

Hartley Brook Primary School

Hartley Brook Road, Shiregreen, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S5 0JF

Inspection dates

24–25 April 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils' outcomes are improving. While still below the national average, pupils' attainment is increasing across key stage 2. This represents strong learning when set against pupils' low starting points.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving. Teachers generally plan learning activities that are closely matched to pupils' starting points. However, the most able pupils are capable of more than some teachers believe.
- The headteacher and most other leaders provide strong and effective leadership. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have been successful in improving the quality of education pupils receive.
- Rates of attendance are improving. Leaders' attendance strategies are wide ranging and have a positive effect on supporting most pupils and families. Nevertheless, rates of absence and persistent absence continue to be above the national average.
- Governors carry out their role diligently. They ask searching questions and demonstrate that they have high expectations. Notwithstanding this, governors would like more clarification regarding their roles and responsibilities.
- This is a truly inclusive school. The pastoral care for pupils is strong. Excellent relationships with external agencies and professionals ensure that pupils receive specialist support if needed.
- An increasing proportion of disadvantaged pupils reach standards expected for their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. However, gaps remain between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally.
- Pupils' reading and spelling are not as strong as they could be. The books pupils are asked to read in school, and at home, are sometimes too easy or too difficult. Teachers' expectations of pupils' spelling are inconsistent.
- Children in early years provision make good progress from very low starting points. Many children are well prepared for the next stage of their learning. However, children's progress in early writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress. They are supported very well by the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), other staff and a wide range of external agencies.
- The understanding of a small minority of staff relating to aspects of safeguarding is underdeveloped.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, so that all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and the most able, make at least good progress, by ensuring that teachers:
 - provide pupils with books to read, both in school and at home, that are closely matched to their phonic knowledge
 - use pupils’ prior assessment information to plan activities that meet pupils’ needs and abilities effectively
 - display consistently high expectations by insisting that pupils spell simple and more complicated subject-specific vocabulary accurately
 - set regular and high-quality homework.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years by:
 - providing children with more frequent opportunities to develop their writing
 - ensuring that staff record children’s learning accurately so that future plans and/or activities take into account children’s prior understanding.
- Continue to improve rates of attendance and reduce persistent absence, including in the early years.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - developing the understanding of staff so that they are fully aware of the indicators that may suggest a pupil is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or harm, particularly in relation to radicalisation, extremism or drug trafficking
 - clarifying the scheme of delegation.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal, ably supported by two very effective vice-principals, provides strong leadership. Since his appointment in July 2015, the school has improved considerably. The principal and his leadership team have successfully managed to improve pupils' behaviour, increase levels of attainment and, as one member of staff said, 'provide a sense of hope for the community'.
- Staff receive effective support from the multi-academy trust (the trust). Staff improve their understanding and skills because they attend a number of training opportunities, work closely with staff from other trust schools and draw upon the significant experience of trust leaders when required. Furthermore, the trust is responsive to the school's needs and, if necessary, assists the school financially so that leaders can trial new ideas or appoint additional staff.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Appropriately, improvement plans are well-matched to the school's own self-evaluation. Leaders ensure that staff spend time improving aspects of the school that need it most. They are quick to put a stop to less effective actions if their monitoring demonstrates that pupils' outcomes or experiences are not improving. Staff are regularly consulted and involved in activities and initiatives that are designed to improve the quality of teaching. In this way, all staff say that leaders have created a climate in which they are trusted to take risks and innovate in ways that are right for the pupils.
- Staff morale is high. Nearly all staff who responded to Ofsted's online inspection questionnaire said that the school is well led and that they enjoy working at the school.
- Leaders review the curriculum regularly to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is appropriately diverse and ensures that pupils develop a broad range of skills in the classroom and beyond. For example, the 'Astrea Promise' encourages pupils to participate in 30 different activities during key stages 1 and 2. Activities that support the taught curriculum include visiting a foreign country or sleeping under the stars. Additionally, a successful after-school programme of sports, crafts and creative arts ensures that pupils can try something new, master a new skill or learn to work as part of a team. Attendance at after-school clubs is extremely high.
- Subject leadership is a strength. Most subject leaders have a thorough understanding of their role and the effect of their actions on pupils' learning. Subject leaders have a consistent understanding of the main school priorities and how they can contribute to achieving them. Senior and subject leaders jointly attend regular pupil progress meetings to discuss how well pupils are learning. Consequently, subject leaders coordinate tailored interventions that provide pupils who are falling behind with additional support, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The SENCo brings considerable expertise to the school. She, and other staff who teach pupils with SEND, have a detailed knowledge of each pupil's additional needs. Communication with families and external agencies is frequent and helpful, ensuring that pupils are carefully supported by a coordinated approach from multiple adults. Pupils with SEND make strong progress across most of their lessons.

