Airedale Infant Academy

Prospectus

Headteacher Welcome

Welcome to Airedale Infant Academy

Airedale Infant Academy is an infant school in the heart of the Airedale community; a place where we are proud to champion and celebrate your child's hard work, inspire their unique creativity, and nurture the confident behaviours needed for a journey of continuous learning

Our commitment is to deliver an exceptional education for every child, using creative and varied teaching methods to recognise and nurture individual brilliance with an approach rooted in unwavering kindness, ensuring all children achieve and savor their success.

We aim to foster a happy, secure, and stimulating learning environment in which both children, and staff, can feel supported and able to flourish into their most confident selves. We learn together and grow together.

Our values of Care, Aspire, and Succeed run through everything we do, and are further underpinned by are learning attitude characteristics that support the development of excellent learners. We aim to instil these values in all our pupils to prepare them for a brighter, more ambitious future.

Our vision is of a world where all children and young people are given equity of opportunity to thrive, succeed and aspire. High aspirations and ambitions are what drive us, and we encourage the whole of the community to aim to be the best they can be academically, socially and personally.

We are proud of our school and all those who work and attend here.

Kirsten McKechnie
Executive Headteacher

CEO Welcome

I hope that as you look through the following prospectus, it gives you a flavour of Airedale Infant Academy and the amazing work that they do.

Airedale Infant Academy is a part of Castleford Trust, a cross phase Multi Academy Trust comprising of nine schools: three secondary academies, and six primary academies. The Trust is a medium sized family of schools all located within a geographic cluster within Wakefield.

Castleford Trust is committed to **"working together to achieve excellence for all".**

All the academies within the Trust have a strong moral purpose and seek to have a positive impact on the communities that they serve and to support families to overcome any social disadvantage. This is delivered through an ambitious and engaging curriculum where no learner is left behind, alongside a strong pastoral support programme which ensures that pupils overcome any barriers to learning.

All academies within the Trust offer a rich set of experiences to allow pupils to grow and nurture talent, whether that be in sport, drama, music, art or technology. Staff will strive to give pupils opportunities to compete with the very best locally, nationally and globally. We are proud of our pupils and the positive contribution they make to society.

We are an ambitious and innovative Trust who are deeply committed to our values of Care, Aspire and Succeed and have very high expectations and aspirations for our pupils. The key to the success of the Trust is the commitment of an outstanding team of leaders, teachers and support staff who, through mutual sharing of knowledge expertise, systems and resources from across education and business support the raising of educational standards and achievements. This enables us to sustain and enhance educational performance, improving the life chances of all pupils across the Trust.

At Castleford Trust, it is essential that we deliver a first-class standard of education and ensure that all of our academies deliver 'outstanding' provision for the benefit of our pupils and wider community.

Castleford Trust is an exceptional place to work and has a team of dedicated and committed staff. We strongly believe in developing and nurturing talent by providing opportunities for staff training and development. Staff turnover is low. We are proud of our achievements but are always striving to do more and provide the very best life opportunities for the communities we serve. We continually seek out the best practice to ensure that our provision sits alongside the finest that is available nationally.

We look forward to welcoming your child to the academy.

George Panayiotou
CEO, Castleford Academy Trust

Welcome to our Academy

Our leadership team work hard to model our values daily and drive improvements that help our pupils reach their goals and aspirations. The team consists of:

Kirsten McKechnie
Executive Headteacher

Jemma Whitney
Deputy Headteacher

Louise Clarkson
Assistant Headteacher

Yvette Johnson
Assistant Headteacher

Sara Myhill
Assistant Headteacher

Our Governors – Academy Council

Our Governors have an important role to play in the leadership of our academy. They challenge the strategic and operational leadership of the school, through meetings and regular visits to the school.

Sharon Butterfield
Chair of Governors

Barbara Hughes

John McNichol

Laura Smith

Pupil Voice

"We all help our friends so everyone can be good at things and learn new skills!"

"Our teachers are kind and really try their best to help us do things like learn to read and write and be scientists."

"If we are finding things hard there are so many people who want to help us. It's amazing"

Parent Voice

"My child is genuinely happy and doing well here—the school offers such a warm, supportive place for them to grow and do well in their learning and friendships."

"What they do for our children is brilliant. My daughter loves coming to school and she loves to read now."

"This is exactly the kind of place you want your children to be; the school always goes the extra mile to support families when help is needed."

