

Inspection of a good school: Amblecote Primary School

School Drive, Amblecote, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 4DQ

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 March 2022

Outcome

Amblecote Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Amblecote Primary School is a welcoming, friendly school. The core values of friendship, kindness, resilience, respect, honesty and pride are at the centre of this school's work. Leaders have high aspirations for every child. Pupils enjoy coming to school. However, a small number of pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. Pupils are happy and feel safe at school. Bullying is not tolerated. Staff act swiftly to resolve any issues that arise.

Leaders ensure the curriculum meets the personal and academic needs of pupils. Pupils enjoy reading. A range of enrichment activities, such as after-school clubs, a visiting circus and a walk to a local theatre performance, allow pupils to develop their talents and interests. Year 6 pupils are excited about their planned summer residential trip to Astley Burf.

Leaders ensure pupils' behaviour is managed consistently and fairly across the school. Pupils are polite and courteous. Leaders expect all pupils to do their best. Pupils work hard and concentrate in lessons. Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school. They told us that 'children have so many opportunities and are supported to reach their potential'.

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

Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum for pupils. In most subjects, including mathematics and physical education, learning is carefully sequenced so that pupils build up knowledge over time. For example, pupils in Year 6 learn to play hockey confidently by practising skills such as dribbling and defending. However, some subjects, such as history and geography, are less well developed. Leaders have prioritised curriculum development in these subjects.

Subject leaders make sure teachers present new learning well. Teachers regularly recap on prior learning. Pupils say this helps them remember things they have learned before

and helps them integrate new knowledge with what they already know. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They set work that is demanding and matches the aims of the ambitious curriculum. Teachers make regular checks on pupils' learning during lessons and over time. This helps them to spot pupils' misconceptions and address them quickly.

Children in the early years settle well into school life because staff have high expectations and establish routines early on. Children learn about number through practical activities, songs and stories. Leaders prioritise reading. Younger pupils learn to read and write words and simple sentences accurately. This is because the reading curriculum is carefully planned and pupils are taught to read well. Staff are highly skilled and receive regular training in phonics. Leaders make sure that teachers have the resources they need to teach reading well. Reading books closely match the letter sounds pupils are learning. Handwriting is also prioritised. Pupils improve handwriting movement and core body strength through a range of structured activities. As a result, the high expectations leaders set for pupils' handwriting are met.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils who are disadvantaged are effectively supported to access the same curriculum as other pupils. Adults provide timely help, additional resources and support to pupils who need it. This enables pupils to focus on their learning. As a result, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND achieve well in school. Parents are positive about the care and support their children receive.

The school provides a range of enrichment opportunities as part of the curriculum. These experiences support pupils' personal, social and spiritual development. For example, pupils learn to care about others. They enjoy fundraising for charities such as Young Minds. Opportunities such as reading ambassadors, digital leaders and the ethos committee allow pupils to take on responsibilities. In doing so, they develop confidence and communication skills. However, some pupils do not take up these opportunities. The school rules help pupils to understand right and wrong and how to keep themselves and others safe. Pupils recognise and respect others' differences. They enjoyed learning about the Hindu festival 'Holi' from a visiting speaker. Visits to places of worship such as the local church and Singers Hill Synagogue allow pupils to learn about other cultures and religions. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They make regular checks on the work of the school. Governors hold the headteacher to account effectively for the performance of the school. Staff say that they are well supported by leaders to manage their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil. They are aware of specific areas of concern such as protecting pupils from sexual harassment, domestic abuse and radicalisation. Leaders seek the right support for pupils. This includes support from external agencies when necessary.

Leaders ensure that the appropriate checks on staff are undertaken before they are appointed. Pupils know how to raise concerns with trusted adults in school. They learn about healthy relationships and how to keep safe when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Although leaders have recently reviewed the curriculum in some subjects, they have not yet evaluated the impact that these plans are having on what pupils know and remember. Leaders should support subject leaders to evaluate the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning in all subjects, particularly history and geography.
- Some pupils do not attend extra-curriculum activities which could be of benefit to them. This means that these pupils do not develop their confidence and resilience as well as others. Leaders should monitor pupils' participation in these activities and encourage participation to ensure that all pupils benefit as much as possible.
- A small number of pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means that gaps emerge in their knowledge, and they struggle to develop positive attitudes to learning. Leaders should take further steps to work with pupils and their families to instil the importance of regular school attendance so that attendance improves for these pupils.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2011.

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

Unique reference number	103806
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10211201
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Roberts
Headteacher	Jane Cook
Website	www.amblecote.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in history, physical education and reading. This included visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work, examining curriculum documents and talking with pupils and staff. The inspector considered a sample of pupils' work from other subjects, as well as curriculum information on the school's website.
- The inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements. This included examining the single central record of employment checks on school staff.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in class and at other times during the day.
- During the inspection, the inspector had formal meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, both special education needs coordinators, the designated safeguarding leader, governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of responses to the online parents' survey, Ofsted Parent View, the pupils' survey and the survey for staff.

Inspection team

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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