

# Inspection of Atlas Academy

Prospect Place, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN1 3QP

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|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Inspection dates:         | 22 and 23 October 2024 |
| The quality of education  | <b>Good</b>            |
| Behaviour and attitudes   | <b>Good</b>            |
| Personal development      | <b>Good</b>            |
| Leadership and management | <b>Good</b>            |
| Early years provision     | <b>Good</b>            |
| Previous inspection grade | Requires improvement   |

The principal of this school is Andrew Crossley. This school is part of Astrea Academy 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), Rowena Hackwood, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Benjamin Brown.

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

At Atlas Academy, everybody is proud of the community they have created. 'Unity through Diversity' is central to the school's work. Many pupils join school part way through the year and are immediately made to feel welcome and an important member of the school family. School is a safe place, and pupils are happy to attend.

The school sets high expectations for its pupils. Published outcomes in national assessments are well below national averages. This is because of high levels of pupil mobility. Pupils who attend this school over time achieve well.

Pupils respond positively to the school's clear rules and routines which are introduced from the very start of the early years. Pupils listen carefully in class and display a positive attitude to their learning. Movement around school is calm and orderly. Pupils are kind to one another and know that if they are worried, adults will help them. Bullying is rare and is always addressed by adults.

Pupils are keen to share their aspirations. They aim to be 'scholarly' to prepare them well for future, chosen careers. They recognise the importance of being resilient and look forward to the Year 6 residential where they will face new challenges and push themselves 'to the limit'.

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

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It meets the needs of the diverse school community well. From the beginning of the early years, the curriculum follows a logical sequence. Teachers have received training to help them be clear when explaining new learning. Many pupils arrive and leave the school throughout the academic year. There are frequent opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to revisit and consolidate learning. Teachers regularly check how well pupils are learning. On occasions, this is not precise enough, and some pupils are given work to do that is too difficult or too easy.

Staff identify the needs of pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. Lessons are adapted to meet individual needs. Most pupils with SEND develop their understanding alongside their peers. However, a group of pupils are members of class '7TM'. Pupils in this class access a bespoke curriculum that closely matches their needs. This support enables these pupils to make progress.

Reading is prioritised by the school. Adults deliver the school's phonics programme consistently well. The progress that pupils make through this programme is carefully monitored. Staff ensure that any gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge are identified and addressed. Pupils enjoy reading. They particularly enjoy story time, when they can close their eyes and 'drift off to another world.'

Pupils are taught how to write their letters correctly during phonics lessons. However, some children do not have the level of physical development required to write with the

tools given. Some pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to practise forming their letters correctly and errors are not always corrected. As a result, some pupils struggle when asked to compose pieces of writing accurately.

In the early years, the school establishes children's starting points quickly. The curriculum is well designed and sequenced from Nursery to Reception. Adults develop warm and positive relationships with children. In the outdoor environment, adults support children's physical development by using hoops for them to step through and beams to balance on. Children enjoyed a walk in the community taking photographs of their homes. Then they recreated them using a range of boxes and materials. They practised saying key vocabulary such as window and roof.

The school tracks pupils' attendance diligently. As a result, attendance has improved since the previous inspection. The vast majority of pupils attend school regularly and on time. The school is relentless in its efforts to further reduce absence. It recognises the significant challenges that many of its family's face. The school is working with external services to strengthen support for families.

There is a well-considered programme for pupils' personal development. Pupils have a clear understanding of the fundamental British values. They know what makes a healthy relationship and how to stay safe. This includes keeping safe online and from risks within the local community, including from drugs and knife crime. Pupils understand that the world is diverse, and that people should be valued for who they are. Pupils enjoy the choice of extra-curricular clubs on offer, including art, dance, and football. They value the opportunity to work with sports coaches.

Those responsible for governance provide effective support and challenge for the school. They know the school well. They are proud of the school and share leaders' ambition that every pupil will succeed. Staff enjoy working at the school. They have high morale. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration of their workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The school does not check for pupils' understanding in lessons with sufficient rigour. This means that misconceptions are not addressed in a timely manner, and, on occasions, activities are not well matched to pupils' needs. The school should ensure that it accurately and consistently checks pupils' understanding throughout lessons.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise and embed basic transcription before they move on to writing composition. Some pupils do not form their letters correctly. Some pupils do not demonstrate the physical strength and dexterity to use

the writing tools they are given. The school should ensure that pupils at the early stages of writing are given opportunities to prepare them physically for writing and that pupils are given sufficient opportunity to practise letter formation correctly.

## 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

|                                            |                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 144950                                                         |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Doncaster                                                      |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10323096                                                       |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                                        |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy sponsor-led                                            |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3 to 11                                                        |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                          |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 422                                                            |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees                                              |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | Benjamin Brown                                                 |
| <b>CEO of the trust</b>                    | Rowena Hackwood                                                |
| <b>Principal</b>                           | Andrew Crossley                                                |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.astreaatlas.org">www.astreaatlas.org</a>   |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>        | 8 and 9 March 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. |

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Astrea Academy Trust.
- There is an on-site breakfast club managed by the school.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

## 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.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, curriculum leaders and other staff. They reviewed a range of documentation.
- An inspector met with the CEO of the trust, trustees, and members of the trust management board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also looked at pupils' work in some other subjects.
- The inspectors spoke with parents and considered the responses to the online survey Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text comments.
- The inspectors spoke with staff and considered responses to the staff survey.
- The inspectors spoke with groups of pupils.
- An inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- To review 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 pupil's interests first.

## Inspection team

|                             |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Tracy Duffy, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Gerry Wilson                | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Donna Waddington            | Ofsted Inspector        |

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