Vision and Values

At Airedale Junior Academy, we fully embrace Castleford Academy Trust's vision of ***"working together to achieve excellence for all"*** and demonstrate this in our drive for excellence for every child.

Alongside this vision and the Trust's core values, our learning attitude characteristics underpin all teaching and learning. These essential learning attitudes are taught, revisited and reinforced across all elements of the school day.

Care

We create safe, respectful environments where everyone feels valued, supported and empowered to thrive.

We care deeply for everyone in our Trust. This means creating safe, respectful environments where pupils and staff feel valued and supported. Through strong partnerships with families and exceptional pastoral care, we remove barriers to success and uphold high standards of behaviour, ensuring calm, focused classrooms where learning can flourish. We champion kindness and honesty so that all members of our community grow as confident individuals who respect themselves, seek out the good in others and take pride in the diverse communities to which they belong.

Aspire

We inspire ambition and provide opportunities for all to aim high, broaden horizons and unlock their full potential.

Aspiration drives everything we do. At Castleford Trust, we believe that no one should have their opportunities limited because of background, beliefs, or ability. We encourage everyone, pupils and staff, to challenge themselves, and aim high. Through excellent teaching, enriching experiences, and professional development, we unlock ambition and nurture talent. We expose pupils and colleagues to the best ideas and opportunities so they can broaden horizons and believe that their potential is limitless.

Succeed

We celebrate success in all its forms by helping every individual belong and achieve, because when one succeeds, we all succeed.

When one of us succeeds, we all succeed. We work tirelessly to ensure everyone makes excellent progress from their starting points and develop the knowledge, skills and character needed for life. Our curriculum builds strong foundations in literacy and numeracy while developing creativity, resilience, and confidence. We also recognise and celebrate achievements in sport, the arts, technology, and personal growth. For our staff, success means thriving in their careers, feeling valued, and having opportunities to develop.

Learning at Airedale Infant Academy

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"working together to achieve excellence for all"

and demonstrate this in our drive for excellence for every child.

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Care, Aspire & Succeed

Aspirations

We will support pupils in identifying and setting goals and aims so that they are always trying to achieve their full potential and be the very best that they can be; and once these goals are achieved, we will strive for more!

Determination

We will facilitate opportunities for pupils to work independently and with others, supporting them in developing the skills and attitudes needed to persevere and show fortitude in the face of adversity so that they can attain their goals and aims.

Communication

We will teach and develop the skills necessary to communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings across a range of contexts whilst listening and considering the opinions and views of others. This will in turn equip pupils with rich vocabulary and language skills.

The School Day

Reception class, Year 1 & Year 2

The doors open at 8:40am with the school day beginning at 8:45am. During the day, Year 1 & 2 have a break time of 15 minutes during the morning and a lunchtime of 1 hour. Reception class has many opportunities to learn and play outside as part of their curriculum offer; they also have an hour long lunch break.

Short outdoor comfort breaks are sometimes used in an afternoon if they help learners concentrate better.

Lunchtimes are 12 noon until 1 pm

The school day ends at 3.15pm unless your child is attending an after-school club. After-school clubs have varying end times that are communicated to families when a child joins that club. We offer a range of after school clubs and share this information with families at the start of the academic year.

Nursery class

We have two nursery classes: a morning class and an afternoon class.

Time	Session
8:45 - 11:45am	Morning
12:15 - 3:15pm	Afternoon

School Uniform

Children at Airedale Infant Academy wear blue and black. Blue is our school colour and we wear it with pride.

Wearing our school uniform fills our children with pride, nurturing a strong sense of belonging and collective identity. For this reason, we expect all pupils to attend school in full uniform

- Blue cardigan or sweatshirt
- Black trousers, shorts, skirt, or blue school dress
- White collared shirt or polo shirt
- Sensible black shoes or dark-coloured trainers

For health and safety, we only allow pupils to wear small stud earrings -these must to be removed for PE lessons. We advise parents to organise ear piercings during the summer holidays, to allow sufficient time for the ear to heal and to teach their child how to remove their own earrings, so that they are able to do this for PE sessions.

Children may wear a watch if they wish but Smart Watches are not allowed to be worn in school by pupils.

PE

Indoors:

- White T shirt and black shorts
- Trainers or pumps

In line with health and safety guidelines, indoor gymnastics work is carried out in bare feet

Outdoors:

- White T shirt
- Black shorts
- Black school hoody or black hooded sweater/hoody
- Tracksuit bottoms
- Change of trainers or pumps

For health and safety, jewellery of any kind, including watches, are NOT to be worn during PE.

