

Inspection of a good school: Armthorpe Shaw Wood Academy

Mere Lane, Armthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN3 2DG

Inspection dates: 7–8 January 2020

Outcome

Armthorpe Shaw Wood Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is an exciting place to learn. Pupils' attendance at Armthorpe Shaw Wood Academy is good, and it is easy to see why. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, (SEND), enjoy lessons and thrive on the opportunities the school offers. The school's 'challenge curriculum' and its four skills thread through everything pupils do. Through these skills, leaders have high expectations of every pupil.

Pupils are welcoming to visitors. They are enthusiastic when talking about their work. Around school there are lots of examples of pupils' work on walls and in corridors. Pupils' design and technology projects are a feature, along with their artwork.

The behaviour of pupils around school is exemplary. Everyone follows clear routines. Staff encourage respect and tolerance and model it for pupils. In lessons, pupils are enthusiastic and keen to do their best. They work hard on their own and with each other. Pupils say that bullying is rare. They also say that everyone is welcome in their school, it doesn't matter where they are from or what their background is.

Parents are positive about the school. They feel that their children are happy and safe.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils. They have considered what to teach and when to teach it, so pupils build up skills in a sensible order. Teachers revisit learning when necessary. This allows pupils to practise skills and knowledge and remember more. Pupils love their lessons. They approach learning with enthusiasm and energy. This is because pupils are learning through topics which interest and excite them. Teachers spend time talking with pupils and supporting learning. Because of this, teachers spot when pupils need extra help, or are falling behind.

Pupils learn phonics as soon as they start in Reception. Leaders have invested in books to encourage pupils to read. These books match pupils' reading skills. They are also challenging enough to help them to improve their reading further. Pupils take books home to practise their reading. Pupils hear adults read to them daily from an early age. Progress in reading is mostly high, but leaders acknowledge the need to improve reading further.

Pupils' writing is strong. Pupils are encouraged to write about and evaluate their work regularly. Those pupils who are disadvantaged or with SEND, produce high-quality work. Leaders make sure that pupils who need extra help receive it, but they are careful to ensure that these pupils are encouraged to produce work independently.

Pupils enjoy design and technology lessons. These provide pupils with opportunities to work together on projects. Pupils do so with energy and enthusiasm. Because of this, they learn by mistakes and success. As a result, they produce high-quality work. The 'challenge curriculum' approach helps pupils with this. They develop their skills in leadership, self-belief, grit and teamwork. If pupils need help to develop these skills further, they attend challenge sessions to focus on the skills they need.

Mathematics is strong at the school and pupils do well, but leaders recognise that some pupils need more practice at reasoning and problem-solving. Teachers are putting into place new lesson plans. These will provide all pupils with more of these opportunities.

The school provides opportunities for out-of-classroom learning. There is a wide range of trips, visits and activities available for pupils to take part in. The school is proud of the musical and dramatic performances which pupils take part in regularly.

Leaders are passionate about providing pupils with the best education possible. They have created a learning environment which is welcoming and exciting. The relationships between pupils and staff are a strength of the school. Teachers feel supported by leaders as well. The school has a caring and community-minded approach. This makes it a place where pupils and staff alike want to be.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that the procedures for checking and recruiting staff are robust. Staff have received recent safeguarding training. They have regular updates so they can identify the signs which cause concern. As a result, they take swift action to ensure that pupils receive the help they need. All staff and pupils know who to talk to when they have a concern.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online safety. Pupils know the names of the designated safeguarding leaders in the school. They understand what leaders can do to help them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Although reading is now stronger across the school, in the past the teaching of reading in key stage 1 has not been as strong as it has been in key stage 2. Because of this, in the last academic year some pupils in key stage 1 did not make the progress expected of them. Leaders should ensure that the teaching of reading in key stage 1 is further strengthened so that pupils make the progress in reading they are capable of.
- In the past, those pupils who have found mathematics challenging have spent lots of time practising and becoming fluent in techniques. They have not spent as much time using these techniques to problem solve and reason. Consequently, some pupils have not made the progress in mathematics they are capable of. Leaders should ensure that all pupils have the lesson time they need to become more skilful in using their learned mathematics techniques to reason and solve problems.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Armthorpe Shaw Wood Academy to be good on 20–21 April 2016.

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 are the school and you are 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

Unique reference number	138705
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10110827
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	470
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mr Michael Woodstones
Headteacher	Jo Campbell (Executive headteacher)
Website	www.shawwoodacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 April 2016

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school runs an after-school club.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is average.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- I met with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum leaders and other members of staff. I also met with the co-chair of governors. I took account of the 33 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at playtimes and lunchtimes. I gathered pupils' views about the school through formal and informal discussion.

- I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding documents. I also evaluated information relating to pupils’ behaviour and attendance.
- I took account of the views of 42 parents who responded to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, along with 42 responses submitted as free-text.
- I looked in depth at the following subjects: reading, English and writing, and design and technology. In doing so, I visited classes across year groups and reviewed pupils’ work. I spoke to pupils about their learning and listened to them read. I also met with teachers.

Inspection team

Barry Found, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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