

Inspection of Ferham Primary School

Ferham Road, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S61 1AP

Inspection dates:	28 and 29 January 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Vikki Fenton. This school is part of the James Montgomery 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), David Silvester, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Richard Punshon.

What is it like to attend this school?

Ferham Primary is a friendly and welcoming school, where pupils feel safe and cared for. They form strong relationships with staff and each other. Pupils understand the importance of respect and kindness. They confidently greet visitors with a smile.

The curriculum has undergone substantial changes. There is clarity over what pupils should learn and when. However, these changes have not had sufficient time to have an impact on the historic outcomes. While progress is evident in pupils' knowledge and work, the impact on outcomes is yet to be seen.

Pupils from a wide range of cultural backgrounds enjoy learning from each other. They work and play well together. The school also cares for its wider community. Their community café brings people together. Local organisations attend to provide support and advice. This strengthens links between the school and families.

The school has a calm learning environment. Pupils behave well both in and outside the classroom. In early years, children enjoy following the rules that help them to self-regulate. Staff support pupils to make the right choices. Across the school, pupils listen attentively in lessons, engage in discussions and follow instructions. This behaviour creates a focused learning atmosphere. However, a number of pupils do not attend school as frequently as they should.

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

The school has a well-structured curriculum that considers pupils' experiences. It includes cultural references, a range of texts and diverse role models. The curriculum starts in early years and helps pupils build key knowledge over time. For example, in design and technology, children learn about textiles in early years. In Year 2, pupils learn a running stitch and by Year 6, they learn more complex seam techniques. Building vocabulary is a key aspect of the curriculum. For example, in mathematics, pupils use mathematical vocabulary to explain their understanding. The school focuses on targeted sessions in core subjects like mathematics and reading. This is starting to close gaps for pupils who miss lessons due to absence. In foundation subjects, though, there is some variety in how gaps are identified. The school needs to continue to work on a consistent approach to identifying and addressing gaps in pupils knowledge across all foundation subjects in order to ensure effective learning in these subjects.

The school identifies the needs of pupils well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school's inclusive approach to supporting, teaching and identifying needs ensures pupils receive the support they need. This is helping pupils make progress from their starting points.

The school is building a strong reading culture. Pupils enjoy reading and listening to stories in daily book clubs. 'Book blether' sessions give pupils opportunities to discuss texts. The 'reading room' is a popular place pupils visit during playtimes. Each year group has a specially curated list of essential reads. In early years, pupils enjoy the 'Terrific 12'

books and vote to hear their favourite story each day. Pupils learn to read through a structured phonics programme. The books they read match their knowledge of sounds. There is targeted support for pupils who need to catch up. This extra practice is helping pupils build fluency and comprehension.

Children in early years learn through routines of the day. Small group work and close support from adults help with language development. Staff ask questions to help children think and encourage play and storytelling. Children stay focused on activities like role play and sensory play. Pictures and signs help children communicate, especially those learning English. Staff support early language by building on vocabulary and modelling social skills. The school provides parent workshops that are well attended. They share resources to help with home learning.

The school has many pupils who are new to the country or have irregular attendance. Many speak English as an additional language. The school has strong systems to help pupils settle in. However, too many pupils are persistently absent, which affects their learning. While there are early signs of improved attendance, continued work is needed to ensure more pupils attend regularly.

Pupils learn life skills, such as water, rail and personal safety, relevant to where they live. Pupils have jobs around the school, such as being young interpreters and class librarians. This builds pupils' confidence and resilience. The school raises pupils' aspirations through assemblies, career fairs and visits. These activities broaden pupils' horizons. For example, older pupils are excited to join the 'mini police' programme in Year 5. Multi-cultural events help pupils to explore different points of view. Pupils enjoy different after-school clubs. Through these clubs, they learn how to work together and overcome challenges.

Leaders understand the school's challenges and have identified the right priorities. They are taking action to improve attendance and outcomes. But it is too early to see the impact of this work on published outcomes. Staff feel well supported with 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)

- Attendance rates are currently below national levels and a high number of pupils are persistently absent. Some pupils are not forming good attendance habits and are missing important opportunities to learn the curriculum. The school should ensure that attendance remains a high priority and that families are given support to reduce absence further.

- The impact of the quality of education is not reflected in the school's published outcomes. The published outcomes do not yet show the full effect of changes to the curriculum. The school should continue to review and refine the curriculum so that pupils catch up quickly and this progress is better reflected in pupils' academic outcomes.
- The school is in the process of developing its assessment procedures in some foundation subjects. In these subjects, assessment information is not used consistently in order to address gaps in pupils' knowledge. The school should develop a more consistent approach across all foundation subjects to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.

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	148013
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10346754
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Richard Punshon
CEO of the trust	David Silvester
Headteacher	Vikki Fenton
Website	www.ferhamprimary.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in October 2021. When its predecessor school, Ferham Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged as inadequate for overall effectiveness.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school does not use any 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.
- The inspectors considered the ongoing impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design. 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, listened to pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the impact in other subjects. They looked at the impact of writing in books, work from design and technology and religious education.
- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the CEO and other trust and school leaders.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the trustees and local governing body.
- Throughout the inspection, the inspectors met with groups of staff and considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents expressed through Ofsted Parent View and met parents on the school gate.

Inspection team

Lesley Sullivan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Dimitris Spiliotis

Ofsted Inspector

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