Our Curriculum

Our Aims

Our curriculum is a knowledge and skills-based curriculum, including full coverage of the National Curriculum which meets the needs of all Airedale pupils. This takes into consideration the school setting, local, national and international developments.

Our pupils are offered a very wide range of experiences within the curriculum to extend their understanding of themselves and the world in which they live. The children develop skills, attitudes, and values to enable them to become lifelong learners and equip them for the future. There should be no limits to curiosity, and we instil a thirst for new experiences and knowledge.

Readers, Writers & Mathematicians

Reading, writing and mathematics are taught daily. We place unrelenting value on these crucial elements of the curriculum as they provide pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding to access all other areas of learning.

All children are taught and supported to read in a fluent and accurate way; to unpick and understand what they have read; and to recognise the nuances an author may use. In our school we do everything we can to exploit all opportunities to promote reading, including reading through the wider curriculum and reading at home.

All children are taught and supported to learn to write and to write fluently with accuracy and confidence. We focus on transcription and ensuring that children develop excellent handwriting, are accurate spellers and follow grammatical rules. We recognising the importance of grammar, punctuation and spelling as a means of developing creative engaging writers of the future.

All children are taught and supported in becoming competent mathematicians; to rapidly recall key mathematical facts and apply them in a fluent and reasoned manner to scenarios, in word problems and for use in real-life situations.

Pupils will be taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using Standard English. They will be supported to learn to justify ideas with reasons; ask questions to check understanding; develop vocabulary and build knowledge; negotiate, evaluate and build on the ideas of others; and select the appropriate register for effective communication. They will be supported to give well-structured descriptions and explanations and develop their understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas. This will enable pupils to clarify their thinking as well as organise their ideas for writing.

The Wider Curriculum

The wider curriculum has been organised into topics, which are a vehicle to promote our school values and learning attitudes, and to allow for the development of skills and understanding within and across the National Curriculum subjects.

Our curriculum topics allow the teaching of threshold concepts that are the fundamental ‘learning elements’ of a subject. These concepts are built upon and developed within the year, across the year and over the course of the school experience so that we grow and develop learners into historians, geographers, scientists and musicians of the future – and much, much more.

Creating confident learners

Being independent and fostering a love for learning is crucial in our school. This is promoted regularly through the use of enquiry-based lessons where we encourage children to have enquiring minds. Through studying a range of inspiring individuals and businesses, who have had an impact on our world today, children are taught to challenge past stereotypes connected to gender, wealth, disability, and cultural background. This increases the children’s cultural capital and gives them a deeper understanding of the diverse world we live in and how their learning plays a part in this.

The Early Years Curriculum

In our Early Years setting, we provide a truly nurturing and highly supportive environment where every child is valued and encouraged to flourish. Our curriculum focuses on securing foundational skills in phonics, reading comprehension, writing, and early number sense, providing every child with the tools necessary for academic success.

We deliver a dynamic and engaging curriculum designed to secure and grow essential foundational skills and knowledge, while fostering a deep and lasting love of learning. Here, all children are encouraged to feel confident and to fully engage with every learning opportunity, challenge themselves, and always do their very best.

We place high value on developing the foundational prime areas—Communication and Language, PSED, and Physical Development—to ensure every child develops a strong voice, positive relationships, and essential coordination, preparing them confidently for all future learning.

All children have the opportunity to learn indoors and through outdoor provision. Provision is adapted according to pupils' needs and what we know will engage and challenge young learners.

Pupils Will Have Respect For All

By actively promoting, exploring, and discussing British values alongside social, moral, spiritual and cultural differences, we broaden our pupils' perspectives. We provide opportunities to learn about the impactful contributions of Britons to innovation, excellence, and global advancements. Through our personal, social, and health education, we empower our pupils to develop into reflective and engaged citizens. This crucial learning equips them with the skills and understanding necessary for active participation within their community and beyond.

A Curriculum Offer For All

With high expectations for every pupil, all adults in our school plan, deliver, and assess learning in an inclusive and accessible way. Our teachers use appropriate and relevant assessments to establish deliberately ambitious targets. We then employ adaptive teaching – providing targeted support and scaffolding – to ensure all learners can successfully reach these goals.

Adaptive teaching recognises: individual needs; the need for varied and additional resources; when, where and how additional support can be facilitated; and how children learn best. Teachers plan lessons so that all pupils can study every National Curriculum subject and experience success against age-appropriate expectations and/or their own bespoke personal targets.

