

# Inspection of Abbot Alphege Academy

Beckford Drive, Lansdown, Bath BA1 9AU

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Inspection dates: 19 and 20 January 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

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

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

Despite leaders' strong, aspirational vision, some pupils do not receive a good quality of education. Leaders have high expectations of what pupils will achieve. However, inconsistent assessment practices across the school mean that, at times, important information about what pupils know and understand is not used to plan learning effectively. In addition, some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not have the support they need to learn successfully alongside their peers.

Pupils at Abbot Alphege Academy are polite and welcoming. They feel happy and safe at school. Pupils and most parents support the view that the school is nurturing and has a family feel throughout. Staff know pupils well and build secure relationships. Leaders prioritise pupils' emotional well-being, confidence and resilience so that they are ready to learn. Pupils state that bullying does not happen. They say that adults would help them if they were worried about bullying that involved themselves or a friend.

Staff are working successfully to increase the opportunities pupils have to learn beyond the classroom. Pupils describe how the school has recently set up a school council. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about the mixed-age assemblies they lead each week. They use these to discuss and increase the awareness of the Christian values that the school holds in high esteem.

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

The quality of education is not yet good enough. In some subjects, the curriculum is not delivered well enough so that pupils learn as well as they should. For example, in mathematics and phonics, there is not a consistent approach to establish what pupils already know and understand. Consequently, subsequent learning does not build on pupils' prior knowledge.

Some pupils with SEND do not receive effective support to meet their individual needs. For example, at times, tasks are not broken down into the small enough steps that some pupils need. Consequently, some pupils struggle to access learning, and this can result in them not engaging during lessons.

Leaders are working to improve the culture of reading. Teachers read regularly with pupils. Children in Reception experience a wide range of rich texts to support their language and vocabulary development. This learning successfully moves into planned learning activities in the indoor and outdoor environment. Children are encouraged to build on what they have learned.

Teachers of early reading use a consistent approach to teach phonics in early years and key stage 1. Nonetheless, some pupils in key stage 1 do not achieve as well as they could. This is because monitoring systems do not check how well teachers assess pupils' learning in some lessons.

Although there are weaknesses in the quality of education, leadership at the school is good. This is because leaders, including governors, accurately identify the improvements needed to secure a good quality of education for pupils. Leaders are working on the right things. They have rightly prioritised the development of a new curriculum. Firm foundations are now in place to secure well-sequenced learning towards ambitious goals. In the early years, the curriculum is successfully sequenced to develop children's speech, language and communication. Staff know how important it is to identify the needs of children as early as possible. Leaders are improving aspects of the early years environment, such as the outside area. These improvements are working well to make a positive impact on children's learning at the start of their education.

Staff feel supported and involved in the changes that leaders are putting in place. The local governing body is relatively new. Despite this, governors understand their responsibilities and show commitment to moving the school forward. In addition, leadership is strengthened further by the work of the trust. Trustees oversee the work of the governors effectively.

The school promotes pupils' personal development well. Staff make sure that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, develop their independence and resilience. This has been a particular focus during the pandemic. Pupils are tolerant and respectful of each other. Staff focus on developing pupils' social skills and on how these impact on maintaining friendships. Leaders are committed to increasing the range of extra-curricular opportunities. The current offer is attended well, including by disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.

Staff at the school are dedicated to meeting the needs of pupils. Leaders provide training and support for teachers and subject leaders so that they can improve what they do. Leaders have rightly identified that the focus is now to move towards monitoring and improving the impact of the changes they have made.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders act quickly on concerns that staff bring to their attention. They keep a careful eye on pupils they know to be vulnerable. Staff have regular training and updates, so they know what to do when a pupil is at risk. Leaders encourage staff to be vigilant, so they are clear about the role they have in keeping pupils safe. Leaders work well with external agencies to support families when necessary.

Recruitment procedures are thorough. Leaders prioritise ensuring the school site is safe and that pupils are well supervised. Pupils understand how the curriculum teaches them to keep themselves safe through aspects such as online safety.

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

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

- Some pupils with SEND are not given the support they need to access the full curriculum. This can mean that they are not able to access learning well enough. Leaders must ensure that teachers support pupils effectively in order to meet their needs and help them to be successful in their learning.
- Leaders have started to improve the use of assessment. This helps teachers to establish what pupils already know and understand. However, there remain inconsistencies in some areas, such as phonics and mathematics. As a result, at times, learning is not sequentially building on what pupils know and can do. Leaders need to make sure that learning is based on ongoing assessment and, therefore, helps pupils to learn more.

## 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.

If you are the school and you are 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144737
<b>Local authority</b>	Bath and North East Somerset Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212164
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	102
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Christopher Nye
<b>Headteacher</b>	Vicky Dupras
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://abbot-alphege.org.uk">abbot-alphege.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Abbot Alphege Academy opened in September 2017.
- The school joined The Partnership Trust in September 2018. Previously, it was part of the Comenius Trust.
- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school. The school has not had a section 48 inspection.

## Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection for the school since it opened in September 2017 and since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the chief executive of the trust, the school leadership partner and pupils.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and religious education.
- Inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with those responsible for governance, including members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school, including improvement plans, leaders' self-evaluation, local governing body minutes and documentation relating to behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors examined safeguarding records, checked staff's safeguarding knowledge and spoke with pupils. An inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader.
- Inspectors considered 41 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 40 free-text comments. They took into consideration 11 responses to the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Leanne Thirlby, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Nathan Kemp

Her Majesty's Inspector

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