

Inspection of Rawmarsh Ashwood Primary School

Ashwood Road, Parkgate, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S62 6HT

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Dawn Roper. This school is part of Wickersley Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Helen Claire O'Brien, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Calvert.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at this school. They enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. The school has rigorous and successful procedures in place to ensure that attendance is high. Pupils benefit from caring and supportive relationships with staff.

The school has high ambitions for pupils at this school, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have a clear vision for implementing a high-quality education for pupils. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in reading and writing by the end of key stage 2. Some aspects of the curriculum design do not provide pupils with the opportunities to learn to read and write as well as they should. The school has been through a turbulent period due to changes in staffing and the COVID-19 pandemic. This has impacted on the rate of development in some curriculum areas.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They follow the expectations set out in 'The Ashwood Way'. This helps pupils to cooperate and to be respectful. Pupils appreciate the rewards that they receive for behaving sensibly and for working hard in lessons. These include 'points' that can be exchanged for prizes.

Pupils understand the importance of equality. They enjoy and appreciate the opportunities they have to debate these issues in school. Leaders strengthen this learning through the school's assembly programme. Pupils carry out a range of leadership responsibilities, such as being school councillors, science ambassadors and sports leaders.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has designed a curriculum that sets out the important knowledge that pupils will learn in most subjects. The trust has provided effective training and development to enable subject leaders to lead their subjects well. Trust leaders have provided training for staff on the curriculum. Staff speak positively about the impact this has had on their teaching. This is helping to raise expectations for what pupils can achieve.

The curriculum for mathematics is ambitious. Leaders have adapted the published mathematics scheme of work to meet the needs of the school. The school has invested in training for staff on problem-solving to help pupils apply their mathematical learning. In science, the school has developed an ambitious curriculum that aims to provide all pupils with a positive view of the subject. Leaders provide staff with the detail they need to ensure they cover all aspects of the subject area well. Staff support pupils to recall and build on their prior learning. Pupils speak confidently about their learning in science.

The school has introduced a new programme for teaching phonics. Leaders have provided staff with the training they need to teach this programme well. Children develop listening and attention skills effectively from the time they enter Nursery.

This ensures that most children are ready to learn phonics as soon as they start in Reception. In phonics lessons, pupils practise and build on their early reading skills. However, pupils who have less phonics knowledge struggle to take part in these lessons. The school provides additional support for these pupils outside of lesson time to help them catch up. However, these pupils have gaps in their knowledge that limit their engagement in lessons. In key stage 2, the school does not provide regular opportunities for pupils, who have fallen behind in their reading, to read to an adult. This means some gaps and misconceptions are not addressed quickly enough.

In the early years, the curriculum builds on what children know and can do. This starts well in Nursery. Stories, language and high-quality discussions support children to develop their vocabulary. Staff design activities carefully to help develop children's knowledge across the different areas of learning. The school has provided clear guidance and support for staff in the early years to teach the intended curriculum. Children are well prepared for their learning in key stage 1.

Pupils conduct themselves well around school. Disruption in lessons is minimal. The school has implemented a new approach to managing behaviour in lessons. The STAR (sitting, tracking, attention, respect) approach is having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. Most pupils have the motivation to learn well.

The school prioritises pupils' personal development. The 'Ashwood Way' encourages pupils to 'dream big'. The 'Enrichment Entitlement Promise' ensures that pupils access a wide range of experiences. This includes learning about finance and budgets. Pupils understand the importance of equality. However, their understanding of the broader fundamental British values is more variable. Pupils enjoy a wide range of educational visits. The school ensures this offer is open to all pupils, including pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils.

Trustees and governors have a good understanding of the school improvement priorities. They receive relevant information on progress towards these priorities from school leaders. Trustees monitor assessment data at a school and pupil level to identify future development areas. Trust leaders are aware that they need to monitor recent developments to ensure the changes have a positive impact on pupil outcomes at the end of key stage 2. Staff speak positively about the work of leaders in school and in the trust. They feel valued and are grateful for the consideration that the school gives to their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils in key stage 1 lack the knowledge they need to take part in whole-class phonics lessons. This means that learning time is lost. The school should review the phonics provision for these pupils to ensure that any gaps in knowledge are addressed to help these pupils to catch up quickly.
- The school does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils in key stage 2, who are still learning to read, to read to an adult regularly. This means that gaps in knowledge and misconceptions are not addressed quickly enough. Too many pupils move on to secondary school with below average reading attainment. The school should ensure staff dedicate regular opportunities to listen to these pupils read and take timely action to address any gaps in learning.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	140799
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10290256
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	194
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stephen Calvert
CEO of the trust	Helen Claire O'Brien
Headteacher	Dawn Roper
Website	www.ashwoodprimary.org
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and assistant headteacher are new to the role since the last routine inspection.
- The school is part of Wickersley Partnership Trust.
- The school does not use alternative provision providers.
- There is a breakfast club run by the school on site.
- The school has a nursery for three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

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

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the chief executive officer, headteacher, assistant headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors met with a number of representatives from the multi-academy trust, a member of the trust board and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, maths, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school, at playtime and at lunchtime. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their views of the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and pupils and Ofsted's online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, including comments received via the free-text facility. Inspectors also talked to parents in the school playground.

Inspection team

Nicola Beaumont, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Katie Hall

Ofsted Inspector

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