

Inspection of Acres Hill Community Primary School

Mather Road, Littledale, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S9 4GQ

Inspection dates:	14 and 15 January 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Christopher Howlett. The school is part of the Sheffield South East 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), Joanne Bradshaw, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Keith Crawshaw.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school and happy to attend. Pupils say, rightly, that their school is an inclusive place to be. The majority of pupils hold the 'Acres attributes' of care, collaboration, creativity, resilience, respect and reflection in high regard. Pupils like the stickers they get from adults when they demonstrate these values in their work and behaviour. However, on occasion, the behaviour of some pupils in lessons is not well managed. This can disrupt the learning of others.

The school is an important part of the local community. Building positive relationships with parents and carers is a high priority for the school. Events, such as family breakfasts and the community fair, help to bring parents into the school. Pupils enjoy the wide range of experiences the school offers them. Visits to venues such as galleries and cinemas help to give pupils a wider view of the world beyond their local community.

The school is developing the curriculum to ensure that the quality of education that pupils receive improves. The school has high expectations for all pupils' achievement, but these are not currently realised at the end of key stage 2.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has made considerable changes to the curriculum. In some subjects, it has carefully identified the skills and knowledge that pupils should learn. However, in some subjects this work it is not complete. Where this is the case, it hinders staff from setting learning activities that emphasise the essential knowledge and skills pupils should remember, and pupils' understanding does not deepen over time.

Reading is a high priority for the school. The phonics programme starts in the early years. Parents are regularly involved in reading stories to the Reception children. Guest readers share books regularly, and this helps to foster children's interests in texts from an early age. The number of pupils who can read with fluency by the end of key stage 1 is increasing. Pupils who struggle with their reading get the extra help they need to catch up. However, this work has not had time to have an impact on published outcomes in reading for older pupils.

Leaders have created a curriculum that provides plentiful opportunities to develop children's speech and language skills. They are mindful that many children arrive with gaps in these areas. The early years curriculum sets high expectations for what children can achieve. Leaders make regular checks on children's learning so that they can support them to stay on track. High-quality interactions with adults help children to develop their speech and language effectively. In Reception, children learn as they play together in a well-resourced classroom. Adults encourage children's curiosity and learning through the questions they ask them. Outside, adults support children to practise their phonics and help them write letters on large chalkboards. Children are increasingly well prepared for key stage 1.

Pupils with the highest levels of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported exceptionally well in the integrated resource, known as 'The Pride'. Activities and resources are carefully chosen to create a purposeful learning environment. For other pupils with SEND in the school, the support they receive is inconsistent. Curriculum adaptations do not consistently match with what these pupils need to learn next. As a result, the work that some pupils with SEND complete can be too easy or too hard. The progress that these pupils make through the curriculum is inconsistent across different subjects.

Pupils are enthusiastic about the school's behaviour system. They value the time that staff take to talk with them about their problems. Pupils know this helps to resolve arguments. However, this behaviour system is not implemented consistently during lesson time. The school's high expectations of pupils' behaviour are not universally applied. As a result, pupils' learning is too often interrupted by low-level disruption during lessons.

The school ensures that pupils benefit from a wide range of broader curriculum experiences. Staff provide pupils with the opportunities to raise money for their democratically chosen charities. The school council representatives are proud of the contribution they make to their school. Pupils understand the importance of equality and respecting diversity. Pupils know that discriminating on grounds of race or religious beliefs is wrong. For instance, through their studies during Black History Month, pupils learned about historically significant figures, such as Rosa Parks. Older pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationships.

The school has managed the high number of staff changes sensitively. The majority of staff are happy to work at this school. They report that leaders consider their workload and well-being. Staff are consulted on curriculum changes before they are made. This helps different views and workload implications to be considered.

Those with responsibility for governance know the school well and check the impact of leaders' work. The trust has an accurate view of the school's performance and is fully committed to improving the quality of education that the school provides for its pupils. The trust is providing additional, targeted support for the school to help bring about the necessary changes.

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 subjects, the key knowledge that pupils should learn is not clearly identified. As a result, learning activities do not focus on important knowledge, leading to gaps in pupils' understanding. The school should ensure that the curriculum identifies and

addresses the key knowledge and skills pupils should learn across all subjects so that they remember more of what they have been taught.

- The curriculum adaptations for some pupils with SEND do not consistently match what these pupils need to learn next. This means that the tasks some pupils complete can be too difficult or too easy. The school should ensure that the curriculum adaptations and adjustments that they make help pupils with SEND to make better progress through the curriculum.
- The school's high expectations and approach to managing pupils' behaviour are inconsistently applied. This results in learning being disrupted for some pupils during lessons. The school should ensure that all staff are supported to implement its approach to managing pupils' behaviour consistently well so that low-level disruption in classes is reduced.

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	143546
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10346646
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	228
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Keith Crawshaw
CEO of the trust	Joanne Bradshaw
Headteacher	Christopher Howlett
Website	www.acreshillschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Since the last inspection, the school has opened an integrated resource unit for pupils with social and communication needs. This provision has capacity for 10 pupils.
- The school is part of the Sheffield South East Trust.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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. 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 headteacher and members of the local governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- Meetings were held with trustees, including the chair of the trust and the CEO.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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 discussed the school's work in some other curriculum areas.
- 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.
- An inspector visited the school's breakfast club and spoke to parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's parent survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- To evaluate pupils' behaviour, inspectors visited lessons, analysed behaviour records, met with groups of pupils and observed their play at breaktime and lunchtime.

Inspection team

Chris Pearce, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alison Stephenson

His Majesty's Inspector

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