

Inspection of Abbey Woods Academy

Wimblestraw Road, Berinsfield, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 7LZ

Inspection dates: 11–12 September 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Abbey Woods is a happy and welcoming school. Pupils are cheerful and kind towards each other. Relationships are based on mutual respect. The atmosphere around school is calm and harmonious. The school has a particularly supportive, caring and nurturing ethos. This helps pupils to develop positive attitudes towards each other. They learn about and value differences between people.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and that staff care about their well-being and welfare. Pupils generally behave well. They know who to talk to if they have any concerns and trust staff to always help them. Pupils told inspectors that bullying does not happen.

Pupils are enthusiastic about the different responsibilities they have in school. These include being classroom monitors, playtime buddies and members of the school council. Leaders seek and listen to pupils' views and opinions. Pupils also enjoy the wide variety of after-school clubs they take part in, such as sports, cooking and the touch-typing club.

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

The quality of the wider curriculum is not good. Leaders have not yet considered what knowledge should be taught and when in subjects other than English and mathematics. They have not given teachers enough guidance to help pupils learn well in all subjects. Leaders have not made sure that teachers have the required subject knowledge in subjects such as science, history and geography. Teachers do not check what pupils have understood effectively enough. Pupils' misconceptions often go unchecked. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) find it difficult to keep up in the wider curriculum. As a result, pupils do not develop essential knowledge across different subjects to help them achieve well by the end of key stage 2.

There are some more positive aspects of the quality of education, however. Leaders ensure that staff focus on teaching reading from the moment children start school. Staff are well trained and skilled in teaching phonics (letters and the sounds they represent). Teachers are clear about which sounds and words children should be able to read by the end of each term. Pupils quickly develop the skills to become fluent readers. Pupils who are not confident readers receive effective help, so that no pupil is left behind. In mathematics, teachers clearly explain mathematical topics to pupils. They check and provide the right level of support to help pupils learn well. For example, Year 1 pupils use a range of resources to help them read, count and order large numbers. In the early years, children get off to a good start. Children thrive in the well-structured curriculum. Staff plan activities that cater for children's developing needs and their natural interests.

Pupils are generally positive and well behaved in lessons. However, at times, they lose concentration in lessons where they are not sure what their teachers want them

to learn and remember. This can lead to confusion and gaps in what they learn. Pupils described the work they do in the wider curriculum as being 'too bitty and confusing'.

Leaders and staff are united in their desire to make sure that pupils develop into considerate and well-rounded people. Assemblies encourage pupils to discuss different values. Many pupils are quick to give examples of how they can support those who are vulnerable in the wider world. Pupils learn to respect and celebrate differences. Their compassionate views prepare them well for life in modern Britain.

Staff say that leaders care about their well-being. Recent changes have been made to the school's assessment procedures to reduce the workload of staff. Staff told inspectors that they feel really well supported by leaders.

Local governors know what the school does well and where improvements need to be made. They recognise that they have not challenged leaders enough to check that planned actions bring about the required improvement in the quality of education, including for pupils with SEND. The trust provides additional, useful support. However, leaders have not always made the best use of the resources and expertise available.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take their responsibilities for the protection and care of pupils very seriously. They ensure that children are safe in school. Leaders have robust systems in place for safeguarding pupils.

The trust checks that the school keeps detailed records on the suitability of staff to work in school. These records are organised well.

Staff are very knowledgeable about the community they serve. This helps them to be aware of any potential risks and provide appropriate support for vulnerable families. The school works effectively with external agencies to provide suitable care for pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Weaknesses in pupils' knowledge across the curriculum contribute to their low attainment at the end of key stage 2. The content of the wider curriculum is not as well organised as it needs to be. Leaders need to identify the knowledge and skills pupils should learn at different stages so that they achieve well.
- The curriculum plans for subjects such as science, geography and history do not support teachers to build pupils' knowledge sequentially so that pupils understand

and remember key facts and ideas. Leaders need to ensure that the content of all subject plans is well chosen, carefully sequenced and that the end points are clearly identified.

- Across the wider curriculum, leaders have not made sure that teachers have the required subject-specific knowledge. Teachers need more training to improve this professional knowledge and guidance to teach a range of subjects more effectively.
- Leaders have not ensured that teachers make appropriate use of assessment information well enough to check pupils' understanding and adapt their teaching accordingly in subjects other than English and mathematics. Leaders need to make sure teachers have the skills to help them support pupils successfully.
- Local governors do not challenge leaders well enough to check for the impact of strategic actions to improve the quality of education, which includes the achievement of pupils with SEND. Local governors need to hold leaders to account more effectively.
- Leaders do not always make the best use of the resources and wider expertise available through the work of the trust. Leaders need to make sure they take maximum advantage of the specific and broader support available to improve the quality of education and achievement of all pupils.

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're 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	139709
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10111134
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	195
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Heather Dawson
Headteacher	Grant Mottram
Website	www.abbeywoodsacademy.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 May 2017

Information about this school

- Abbey Woods Academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of The Anthem Schools Trust.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND, including pupils with an education, health and care plan, is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, the chair of trustees, the director of education for the Anthem Trust and the chair of the local governing body.
- During the inspection, inspectors focused their activities on reading, mathematics, science, music and geography. This meant that, in each subject, inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils, spoke to teachers and

looked at pupils' work.

- Inspectors considered the views of staff from meeting with staff and from the responses of 14 staff to the confidential questionnaire.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, including the central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and carers during the inspection and considered the views of 22 parents who responded to Ofsted's parental questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Shazia Akram, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Nigel Cook

Ofsted Inspector

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