Religious Education

We have designed our curriculum to ensure pupils gain knowledge and understanding of a wide range of cultural, ethnic, religious, and family backgrounds, nurturing a deep respect for every individual, irrespective of their background. Opportunities to learn about different and diverse communities are embedded throughout our Religious Education curriculum, in assemblies, and across subjects such as PSHE and history. We do this by:

- Learning about customs and practices.
- Visiting places of worship.
- Familiarising ourselves with stories from sacred texts.
- Speaking to religious leaders and people from a faith background.
- Comparing religions to our own custom and practices.

Through these studies, pupils will develop an increased understanding of a range of diverse backgrounds and that everyone should have equity of opportunity.

Our curriculum is designed in line with the Wakefield Agreed Syllabus.

Personal, Social & Economic Education

The social, emotional and mental wellbeing and development of our children at Airedale Infant Academy is an incredibly important focus for us and we address this as part of the school's ethos and culture and through the subjects we teach. Physical health development and wellbeing are key elements of this and we explore the positive impact that physical activity, and keeping fit and well, has on mental health.

Through our curriculum and extensive offer, we promote the importance of a healthy mind alongside the support we offer children.

Our well-structured PSHE curriculum unfolds throughout the year, engaging all children in lessons focused on crucial aspects such as mental well-being, first aid, families, and healthy relationships. This learning is further reinforced by the school's ethos and culture, creating a holistic approach to personal and social development.

Our curriculum also includes the Relationships Education, which is a statutory expectation for all schools and academies. Where consultations with parents are required, the school adheres to this necessary process.

Attendance

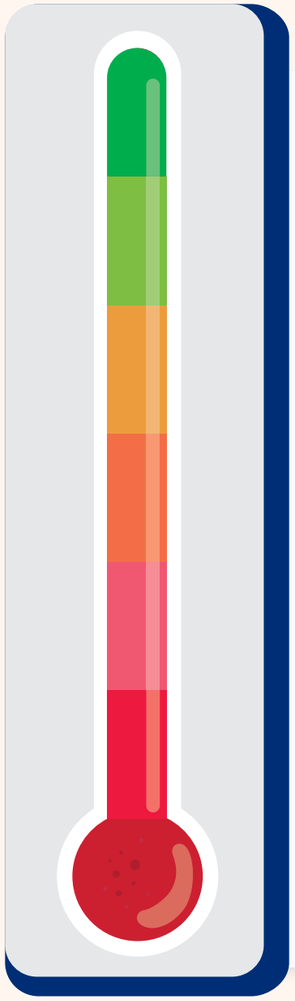
High attendance is a shared responsibility and the cornerstone of a successful school experience for every pupil. Regular attendance directly impacts not only academic achievement and wellbeing but also the ability to collaborate effectively and secure brighter future opportunities.

Furthermore, consistent presence is an important safety feature and ensures pupils can access vital support tailored to their individual needs and is strongly linked to higher attainment at both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.

The attendance target for Airedale Junior Academy is 96%.

Regular attendance in school is crucial for your child so that they do not miss out on valuable teaching and learning. In the event of needing to report your child's absence from school we ask you to help us by:

- Telephoning the school office on the first morning of an absence with the reason and saying when your child will return.
- Arranging dental and medical appointments outside of school hours or during school breaks.
- Keeping us updated by telephone if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness.
- Upon returning to school, providing medical evidence i.e. prescription labels, regarding the reason for absence.



100% attendance You have attended every day. No missed days of learning.

99% attendance 2 days of missed learning.

98% attendance 4 days of missed learning.

96% attendance 7.5 days of missed learning (this is 8 phonics lessons).

95% attendance 9.5 days of missed learning (this is 10 phonics lessons).

92% attendance 25 days of missed learning (this is 15 hours of English lessons).

90% attendance Persistently Absent 19 days of missed learning (this is 23 hours and 45 minutes of playtime and making friends).

Below 90% attendance
Your child has missed over 4 weeks of learning.

85% attendance
28.5 days of learning. This is over 5.5 weeks of missed learning, nearly half a term.

Safeguarding

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment maintaining a cultural vigilance, where children are respected and valued. We will act quickly and follow our procedures to ensure children receive early help and effective support, protection and justice. We all have a statutory duty to “promote and safeguard the welfare of children” (section 175 Education Act 2002)

The safety and wellbeing of every pupil is paramount at our school. We work closely with external professionals in Social Care to provide the highest level of support and care for all our pupils.

