

Inspection of Lowedges Junior Academy

Lowedges Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S8 7JG

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 June 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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Adults have high expectations of all pupils at Lowedges Junior Academy. Pupils are happy and feel safe. They are polite and respectful towards others and show positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils work purposefully in lessons. At playtimes, pupils play well together, taking part in team games. The playleader ambassadors organise games for younger pupils. Pupils understand what bullying is. If bullying happens, teachers resolve it promptly.

Pupils are proud of how much food they have collected for their local community as part of their charitable work. Receiving their school community award certificate motivates pupils to support others.

The 'Lowedges Pledges' scheme encourages pupils to take part in many new experiences. Pupils can learn to ride a bicycle or visit the cinema. Pupils enjoy curriculum visits. They recall playing in an African band when they learned a new musical skill. Pupils know that having a healthy body and mind is important. In lessons and after school, there are many sports that pupils can take part in to stay active.

All members of the school community embrace equality of opportunity. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported to ensure that they can access activities alongside their peers. Pupils understand the importance of treating everyone fairly.

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

Leaders have developed a coherently sequenced curriculum. They provide subject leaders with training so that their subject knowledge is secure. Subject leaders check that their subject is taught consistently well. This helps them to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching. Teachers choose activities so that pupils acquire important knowledge. They check that pupils remember their learning well, for example in physical education. However, in other subjects, the system to check whether pupils remember their learning in the long term is not as well established.

Leaders have an inclusive system in place for teaching pupils with SEND. Leaders are determined that pupils with SEND will access learning alongside their peers. Their learning is supported with resources such as sensory equipment. Adults are perceptive of the needs of pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND develop great confidence in their ability to achieve well.

Leaders have an effective system in place to teach phonics. Early reading starts straightaway in Reception Year. It is delivered with consistency. In phonics lessons, pupils decode new words well using the phonic sounds they know. Pupils practise writing the words regularly. Pupils write with confidence. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they are learning. All staff, including those who teach extra

phonics sessions, teach phonics with the same approach. This means that those pupils who need extra support catch up quickly in reading.

Reading is celebrated in many ways across the school. Pupils who read regularly receive a 'golden ticket' to put into a weekly prize draw so that they have a chance of winning a book. Reading ambassadors give out valuable information to pupils about books, such as reading recommendations. This encourages pupils to read more frequently.

In early years, there is a planned curriculum that prepares pupils well for Year 1. Teachers identify the small steps in learning that build children's knowledge securely over time. This is communicated to all adults who work in early years. Everyone knows the precise vocabulary that the children should be taught and when. In lessons, children learn to write independently. They are proud, for example, of their recent letters to King Charles. They know that he lives in a palace in London, England. Children concentrate well on the tasks they are given and remember their learning.

Leaders make sure that there is a carefully considered personal, social and health education curriculum in place. This supports pupils' well-being. Pupils know how to treat others respectfully, irrespective of differences. Pupils access a wide range of opportunities and experiences that they may not ordinarily have in their lives. They have knowledge of different faiths. Through student elections, they have learned about the importance of voting.

Leaders have been tenacious in making sure that pupils' attendance continues to improve. They promote the importance of attending school to parents and carers through regular meetings.

The trust's chief executive officer and trustees have been key partners in reshaping the strategic direction of the school. They work alongside school leaders to bring about quick, sustainable improvements in school, notably through curriculum subject training. Trustees perform the required statutory duties with care, such as ensuring funds are spent well. They hold senior leaders to account. Teachers feel that their needs are considered and that their well-being is a priority.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All adults take part in an annual training programme. They know how to identify pupils who may be vulnerable or at risk. Leaders work with local partners to make sure that appropriate support is put in place for all pupils and their families. Leaders understand the risks that pupils may face.

Safer recruitment training is undertaken by the relevant staff members and trustees. Leaders undertake necessary pre-employment checks for all adults in school.

Pupils know rules that will help them keep safe when using online technologies. They also learn about road safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not consistently identify gaps in knowledge. Consequently, they do not always make adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum to address potential gaps. This means that some pupils do not develop the depth of knowledge they could. Leaders and teachers should check that pupils have learned the intended curriculum and make necessary adjustments to curriculum delivery where there are gaps in knowledge.

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	141102
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10268346
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	338
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Barton
Principal	Lindsay Jones
Website	www.lowedgesacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	15 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is one of the 12 schools that form Aston Community Education Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative education provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, curriculum leaders and other staff. They reviewed a range of documentation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, English, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with leaders with overall responsibility for safeguarding and looked at the school's safeguarding records. They also reviewed the single central record.

- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted’s staff survey and to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text comments. Inspectors talked to pupils to gather their views on school life. They also talked to parents.

Inspection team

Lesley Allwood, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Haunch	Ofsted Inspector
Katy Cox	Ofsted Inspector

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