

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Aston Hall Junior and Infant School

Church Lane, Aston, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S26 2AX

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 November 2024

Outcome

Aston Hall Junior and Infant School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Scott Holmes. 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 (CEO), Helen O'Brien, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steve Calvert.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils rise to these high expectations. They enjoy coming to school. Pupils feel safe at school and they achieve well.

Pupils are cheerful, polite and welcoming. They enjoy positive relationships with their peers and adults. They value their education and this is reflected in rates of attendance that are above average. Pupils behave extremely well throughout the school, responding well to clear routines and the expectations of adults. Bullying is extremely rare and pupils know that they can rely on adults to support them if there are any worries or problems.

The school's exceptional personal development offer provides pupils with multiple opportunities to extend their interests and passions beyond the curriculum. Older pupils develop independence through a number of residential visits. All pupils receive first aid training. Pupils thrive in a range of leadership roles. For example, sports leaders help at playtime by providing equipment and facilitating games. Pupils are very well prepared for their later life. They aspire to becoming positive, caring members of society.

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

The school has designed and introduced a curriculum that is broad and ambitious. Pupils' learning across all subjects has been clearly sequenced and is carefully planned from early

years through to Year 6. The curriculum in early years prepares children well for the next stage of their education. Pupils build their knowledge well over time. Lessons follow a clear and consistent structure in which teachers ensure previous learning is revisited and consolidated. Teachers are well trained and have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. They present information in interesting and relevant ways, for example, by using an online tool to compare the features of Aston with a contrasting Yorkshire village. Where the school makes accurate and timely checks on pupils' learning, any gaps are quickly addressed. This is not consistently the case. On occasions, the school does not identify and address how well younger pupils form their letters.

Children's early experiences of mathematics and learning to read ensure that they get off to a sound start to their education. Phonics sessions ensure that pupils systematically learn the sounds that letters make and become increasingly fluent readers. Those that struggle are supported well to keep up. Children in Reception learn about numbers and practise making shapes.

Pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Their needs are largely met well through adaptations to the curriculum and support from adults. Some pupils with SEND benefit from specialist support for their physical development and through the school's 'Rainbows' resource centre. On occasions, support for pupils with SEND is not as precise as it could be and this can limit their progression through the curriculum.

Pupils report that everyone is treated fairly. The behaviour policy is applied consistently and is well understood. In lessons, pupils show positive attitudes to learning, they are attentive and make confident contributions. While attendance levels are comparatively high, the school remains relentless in improving attendance for pupils where it is low.

The trust and the school have an unwavering commitment to pupils' personal development. They provide a specific careers curriculum. Through this, pupils are inspired and exposed to the rich possibilities for their future. Visitors include parents and professionals representing scientists, members of the emergency services and Olympians. Through the curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils frequently discuss and debate important topical issues on subjects such as knife crime, poverty or whether female sports stars should be paid the same as men. Pupils have strong inclusive values. They have a secure understanding of protected characteristics. They are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern British society.

Leaders at every level share the same strong moral commitment to ensuring the best for every pupil, particularly those that are disadvantaged or who have SEND. Governors and members of the trust have a deep commitment to their ambitious vision for pupils. Staff report how happy they are to work at the school. Leaders ensure staff receive regular professional development. They are mindful of staff well-being and workload. The school and trust benefit from a strong culture of support and collaboration.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the support for pupils with SEND is not mapped out and checked carefully enough. This means that adaptations for these pupils are not as effective as they could be. The school should improve the way it shares guidance and targets to support pupils with SEND to further improve their progression through the curriculum.
- The school does not consistently identify and address errors in pupils' letter formation. As a result, pupils continue to make the same mistakes and do not develop their handwriting skills effectively. The school should ensure that weaknesses in letter formation are promptly identified and addressed.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Aston Hall Junior and Infant School, to be good for overall effectiveness in November 2011.

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	143054
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10346600
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	309
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steve Calvert
CEO of the trust	Helen O'Brien
Headteacher	Scott Holmes
Website	http://www.astonhallschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- The school is part of Wickersley Partnership Trust.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other leaders. He also met with members of the governing body, and representatives of the trust.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector/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.
- The inspector took account of responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, the pupils' survey and the staff survey.

Inspection team

Dughall McCormick, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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