- Leaders, at all levels, have high expectations. They are not afraid to hold other staff to account. When staff need advice, guidance or direction to ensure that pupils' outcomes continue to improve, leaders are swift to step in. Inspection evidence demonstrates that leaders are successful in this regard; the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment has improved in some classes due to the high-quality training and support that leaders have provided.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Skills such as teamwork and communication are fostered well in assemblies and lessons. Pupils receive regular rewards for fundraising and helping others who are less fortunate than they are.
- Leaders' use of additional funding to develop school sports and physical education (PE) provision continues to be very successful. Within the last few years, the number of school sporting teams has increased significantly. Additionally, a wide range of after-school sporting opportunities exist for pupils, including dance, cheerleading, rugby and gymnastics. School teams and individual pupils have won many local competitions and been selected to represent elite teams.
- More than half of the pupils in the school are disadvantaged. Improved leadership in this area and regular monitoring of disadvantaged pupils' learning are ensuring that attainment for these pupils continues to rise. Leaders ensure that additional funding is allocated to a range of strategies that are proven to be effective. However, while disadvantaged pupils' attainment is much stronger now than it has been previously, additional funding has not contributed to disadvantaged pupils attaining as well as other pupils in school and nationally.
- A very small minority of subject leaders do not have the skills, knowledge or understanding to bring about swift improvements in their subjects. They are less clear about what works and what does not. Consequently, some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- While leaders' improvement strategies are spread across the year so that staff are not overburdened at any one time, many are relatively new. In this way, it is too early to see the impact of leaders' recent strategies that are designed to further improve spelling, attendance and the curriculum.

Governance of the school

- The local education and consultative committee (the governing body) provides increasingly stronger support and challenge to the school's leaders. Committee members conduct annual skills audits. They have a thorough understanding of their strengths and limitations. The trust offers suitable training to develop the effectiveness of individual committee members.
- Minutes of meetings demonstrate that committee members ask searching questions of leaders. They invite leaders to meetings so that they can explain a new initiative or provide an appraisal of their own work. Leaders say that they welcome the professional challenge that this provides in addition to the regular link meetings that take place between committee members and staff in school.
- The powers and functions delegated by the board of trustees to the committee are set out in detail in the trust's scheme of delegation. Nevertheless, committee members say

that they would welcome further clarification from the trust regarding their responsibilities, particularly in relation to the management and allocation of additional funding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Vulnerable pupils in school are well known to safeguarding leaders and staff. Leaders have developed effective working relationships with a wide range of external agencies. By doing so, pupils and families in need of specialist care and assistance are supported extremely well.
- Leaders make appropriate pre-recruitment checks to ensure that staff are safe to work with pupils.
- Staff are clear about procedures where they are concerned about the safety of a pupil. Checks on safeguarding referrals demonstrate that leaders are swift to act on any concerns that are brought to their attention. However, despite training in the past, a minority of staff do not have a thorough understanding of the indicators that may suggest that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or harm, particularly in relation to radicalisation, extremism or drug trafficking.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They welcome new additions to the playground such as 'friendship' benches so that they can talk to pupils who may be feeling sad.
- Leaders develop parents' understanding of safeguarding issues well by inviting them into school for workshops or alerting them to specific e-safety concerns via school newsletters.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving. Much of the teaching across the school is engaging, topical and leads to pupils making strong gains in their learning.
- Most teachers use pupils' prior assessment information adeptly to ensure that they plan lessons that build on pupils' prior learning. Most of the time, teachers and teaching assistants ensure that pupils are sufficiently supported and challenged in their work by asking probing questions to evaluate what pupils know and can do. This is more common with pupils who have below average or average starting points.
- Teachers' planning is less effective at meeting the needs of the most able pupils. This is because some teachers provide too much support and direction, particularly in writing. The most able pupils are sometimes constrained and make less progress because learning activities lack challenge or opportunities for them to learn by making mistakes.
- Teachers have developed effective classroom routines that enable pupils to move swiftly from one activity to the next. This ensures that very little learning time is lost across the school day.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners, keen to exemplify or share their learning with teachers or their peers. Teachers often encourage pupils to work in pairs or groups to

investigate a problem or share ideas. Pupils rise to this challenge. Consequently, pupils' communication and listening skills are improving swiftly.

