

Inspection of Aston Lodge Primary School

Lodge Lane, Aston, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S26 2BL

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils 'dream big and aim high' at this vibrant and exciting school. This is part of the 'Aston Lodge Way' that one pupil explained as 'a code that keeps them together as one'. Leaders have created a school environment where difference and commonality are shared and celebrated. Pupils are positive about their education. They know that what they are learning now will help them to achieve the ambition they have for the future. Pupils enjoy and value the many opportunities available outside of the classroom. These include career days, visits to the seaside and opportunities such as African drumming workshops.

Behaviour is exemplary. Everyone in school understands the clear behaviour routines and expectations. These are consistently applied by all staff. There is a calm and orderly atmosphere around the school, in lessons and at playtime. Pupils play and learn well together. They co-operate, share and encourage each other.

Pupils know what bullying is and are confident that it never happens at this school. They talk with confidence about what they would do if they were concerned about bullying. They value the support they receive from anti-bullying ambassadors. The ambassadors are well trained and organise their own awareness events in school.

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

Leaders have rapidly accelerated the pace of school improvement since the last inspection. Their determination and drive to ensure that all pupils receive a high-quality education has transformed the school. This has included developing and implementing a well-organised and ambitious curriculum. Teachers are clear about the knowledge that pupils need to learn. They make regular checks that pupils are doing so. Pupils enjoy the 'big 6' check which takes place at the end of each lesson. In this check, they recall knowledge from past and present learning. This helps pupils to see how new learning fits into a bigger picture.

Well-planned visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. This puts pupils' learning into context. For example, in geography, pupils learn about coastal erosion as part of their visit to Scarborough. Pupils also develop their knowledge through practical experiences and high-quality teacher modelling. In physical education (PE), pupils are able to talk about and show fielding tactics. They can explain why they would select these.

Leaders have prioritised early reading and phonics, developing children's listening and language knowledge from Nursery onwards. Pupils are taught in small groups for phonics. These groups are carefully matched with pupils' starting points to ensure that lessons meet their needs. Teachers check pupils' knowledge every three weeks. Those pupils who are not keeping up receive extra support. However, the teaching of early reading and phonics is not delivered consistently well in all sessions. Not all staff use the phonics teaching strategies linked to the school's

programme. Some staff need more training to ensure that all children are well supported to learn to read.

This is an inclusive school. Leaders identify and meet the needs of children with special educational and/or disabilities (SEND). They ensure that pupils are able to learn alongside their peers. Pupils make use of their 'helping hand books'. These include a range of personalised resources that help pupils to access learning. This ensures that pupils with SEND are able to achieve well.

The early years environment is warm and welcoming, and children thrive within the setting. Children work together well. They actively participate in their learning and are self-motivated. Teachers make the most of every learning opportunity. For example, when children are playing games and scoring points, they ask, 'How many more to make 10?' Teachers know what their children need to do next as they have a strong knowledge of the early years foundation stage. At present, there is not a clear school curriculum for what is to be taught in the early years classes. As a result, subject leaders are less confident about how the early years prepares children for learning in all subjects in key stage 1 and 2.

The school's approach to pupils' personal development is exceptional. There is a well-planned series of events which add to the strong curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education (RSE). This includes, for example, all children from Nursery to Year 6 achieving first-aid qualifications. Pupils also take part in careers events and a financial awareness programme. Pupils enjoy earning 'pledges' for contributing to the community and being a responsible citizen. Pupils develop social skills through a weekly opportunity to debate and vote. They understand democracy and British values.

Staff, including teachers at the early stage of their careers, value the opportunities that they have for development. A strong collaboration between the other schools in the trust exists and all staff enjoy these networks. Staff value the fact that, during a time where much has changed, leaders have managed staff well-being and workload well. Governors and the trust board offer strong support and challenge for all leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders see the safeguarding of pupils and their families as a high priority. The members of the safeguarding team use their strong expertise and local knowledge to access suitable support for vulnerable pupils and their families. They ensure that the necessary checks are made on adults who work with pupils. All staff receive regular safeguarding training. This means all adults have the knowledge and skills to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Staff teach pupils how to be safe in a range of situations, including when they are online or when they are playing in the local area.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of phonics is not yet consistent in all sessions. As a result, not all pupils are securing phonic knowledge as effectively as they could. Leaders should provide appropriate training so that all staff develop further confidence and skill in delivering the phonics programme with precision.
- The curriculum in the early years is designed with milestones that support children to achieve the early learning goals. However, subject leaders have not considered how this learning offer prepares children for key stage 1 and beyond. Early years leaders and subject leaders should work together to ensure that the school's curriculum is carefully planned from children's starting points in early years through to Year 6.

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	143055
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10257064
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	192
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steve Calvert
Headteacher	Sarah Cronin
Website	www.astonlodgeprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	26 and 27 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Wickersley Partnership Trust.
- The school makes use of 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 had 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 the headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum leaders, staff and pupils. Meetings were also held with representatives from the trust and the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors met curriculum leaders, spoke to pupils and teachers, visited lessons and looked at their work. In addition, inspectors viewed curriculum plans for and met with

the subject leaders of religious education, design and technology, and art. Inspectors heard pupils read.

- Senior leaders met inspectors to discuss recruitment and safeguarding records. Inspectors reviewed the school's single central record of the checks undertaken on adults who work with pupils in the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents related to safeguarding and spoke to the school's designated safeguarding leader. They spoke to staff and pupils about their safeguarding knowledge.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety were evaluated during lessons and social times. Inspectors spoke to pupils, teachers and leaders about their views on behaviour.

Inspection team

Lee Wilson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sinead Fox	Ofsted Inspector

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