance of reading. One pupil said, 'It expands the words you know and can use, and it helps you later on in life'.

A legacy of weak teaching in the past means that many pupils have not secured the age-related expectations in a range of subjects. Pupils do not always remember the most important knowledge. Some subjects have been more successful due to the continuity and expertise of staff. For example, physical education (PE) has been delivered by specialist staff from the trust. In other subjects, staff subject expertise varies. However, new subject leaders are being well supported by the trust. They have begun to sequence the skills and knowledge which pupils need to gain in each year group, so teachers can support pupils to build their understanding more effectively over time. This is quickly taking shape since the arrival of the new headteacher.

Parents value the headteacher and learning mentor being on hand at the start of each day. The learning mentor knows the community and families well. She has provided effective support for vulnerable pupils over time. This has contributed to pupils' good behaviour and attendance. Pupils are well cared for by staff, who are supportive and nurturing. The curriculum for pupils' personal development makes sure that pupils learn how to be tolerant and respectful of others. They show positive attitudes to their learning and persevere when faced with something they find difficult.

Staff feel well supported by senior leaders. They appreciate the professional development they receive through the trust. New subject leaders are passionate about developing their subjects. After a difficult period of change, staff morale is high.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that safeguarding is high priority. Records are up to date and accurate. Leaders know the potential risks which pupils and families face in the locality. Regular training means that staff are particularly alert to these issues.

Support for vulnerable pupils is considered well. The learning mentor works effectively with families and external agencies to get the help that pupils need.

Pupils say that they feel safe and know how to report any concerns. Leaders make good use of the curriculum to educate pupils in how to live healthy lifestyles and avoid potential dangers they may face.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

## **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The reading curriculum has improved but still needs further development. Pupils who are struggling to read do not get enough practice to help them become fluent readers as soon as they should. Leaders should make sure that these pupils have enough extra practice. The books which they read need to match their phonics knowledge better. Pupils in key stage 2 who are not reading with age-appropriate fluency should also receive additional practice.
- There are inconsistencies in the standards which pupils achieve in different subjects. Subject leaders are in the process of identifying the specific knowledge which pupils must understand at key points. This needs to be completed for all subjects so it is clear to teachers precisely what pupils need to remember to support their subsequent learning. Newly implemented approaches need to be applied consistently. Senior leaders need to make sure that subject leaders continue to receive support and development. This will help subject leaders to develop the expertise of staff, particularly around the use of assessment to help check that pupils have secured the intended learning.

## **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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140799
<b>Local authority</b>	Rotherham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10115216
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	208
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Steve Calvert
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Marshall
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ashwoodprimary.org">www.ashwoodprimary.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Rawmarsh Ashwood Primary School converted to become an academy as part of the Ashwood Multi-academy Trust in 2014. In 2016, it then became part of the Wickersley Partnership Trust. When its predecessor school, Rawmarsh Ashwood Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- There has been considerable turbulence in the school's staffing and leadership arrangements. All leaders and teaching staff have joined the school within the last three years. The current headteacher took up post in September 2019, following a one-day-a-week transition period after her recruitment in February 2019.
- A new chief executive officer (CEO) was appointed to the multi-academy trust in January 2017. Since that time, there have also been several changes in the trust's directors, including a new chair of directors. The local governing body has been reconstituted.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND or who are disadvantaged is higher than the national average.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We

deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same act.

- We held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. Meetings also took place with the chair and vice-chair of the local governing body and executive leaders, including the CEO. There was a telephone discussion with the chair of directors.
- Reading, mathematics, PE and science were considered closely in order to evaluate the quality of education. In each of these subjects, inspection activities included: lesson visits; discussions with staff and pupils; meetings with subject leaders; and work scrutiny. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read.
- A range of documentation was considered. This included the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement.
- We spoke to parents informally at the start of the school day.
- Many of the inspection activities gave inspectors the opportunity to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school. Additionally, we asked staff about the impact of the safeguarding training they have received. Child protection records and the single central record of checks on the suitability of staff to work with children were also scrutinised.

### **Inspection team**

Kirsty Godfrey, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julia Norton Foulger

Ofsted Inspector

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