- The taught curriculum is supplemented by subject-specialist teachers in PE, music, modern foreign languages and computing. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in these subjects are strong. In this way, pupils are well prepared to move on to the next stage in their education.
- A full-time speech and language therapist (SLT) was appointed in September 2018. Pupils who need specialist support with their speaking and language development are making stronger progress this academic year. Pupils work closely with the SLT on a one-to-one basis or in small groups to improve their understanding of unfamiliar language, practise letter sounds and overcome physical barriers to effective speech.
- Typically, teachers insist that pupils reflect on their previous learning, particularly in English. Pupils are supported in doing so by teachers' explicit modelling and exemplification of high-quality written work. When they revisit their own writing and mathematical calculations, most pupils quickly and successfully identify ways to improve their work due to the astute learning points made by the teacher.
- Teachers who are new to the profession are well supported. They benefit from regular mentoring and opportunities to learn from more experienced staff within school and beyond.
- Pupils with SEND play an active role in lessons. Learning resources are generally adapted appropriately and most teaching assistants liaise effectively with teachers to ensure that the learning needs of pupils with SEND are met. However, sometimes the information teachers receive regarding the progress and learning needs of pupils with SEND is not as current as it could be. In a small minority of lessons, this leads to some pupils with SEND making less progress than they are capable of.
- Leaders know that pupils' accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar across the school is inconsistent. They have started to consider ways in which they can improve this aspect of pupils' learning. In some lessons, pupils continue to jumble 'their/there' and 'where/were' because the teacher does not highlight pupils' errors or insist on the correct spelling. In other lessons, pupils correctly spell words that look and sound similar because the teacher spends time pointing out basic errors or reinforcing pupils' understanding of common exception words (words where usual spelling rules do not apply).
- The books pupils are asked to read, both in school and at home, do not always develop pupils' phonics knowledge cumulatively or match closely the school's phonic programme. Consequently, pupils are sometimes expected to decode words with sounds they have not been taught. This confuses early readers and those pupils with below-average reading ability.
- Work scrutiny and feedback from pupils and parents demonstrate that homework is inconsistent in quality, quantity and effectiveness across the school.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff have developed strong relationships with parents. Consequently, communication between staff and parents is strong and improving. This ensures that staff know pupils' concerns or worries and can plan to support them in their learning or home life.
- Pupils learn about the benefits of healthy eating in lessons and the dining hall. Some pupils are appointed to act as 'dining assistants'. They take their role very seriously. Pupils engage with their peers, discuss diet, exercise and encourage others to behave responsibly around school.
- The vast majority of pupils who responded to Ofsted's inspection questionnaire say that bullying either does not happen or that it happens and teachers are really good at resolving it. Leaders promote anti-bullying activities and initiatives regularly. Pupils say with confidence that there is always someone in school that they can talk to if something is worrying them.
- Pupils' understanding about different faiths and cultures is less developed. While pupils learn about people who are different to them in assembly and other lessons, opportunities to visit a range of faith buildings and/or meet representatives from different faiths are not fully embedded across key stages 1 and 2.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved dramatically in the last three years. Staff follow the school's behaviour policy consistently. They encourage positive pupil behaviour by distributing a large number of rewards and offering regular praise when pupils apply themselves well in their learning.
- The vast majority of pupils are kind and polite to their friends and adults. Pupils behave well in class and around the large school site. They play together enthusiastically, taking advantage of the vast array of toys and games to play with at playtime.
- The proportion of pupils who are excluded for a fixed-term continues to decline. Notwithstanding this, a very small number of pupils continue to display very challenging behaviour. This group of pupils accounts for the vast majority of fixed-term exclusions. Leaders are steadfast in their ambition to create an inclusive and nurturing school. In this way, pupils who continue to display poor behaviour are supported by specialist teachers and professionals in the school's sensory rooms and at home.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve rates of attendance recently. Attendance strategies include the 'walking bus' and a mini-bus, which collect reluctant attenders from designated locations in and around the local housing estates or further afield. These strategies and leaders' higher expectations are improving the rates of attendance and reducing persistent absence. However, an above-average proportion of pupils continue to be persistently absent from school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Stronger teaching, improving attendance and increasingly positive pupil attitudes to learning are all leading to current pupils making stronger progress than they have done in the past.
- Leaders monitor pupils' attainment and progress assiduously. In this way, pupils who are at risk of falling behind are identified swiftly and given additional support in class or during focused interventions.
- Progress comparisons with national averages are extremely difficult because a larger than average number of pupils join the school at times other than the usual admission date. Many of these pupils did not complete assessments at the end of key stage 1 and, accordingly, are not included in progress calculations. Nevertheless, in 2018, pupils' progress in reading across key stage 2 was similar to other pupils nationally. This was a substantial improvement when compared to the 2017 cohort who made progress in reading that was well below the national average. Additionally, between 2017 and 2018, pupils' progress in mathematics across key stage 2 improved from below the national average to above.
- Over time, pupils' results in the reading, writing and mathematics assessments at the end of key stages 1 and 2 have been below the national average. However, nearly all children enter Nursery or Reception Year with levels of development that are below those typical for their age. Consequently, levels of attainment achieved more recently represent strong gains in pupils' learning.
- The school's own information highlights that current disadvantaged pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics are very similar to other pupils in the school in a number of year groups. Overall, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils working at the standards expected for their age continues to increase.
- The proportion of pupils who passed the phonics screening check in 2018 increased on 2017 outcomes. Furthermore, the school's own assessment information demonstrates that current Year 1 pupils are on track to surpass last year's results.
- A lack of focus over time on improving pupils' English grammar, punctuation and spelling (EGPS) has resulted in weak outcomes in Year 6 EGPS assessments. Outcomes in this area were considerably below the national average in 2017 and 2018.

