

# Inspection of Normanton Altofts Junior School

Ash Tree Gardens, Altofts, Normanton, West Yorkshire WF6 2NF

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Inspection dates: 8 and 9 March 2023

## **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**

Previous inspection grade

Good

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

This is a friendly school where pupils know that adults care for them. Pupils refer to the school motto of 'forward together'. Relationships between pupils and staff are a strength of this school. There is a culture of equality, where the individual is celebrated and everyone has 'freedom to be themselves'. There is a high regard for tolerance and respect.

In foundation subjects, the quality of education pupils receive is not good enough. Pupils do study a broad range of subjects, but many pupils have gaps in their knowledge because leaders have not developed the curriculum well enough.

The updated behaviour policy has had a positive impact on approaches to managing pupils' behaviour. Pupils are well behaved in class and play together well at breaktimes. They understand the new behaviour policy that helps them to manage their behaviour. When bullying does happen, pupils are confident that it is dealt with. Pupils quote the three rules of 'Be safe. Be respectful. Be ready'.

The school's curriculum supports pupils to become responsible citizens. They learn about a range of cultures and beliefs and enjoy visiting and working with the local church. Pupils experience a wide range of trips and residential linked to the curriculum. However, continued changes in the leadership of the school mean that essential improvements to the curriculum have not been made quickly or sustainably enough.

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

Since the last inspection, there have been many changes in the leadership of the school. This has resulted in instability for staff, pupils and parents. The current interim executive headteacher has brought in essential changes to improve the curriculum for pupils. These changes are at the early stages of development. Governors have not addressed instability in leadership well enough.

Pupils experience a variable quality of education. Their learning in foundation subjects is much less secure than it is in mathematics and reading. Subject leaders, many of whom are new to their role, have not clearly mapped out the knowledge that pupils should learn. This limits their ability to check how well pupils are learning over time.

Leaders do not provide staff with clear guidance on how to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The views of parents and carers are not always used to inform support for pupils with SEND. Such gaps in provision limit the progression of pupils with SEND through the curriculum.

Leaders prioritise reading. They are working with the English hub and a development worker to improve practice. Staff have had recent training in the phonics scheme. Pupils are beginning to apply their phonic knowledge when

reading. They practise their reading using books that match the sounds they are learning at school. Pupils build their reading fluency through repeated reading. Leaders closely monitor the progress of pupils.

Leaders have carefully selected the books that teachers read to pupils in English lessons. Throughout the day, there are specially dedicated reading times. Leaders have developed attractive and well-stocked reading areas that pupils enjoy visiting to choose personal reading books to take home. A vending machine, full of books, is used as a reward for the class that has the highest percentage of 'home readers' each week. These approaches are helping to build a love of reading.

Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons. They have opportunities to revisit, revise and rehearse key knowledge through 'flashback' work. 'Friday blue book' lessons are used to address any misconceptions identified across the week. Leaders work closely with the 'maths hub' and with teacher research groups to observe, share and improve practice in school.

Pupils talk with maturity about having responsibility for themselves. They understand different opinions and views and show tolerance and respect towards difference. Pupils enjoy joining the choir and dancing outside at lunchtimes. They have leadership responsibilities, such as junior leaders and reading ambassadors. The ambassadors encourage and listen to younger pupils read. This further develops their sense of citizenship.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained in safeguarding. They understand the local risks that pupils may face. Staff report any concerns over pupils. Leaders work well with other agencies to ensure that pupils get the support that they need. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including how to stay safe online. They know that they can tell a trusted adult if they have any concerns over their safety. Pupils say they feel safe at school.

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

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

- Leaders have not mapped out the important knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in all foundation subjects. This limits what pupils learn and makes it difficult for teachers to check how well pupils are learning. Leaders need to work with subject leaders, particularly those new to role, to improve pupils' learning in foundation subjects.
- Governors have not addressed the instability in leadership since the last inspection. This is causing concern for staff and some parents. It has also limited school improvement. Governors should intensify actions to build stability that can

support sustained improvement. Governors should seek to improve their own skill base so that they can provide more effective challenge and support, especially for SEND and foundation subjects.

- The guidance that leaders share with staff and parents to support pupils with SEND is highly variable. This is slowing aspects of curriculum progression for some pupils with SEND. Leaders must ensure that they work with staff and parents to provide clearer guidance on how to better support pupils with SEND.

## 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](#)' 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>	108208
<b>Local authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255606
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	333
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jacqui Spedding
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janet Lucas (Interim Executive Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.altoftsjuniorschool.co.uk">www.altoftsjuniorschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	4 and 5 February 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- An interim executive headteacher and interim deputy headteacher were appointed in January 2023. A new headteacher is due to take up post in summer 2023.
- The school is not currently using any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with a wide range of staff, including the interim executive headteacher, the interim deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders. Inspectors also met with representatives of the governing body and the local authority adviser.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, science and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record and safeguarding records. They also spoke to leaders for safeguarding and spoke to pupils and staff.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils both formally and informally, including single-sex groups of pupils.
- Inspectors considered a variety of school documents, including the school development plan.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff and parents through surveys, including Ofsted Parent View, and spoke to some parents as they picked up their children from school.

### **Inspection team**

Lesley Sullivan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mike Smit

Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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