

# Inspection of Akroydon Primary Academy

Rawson Street North, Boothtown, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 6PU

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Inspection dates: 3–4 December 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are happy and safe. They enjoy a variety of experiences, including trips, workshops and extra-curricular clubs. For example, during the inspection, Year 5 pupils had just embarked on the 'champions graduation programme'. Pupils attend clubs ranging from frisbee and tchoukball to fashion design. Leaders prioritise these opportunities to broaden pupils' horizons.

Most pupils conduct themselves well. They move around the school sensibly. Many are keen to welcome visitors. Pupils understand the behaviour system and say it is used fairly by adults. A small number of pupils struggle to manage their own behaviour. A team of specialist staff provides support for the social and emotional needs of these pupils. This is reducing the frequency of fixed-term exclusions. Pupils say that bullying is rare. Chosen pupils are proud to be anti-bullying ambassadors.

Staff work hard and are committed to improving the quality of education for pupils. However, teaching staff do not consistently have the knowledge they need for all the subjects they teach. Due to this, pupils often have misconceptions and gaps in their knowledge. Leaders are working on improving the education for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, the curriculum for these pupils is not well designed. There remain some crucial aspects which leaders have not prioritised and improved.

Leaders put on a range of events for parents and carers. These include performances, workshops and cultural events. Parents' opinions of the school are mixed. A small but significant number of parents feel that leaders do not listen to their views. There is further work to do in building positive relationships with parents.

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

Leaders and staff have worked hard to improve the quality of education in some important areas. They have made a positive difference in English and mathematics in key stage 2. Year 6 pupils who left in 2019 were better prepared for secondary education than previous pupils. Other crucial aspects, including phonics and pupils' outcomes in key stage 1, have not seen enough improvement.

Leaders are at an early stage of designing the curriculum in some subjects. Some subjects, including science and computing, have not been taught well enough over time. This has left pupils with patchy knowledge. It is too early to see whether leaders' work is making a difference to pupils' knowledge in these areas.

Teachers work with specialists for some subjects, including music and modern foreign languages. They also have training, including in phonics and mathematics. However, teachers' knowledge is not consistently secure in all the subjects they teach. In some year groups, teachers are not thorough in checking pupils' understanding. Sometimes, pupils' misconceptions go unnoticed. Leaders have not

introduced an effective way of assessing pupils' knowledge in subjects outside of English and mathematics. These factors mean that pupils do not develop knowledge as well as they should.

The leader for pupils with SEND is improving the education for this group. She is part way through pinpointing pupils' needs. She has started to check on the effectiveness of the teaching pupils receive. Leaders have not begun work on tailoring the curriculum for pupils with SEND. Due to this work being only partially complete, pupils do not consistently reach their potential.

Pupils enjoy reading. They especially like the books teachers read to them during story time. Pupils have a varied 'diet' of different kinds of books and authors. For older pupils, this includes classic texts and Shakespeare. Key stage 2 teachers have a clear structure to follow in developing pupils' understanding of books. However, such guidance is not in place for teachers in the other key stages.

Although improving, phonics teaching is not effective, particularly for lower-attaining pupils. Despite recent training, some adults' knowledge of phonics is not secure. Some pupils need extra practice in reading. This is in place for some pupils but not for all who need it. Similarly, some pupils are given books to read that contain sounds they do not know. These shortcomings mean that pupils do not become fluent, confident readers as quickly as they should. This includes some pupils in key stage 2 who are not being well supported to catch up with their peers.

In the early years, the leader has thought carefully about what children should learn. However, some of the adults who are trying to deliver her vision lack the expertise they need. When adults demonstrate or ask questions, they are not consistent in helping children to learn. The activities on offer for children to choose independently are not demanding enough. Children have few chances to practise phonics, writing or numbers by themselves. This hinders their progress.

Governors have a range of expertise and are passionate about improving the school. However, leaders' improvement plans rarely include precise targets based on pupils' achievements. As such, governors do not have appropriate information to hold leaders to account. For example, governors did not act swiftly to challenge leaders about phonics teaching or pupils' outcomes outside of Year 6.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive frequent safeguarding training sessions. They know about the risks pupils may face. Staff are vigilant to any signs of concern. Pupils appreciate the 'worry boxes' in their classrooms as one way of getting help from staff. Designated staff communicate effectively with external agencies and maintain their records well. Pupils are taught how to stay safe in a range of contexts, including when online.

The trust has several systems in place to check that the safeguarding culture in the school is effective. Appropriate procedures are in place to check that staff are suitable to work with children.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Phonics teaching is not effective, especially for lower-attaining pupils. Some pupils across the age range do not read with the fluency expected for their age. This hinders their learning in several subjects. Leaders must continue to improve adults' subject knowledge. They should also ensure that pupils have frequent reading practice where necessary. Pupils of all ages who are learning to decode should have books to practise that contain only the sounds they know.
- Leaders have started to introduce whole-school plans and resources for teaching wider curriculum subjects. For some subjects, including science, this work is not complete. For other subjects, plans have been introduced recently. Due to developments being in their infancy, pupils have misconceptions and gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that teachers have suitable plans for all subjects and that they are implementing them effectively. This will involve the further strengthening of adults' subject knowledge, including in the early years. Leaders must also ensure that adults are skilled in checking pupils' understanding and assessing pupils' knowledge, including in the early years. Children in the early years should have opportunities to practise phonics, writing and number work independently. The activities children choose from in the early years should be more demanding.
- Work to improve provision for pupils with SEND is ongoing. As such, pupils do not consistently achieve their potential. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum for pupils with SEND is effective. They should also make sure that pupils' needs are identified accurately and that teaching is matched well to these needs.
- Parents' views of the school are mixed, with some parents feeling that their views are not listened to. Leaders have more work to do to build relationships with parents and involve them in their child's education.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account effectively. This has meant that some priorities have not been identified and acted on with enough urgency. Governors must ensure that leaders set and share with them appropriate, precise targets for pupils' outcomes. Governors must then ensure that they challenge leaders on all aspects of the school's performance.

## **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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143651
<b>Local authority</b>	Calderdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	10119928
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	354
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Tom Miskell
<b>Principal</b>	Richard Tipler (acting)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.akroydonprimary.org">www.akroydonprimary.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Akroydon Primary Academy opened in February 2017. It is part of the Trinity Multi-Academy Trust.
- Its predecessor school, Rawson Junior and Infant School, was inspected in November 2013 and was judged to be good.
- Since the school opened, there have been considerable changes in staffing, including staff in leadership positions. A high proportion of the teachers have recently joined the profession.
- The school has a Nursery which children attend from the age of three.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the principal, senior leaders and other members of staff. As lead inspector, I met with trust representatives, including the chief executive officer, the chair of the trust and the director of primary education. I also met with a

group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. An inspector also met with the local authority representative.

- We observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at breakfast club, playtimes and lunchtimes. We gathered pupils' views about the school through formal and informal discussions. We considered the two responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and 22 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- We scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding documents. We also evaluated information relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- We gathered the views of parents at the start of the day. We considered the 31 responses to Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, and the 17 free-text responses.
- We looked in depth at the following subjects: reading, mathematics, science, computing and history. In doing so, we visited classes across all year groups and reviewed pupils' work. We spoke to pupils about their learning and listened to them read. We also met with teachers.

## Inspection team

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