

Inspection of Aspin Park Academy

Wetherby Road, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire HG5 8LQ

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 December 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
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

The headteacher of this school is Emma Meadus. This school is part of Elevate Multi Academy Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Nigel Ashley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Brear.

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 thirteen years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a real sense of community at Aspin Park Academy. Many parents and carers commented on how the school feels like a tight-knit family despite its relatively large size. Pupils have a deep respect for each other. Individuality is celebrated throughout the school.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They hang on every word when teachers are explaining or demonstrating something. The school focuses on rewarding excellent conduct and attitudes to learning from pupils. There is much to reward. Pupils strive for house points or to win a rainbow certificate. More than this though, pupils want to do well and help others because they know that is the right thing to do.

Pupils achieve high standards in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are given the knowledge and tools that they need to access the full curriculum. Staff know the pupils well and inspire them to be successful.

Pupils appreciate and are proud of their school. They play happily together and value each other. Pupils who come to breakfast club are given a warm and productive start to the day. Pupils value their local community and contribute to events like singing carols at the local care home. They understand the importance of celebrating all cultures in Britain through meaningful visits and visitors.

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

Children in the early years are given a rich diet of stories and songs. They develop in their understanding of the world quickly. Children pick up basic skills like taking turns and how to grip a pencil. This develops as pupils move through school. Pupils can use more and more complex language to explain what they know.

Pupils attain exceedingly well in English. The school's teaching of the early reading offer is exceptional. Staff model how to read individual sounds and use this to read basic words. Children in early years pick this up quickly and nearly all pupils can read most sounds by the end of year 1. Any pupils who are not quite where they need to be are given precise and expert tuition to help them catch up. Older pupils read a wide variety of books that they enjoy and fully understand. Pupils also write to a very high standard across different subjects. Pupils use their language and handwriting knowledge to compose interesting and lively pieces.

Most pupils develop detailed knowledge in other subjects such as mathematics and geography. The school have mapped out the core knowledge that pupils need to remember and take with them through their curriculum journey. Teachers check that pupils have remembered this knowledge as they progress through school. In some subjects, the work that teachers give to pupils is not precise enough. Pupils

sometimes do not get the practise that they need to help them build the knowledge or habits that they need, such as their posture in singing or movement in dance.

The school uses a philosophy of 'keep up not catch up' to check that pupils are matching the expectations of the curriculum. Teachers quickly spot where pupils have not quite understood something or have not remembered important information. Teachers then waste no time in giving pupils immediate support so that pupils can continue with what they need.

The school is very adept at identifying any SEND that pupils may have. Trust leaders use a 'SEND hub' model to ensure that this is done as quickly as possible. Teachers then have a wealth of information early on to enable them to assess the needs of pupils with SEND.

The attendance of pupils is high. This applies to pupils with SEND and other disadvantaged pupils. The school has precise recording and monitoring systems that alerts them when the absence of a pupil becomes a concern. Leaders then provide some support for the family to help them improve their child's attendance.

Pupils have a clear and accurate understanding of important concepts such as democracy or the rule of law. Staff teach these concepts in the school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. They then bring this to life for pupils through enrichment experiences such as voting for the eco-council or meeting up with a local police officer. Pupils learn skills about life such as how to resist peer pressure or that first impressions can be misleading.

There is a comprehensive and high-quality training offer for staff in the school. Trust leaders ensure that leaders in school have the knowledge that they need. These school leaders then pass on this important knowledge to staff. Local governors link with leaders in school to discuss the quality of provision in specific parts of the school's work. All of this is overseen by trustees who have a full and accurate view of what is happening. This whole process enables the school to improve while taking account of the workload of staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, the work that teachers sometimes give to pupils does not match the ambition of the curriculum. This means that some pupils do not get to practise the small steps of knowledge or skills as well as they need to. The school should continue to train and develop teachers in their subject

knowledge so that they can make informed choices about the work given to pupils across all subjects.

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	144163
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10255644
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	425
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Brear
CEO of the trust	Nigel Ashley
Headteacher	Emma Meadus
Website	www.aspinparkacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up her post in September 2023.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs wrap-around care before and after school.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders and trust leaders about progress since becoming an academy.
- To evaluate the quality of education, inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. 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 also spoke about the curriculum and looked at pupil's work in music and history.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils in groups and around the school about behaviour and their experiences of being in school. Inspectors also observed breaktimes and lunchtimes and spoke to staff on duty at these times.
- 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 discussed the PSHE curriculum with leaders and spoke to pupils about how this curriculum and associate experiences supported their understanding.
- Inspectors evaluated the responses to the online parent, pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Matthew Knox, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Richard Crane	Ofsted Inspector
Emma Robins	Ofsted Inspector

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