Early years provision

Good

- Staff quickly and accurately assess each child's stage of development when they join Nursery and Reception. The school's own information highlights that children's levels of development are well below those typical for their age when they arrive. Due to the improving quality of teaching and extensive support for families, over half of the cohort leave Reception having reached a good level of development. The current Reception cohort are on track to achieve the school's strongest outcomes in three years.
- The early years leader provides effective leadership. She ensures that all the early years welfare requirements are met. Furthermore, the early years leader and her team have developed very strong transition arrangements. Staff visit every child in their home prior to them starting Nursery or Reception. In this way, staff have a

comprehensive understanding of, and can plan to improve, the weaker aspects of children's learning. For example, early indications identified the need to appoint a specialist SLT from September 2018. This is accelerating children's speech and language development as well as helping them improve their literacy.

- Children are happy and settled. They have developed good relationships with staff and their peers. Children tend to have a core group of close friends but they are equally content to join well-established groups or play independently.
- The large outdoor space provides a high level of stimulus throughout the day. Children often make a beeline for the muddy kitchen to make 'perfume' or investigate cause and effect when programming floor robots. Staff sometimes seize upon new learning opportunities when they present themselves. For example, one teaching assistant, upon hearing a plane overhead, asked the children to describe the noise, suggest what it might be and then proceeded to explore children's understanding about flying and aeroplanes.
- Over time, children make the least progress in writing. Inspection evidence demonstrates that opportunities to develop children's writing are sometimes missed. Furthermore, observations in children's learning journals tend to describe the activities children complete rather than their success in completing them. As a result, when a different member of staff works with a child they do not have a thorough understanding of what the child knows and can do. This means that planning does not always take account of, or develop, children's weakest areas of development such as writing.
- Some parents do not appreciate the importance of good attendance in Nursery and Reception. Consequently, some children have very low rates of attendance. These children are already falling behind their peers in their levels of development.

School details

Unique reference number	144482
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10087495

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	687
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Lisa May-Howard
Principal	Jim Garbutt
Telephone number	0114 245 6882
Website	www.hartleybrookacademy.org/
Email address	HBEenquiries@astreahartleybrook.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Astrea multi-academy trust. Responsibility for the school rests with trustees who delegate some powers to the governing body. The mission statement of the trust is 'inspiring beyond measure'. The Astrea multi-academy trust website and scheme of delegation can be found at: <https://astreaacademytrust.org/about-us/>
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- A larger than average number of pupils join the school at times other than the usual admission date. At the time of the inspection, over 50% of current pupils had joined the school after Reception or following long periods out of education.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil

premium is much higher than the national average.

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is much higher than the national average.
- Nearly all children enter Nursery or Reception Year with levels of development that are below those typical for their age.
- Children attend full- and part-time early years provision in the Nursery and Reception.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited most classes across the school, observing teachers more than once in some instances. Many of the observations in lessons were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, the SENCo, subject leaders, teachers, non-teaching staff, members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and the lead inspector met with the chief executive officer and the executive director of education from the trust.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work during lessons and with senior leaders in all subjects. In addition, an inspector scrutinised a large sample of learning journals belonging to children in Nursery and Reception.
- An inspector spoke on the telephone with a member of staff from the alternative education provider.
- Inspectors held informal and formal discussions with many pupils and observed interactions during social times.
- Inspectors listened to two groups of pupils read.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and scrutinised a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation, analysis of performance information, action plans and evaluations, attendance records, safeguarding files, recruitment checks, headteacher reports and minutes of governors' meetings.
- Inspectors took into account the 79 responses from parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the responses from the 68 members of staff and 257 pupils who completed Ofsted's online survey.

Inspection team

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