

Inspection of Ayresome Primary School

Worcester Street, Gresham Ward, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS1 4NT

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Ayresome Primary School is a diverse, inclusive community where everyone is valued. New pupils are met with a warm welcome by staff and fellow pupils. They settle in quickly and soon feel part of the school community.

Relationships between staff and pupils are very strong. Leaders have created a nurturing and positive environment, where pupils feel safe and are happy. Pupils know that adults care for them and will help them with any worries that they may have.

Leaders are determined that all pupils feel included and succeed at Ayresome Primary School. This begins in Nursery, where children get off to a strong start with staff modelling high-quality language and vocabulary. Pupils in key stage 2 are encouraged to take up new interests and broaden their horizons. For example, all pupils have the chance to learn to play a musical instrument, there are theatre visits and a Year 6 residential trip.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They follow routines and are eager to demonstrate the 'STARS' values (support, togetherness, achieve, respect and success). Around school, pupils are very polite and well-mannered. Bullying rarely occurs. When it does, staff act quickly and effectively to resolve it.

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

The new headteacher has rightly focused their efforts on designing an ambitious and broad curriculum. In early years, leaders have a clear understanding of the needs of children. The environment is well resourced and inviting. Adults use carefully chosen words to extend children's vocabulary. For example, a child playing with a set of scales was supported to use mathematical terms such as 'lighter' and 'heavier'. Staff use 'squiggle sessions' to help children in Reception develop the fine motor skills they need for correct letter formation and writing. Adults also help children to understand their emotions, deliberately modelling kindness.

Leaders have prioritised reading throughout the curriculum. In Nursery, children enjoy story time and join in with songs. Phonics teaching begins straight away in Reception. Children get plenty of practice in sounding out letters and words themselves. Pupils who need extra help with their reading get intervention to help them catch up. Leaders have ensured that all staff are trained in teaching phonics. Older pupils are also encouraged to read often. Leaders make sure pupils read a range of high-quality texts, including classic novels and poetry. Pupils like testing out their reading comprehension through an online reading programme. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy reading. One pupil simply commented, 'Books fall open, you fall in,' when asked what they like about reading.

Leaders have identified the knowledge and skills that pupils must learn in each subject. They have broken these down into small steps so that pupils' knowledge and skills build logically over time.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and value the professional development offered to them. Generally, teachers plan activities that enable pupils to extend their knowledge as intended. However, there is some variability in teachers' selection of teaching activities and these are not always well matched to pupils' needs. In most subjects, teachers check pupils' understanding regularly. They know the starting point of pupils and can fill any gaps in knowledge effectively. However, this is not the case in all subjects. Occasionally, teachers do not assess pupils' prior learning and adapt their lessons accordingly. This means that pupils do not learn as effectively as they could.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve well, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They identify pupils with SEND quickly so that they can support them. Teachers make adaptations in the classroom to ensure pupils with SEND access a broad curriculum. However, pupils' SEND support plans lack detail. This means that teachers do not have the additional information about pupils' targets and strategies required to cater fully for a pupil's needs.

Pupils are enthusiastic in their learning. The positive, caring ethos contributes to a settled school environment in which pupils are now making good progress. Although historically attainment has been below national averages, a very high proportion of pupils join the school partway through their primary education. Leaders prioritise working with parents and carers to minimise the impact of this disruption on pupils' learning.

Leaders have carefully considered pupils' wider development. Pupils learn about a range of faiths and cultures. They appreciate the importance of equality and show respect for the beliefs and opinions of others. Pupils feel listened to by leaders. They make a tangible contribution to school life through the 'school parliament' and the pupil 'safeguarding team'. Leaders have shaped the clubs and trips on offer to cater for pupils' interests.

Trustees and leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school. They know what actions are needed to make improvements. Teachers are proud to be part of Ayresome Primary school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding at Ayresome Primary School is a routine part of daily practice for staff. Staff are alert to signs that a pupil may be at risk or need support. Leaders provide weekly safeguarding training. They use this to keep staff up to date with local safeguarding risks. Record-keeping is detailed and leaders work very effectively with

a wide range of external agencies. Leaders carry out the necessary checks to ensure adults working with pupils are suitable.

Pupils are taught about how to stay safe, including online safety. They know how to seek help if they need it.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers' use of assessment is not well developed. Where this is the case, gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills are not precisely identified. Leaders should ensure that assessment is used effectively in all subjects so that gaps in pupils' learning of the curriculum are pinpointed and remedied.
- Sometimes, teachers' selection of teaching activities does not match the intended learning outcomes. This means that pupils do not build their knowledge as intended and gaps exist. Leaders should ensure that teachers are fully equipped to deliver the curriculum consistently well across the school.
- The targets and strategies detailed in pupils' SEND plans are not specific enough. This means that teachers are not clear on the strategies to use with pupils with SEND. Leaders should ensure that plans are precise, enabling pupils with SEND to achieve the best possible outcomes.

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

Unique reference number	146770
Local authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	10267778
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	721
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Chris Simmons
Headteacher	Charlotte Haylock
Website	www.ayresome.adastraschools.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Ayresome Primary School is part of Ad Astra Academy Trust.
- Ayresome Primary School converted to become an academy in January 2019. When its predecessor school, Ayresome Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement overall.
- The school has a nursery for two- and three-year-olds.
- The school does not currently use 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 held a range of meetings with the headteacher, the chief executive officer, school and trust leaders, and teaching and support staff.

- The lead inspector met with trustees and members of the rapid improvement committee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, art, science and geography. They visited lessons in these subjects, discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, reviewed pupils' work and held discussions with teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors met with leaders who have overall responsibility for safeguarding, looked at safeguarding policies and reviewed leaders' records of checks on the suitability of adults working with pupils. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils about leaders' work to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes and spoke with pupils about their experiences of school.
- Inspectors met with leaders to discuss early years, SEND, behaviour and the provision for pupils' wider development.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for pupils and staff. They also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and additional communications from parents. Inspectors spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Kate Morris, lead inspector	Seconded Inspector
Alison Cottrell	Ofsted Inspector
Kathryn Fenwick	Ofsted Inspector
Dawn Foster	Ofsted Inspector

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