

# Inspection of Linthwaite Ardron CofE (Voluntary Aided) Junior and Infant School

Church Lane, Linthwaite, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD7 5TA

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Inspection dates: 16 and 17 November 2021

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

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

Pupils are proud to attend this school. They feel safe and happy here. Leaders are relentless in their efforts to 'Support, Help, Inspire, Nurture and Encourage' all pupils to 'SHINE' and reach their full potential. Staff know the pupils and their families well. They have made strong links with the local church and wider community. Pupils talked very positively about the recent pilgrimage around Linthwaite. They were encouraged to appreciate the beauty of the world while also learning about important local historical individuals. Pupils say they liked being outside in the fresh air. Pupils in the early years especially enjoy visiting the 'wild woods'.

Pupils have been involved in developing the school's core values. These currently focus on generosity, compassion, forgiveness, friendship, perseverance and truthfulness. Pupils talk with confidence about the meaning behind the words. Pupils' behaviour reflects these values. They are motivated and positive and have respectful attitudes to learning. When issues arise with behaviour or bullying, pupils say that staff deal with them equally and fairly.

Leaders have ensured that the school is fully inclusive, and everyone is valued equally. They have developed a well-planned curriculum and support teachers to adapt this to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Parents are very supportive of the school and the staff. They recognise the positive changes that have taken place. However, a small minority of parents say that they would like greater communication about aspects of school life. Leaders recognise this and are reviewing practices to ensure that this happens.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils in the school. They have improved the curriculum since the last inspection and show determination to continue this journey. They have built a new team of leaders who have introduced a well-planned and progressive curriculum. Subject leaders have created overviews of topics and learning in all subjects. They have carefully mapped these from the early years to Year 6 to ensure that there is a coherent sequence, and it matches the national curriculum expectations.

Most subject leaders have identified the detailed knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Where this is not as clear, some teachers find it more difficult to help pupils build on prior learning. Further detail is needed in some curriculum plans to enable teachers to plan lessons which identify exactly what it is that they want pupils to know and remember. Leaders have started to work with external support to identify how they can help middle leaders, who are new to their role, to do this.

Children in the early years get off to a good start. There is a well-planned and coherent curriculum in place to help them learn in all areas. Teachers plan opportunities to help children make links in their learning. An example of this is reading the Little Red Hen story together and then tasting breads from around the world to support their understanding. Children are settled and happy. They listen well and follow instructions. Leaders are determined that children will be well prepared for Year 1.

Phonics teaching is effective for most pupils. They have daily opportunities to learn new sounds and read regularly. However, there are some minor inconsistencies in the teaching strategies used to deliver phonics lessons. Leaders recognise this, and already have plans underway to introduce a new systematic synthetic phonics programme. All staff are scheduled to receive training in this to ensure that there is a consistent approach to teaching early reading across the school. Several pupils have gaps in their phonics knowledge in year 1. These pupils receive extra support through planned interventions and one-to-one reading sessions. Additional focused phonics lessons are now being introduced to accelerate these pupils' learning and help them get back on track.

Leaders are passionate and determined that pupils will become confident readers. They have planned a reading curriculum that challenges and excites pupils. Pupils read daily both for pleasure and to improve their comprehension of stories. In key stage 2, pupils can talk about a wide range of authors, including C S Lewis and David Walliams. They enjoy reading challenging novels such as *Watership Down* and stories such as *Charlotte's Web* or *World's Worst Sister*. Pupils can talk about how authors use language differently to interest the audience.

This is an inclusive school. The curriculum for pupils with SEND is well designed. Teachers adapt lessons to help pupils learn alongside their peers. Extra support is given to individual pupils when it is needed by skilled teaching assistants. This helps pupils to make progress. However, teachers need to ensure that targets on bespoke learning plans are clearer to help pupils make greater progress.

Leaders, governors and staff consider pupils' wider personal development just as important as their academic achievements. Leaders have also identified several curriculum enrichment opportunities to support learning. An example of this was when a local MP visited the school to support pupils' understanding of democracy. However, opportunities to explore different cultures or have experiences beyond the local area have not been fully explored. As a result, some pupils are not as fascinated or curious about the world around them as they could be. Pupils and parents also recognise this and would like more planned opportunities to see the world beyond Linthwaite.

Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning. In the early years, they attend workshops about learning and welcome the support the school gives them. They say that the leaders and teachers are kind and caring. A small number of parents say that communication could be better, and they would welcome more information about their child's experiences at school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a strong understanding of safeguarding. They have ensured that staff are well trained and vigilant to signs that pupils may be experiencing harm. Leaders support families well, using outside agencies such as the foodbank or the community hub. They care about the families in the school.

Leaders use outside agencies, such as the police, to teach staff and pupils about risks in the local area. Pupils talk about these visits and what they have learned about keeping safe. They can talk with confidence about online safety, their digital footprint and the importance of changing passwords regularly.

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

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

- The school's enrichment curriculum is limited. Over time, pupils have not benefited from enough opportunities to learn about the world around them. Activities planned have not always happened. Leaders must accelerate their efforts to ensure pupils have experiences to open their eyes to the world around them.
- Leaders have started to work with external partners to improve both the strategic leadership of the school and also subject leadership. This has enabled school improvement to gain momentum, as leadership has become more distributed across the school. Leaders should continue to seek out and utilise external support to develop the school further. This will ensure that subject leaders have the opportunity to work with colleagues from beyond the school, as they introduce new systems such as the phonics programme or subject assessment.
- Monitoring of systems to improve first-aid logs and staff training is not as robust as it could be. Governors are not challenging leaders in this area. Further challenge is needed from governors to ensure that leaders are monitoring systems and records regularly. Governors should support leaders to address this.

## 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.

If you are the school and you are 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>	107740
<b>Local authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200700
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	195
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair/Chair of trust/Chair of governing body</b>	Rachel Stirling
<b>Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge</b>	Jane Travis
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.linthwaite-artron.org.uk">www.linthwaite-artron.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 February and 22 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support for SEND is slightly below the national average. A significant number of these pupils have education, health and care plan in place.
- The school runs a breakfast club daily.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and teachers. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. A separate meeting was held with a local authority representative, and a telephone meeting was held with a representative of Leeds Diocese.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school self-evaluation documents and plans for improvement, as well as records of the work of governors.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history and art and design. They met subject leaders and visited lessons to observe learning. Inspectors also looked at books from a range of subjects and talked with pupils and teachers about lessons visited.
- The arrangements for safeguarding were checked. This included checking the single central record. Inspectors held discussions with the leaders about safeguarding systems and processes. Discussions about attendance and behaviour were also held.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views about the school through formal and informal discussions with over 50 pupils during the course of the inspection. These discussions took place during lessons, in meetings and at break times. Inspectors observed their behaviour at various times during the school day, including lunch and break times and in the breakfast club.
- Inspectors met some parents at the start of the day to gain their views of the school. They reviewed 49 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and 48 additional free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of 19 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and a small number of responses to the pupil questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Andrea Batley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

James Duncan

Her Majesty's Inspector

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