Airedale Infant Academy work within the local authority framework of a continuum of need to identify levels of support.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads for our academy are:

Kirsten McKechnie
Headteacher

Kirsty Walker
Deputy Headteacher

Sarah Golsworthy
SENDCo and Safeguarding

Wakefield Continuum of Need
Scan QR code for more information.

Behaviour

Excellent behaviour and positive learning attitudes are the foundation of success and achievement at our school. We are dedicated to providing clear and consistent expectations for pupils’ behaviour through well-defined boundaries and routines. By meticulously planning for individual needs, actively engaging pupils in their learning, and providing structured feedback, we foster interest and maintain focus, thereby preventing the disengagement that can lead to poor behaviour.

We have clear systems of rewards and sanctions which are consistently and fairly applied.

We celebrate positive behaviour with specific praise, and staff award “dojos” that recognise our promoted learning attitudes. Children proudly collect these dojos, earning celebratory wristbands as they accumulate them. Throughout the year, we share successes and awards in assemblies, culminating in our annual Airedale Citizen of the Year ceremony, which honours pupils who consistently demonstrate exemplary learning and go above and beyond.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

At Airedale Infant Academy, we provide an inclusive education for all pupils in collaboration with parents, external agencies and, most importantly, the children. We have high expectations for all our pupils, who are provided with a broad and engaging curriculum tailored to meet the needs of every individual.

Pupils with SEND have thoughtful, accurate targets that support them through their learning journey - and are given the necessary additional support & scaffolding to successfully achieve them. These targets are reviewed three times to teacher/pupil conferences and at least twice a year with parents/carers. Our entire staff work tirelessly to help every child reach their full potential and to celebrate their accomplishments.

'Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress throughout the curriculum. Teachers adapt learning so that all pupils can learn together.'

- Ofsted June 2025

Information about the Local Authority Local Offer can be found using Wakefield SEND Local Offer.

Pastoral Support

The emotional and mental wellbeing of our children at Airedale Infant Academy is equally as important as the physical wellbeing and academic progress. Through our curriculum and extensive wellbeing offer, we promote the importance of a healthy mind alongside the support we offer children through the curriculum and through the supporting team we have.

Our school has Learning Mentors who work with pupils on a variety of emotional aspects. Access to this offer is through an in-school referral service and by speaking to your child's teacher.

We work closely with external services and can access referral routes through Wakefield Local Offer.

Pupil Premium

Schools are allocated pupil premium funding based on the number of pupils they have in an academic year. This funding enables schools and academies to further support pupils, either academically or by providing experiences. The school bases its spend on areas that have the greatest impact on learners and annually assess the impact that the funding has had on pupils.

Schools and academies have a responsibility to publish on their website their

intentions for allocating this spend. To see how we at Airedale Infant Academy, allocate this spend, please visit the school website.

Schools receive an allocated amount of funding for every primary age pupil who claims free school meals, or who has claimed free school meals in the last 6 years.

Your child may be eligible if you, as a parent, get any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (subject to some limitations)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – (subject to some limitations)
- Universal Credit – (subject to some limitations)

Free School Meals forms can be found on the Wakefield Council website.

Parent Partnerships

We consider parents as partners in their child's education and consider the relationships between academy and home of utmost importance for each child to achieve their best.

Throughout the year, we invite parents and carers into school for academic and non-academic events, which may include:

- Parent consultations, twice annually, providing
- information on your child's progress and how they can be supported further.
- Parent workshops linked to parts of the school curriculum
- National/locally linked events
- Sports events
- Class or themes assemblies
- Festival celebrations and linked events
- Coffee morning with visiting speaker or information

We regularly communicate with you and keep you updated on news and events through our app, which you are invited to when your child enrols at the school.

Lunchtimes

All pupils throughout school are provided with an hour for lunch.

Pupils are provided with time to eat their lunch, as well as socialise outdoors with their peers. We offer a wide variety of food options on a daily basis and can cater for pupils who have dietary needs, with prior arrangement.

The cost of a school meal is shared during the initial parents meeting/briefing, or during a visit to the school. Should you require an update on this cost that please contact the school office.

Ofsted

The academy was inspected in June 2025 and was graded as continuing to be a ‘Good’ school in all categories.

To read the full report, please visit the school website.

Airedale
Infant Academy

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