

Inspection of Ashby Fields Primary School

Wimborne Place, Ashby Fields, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 0YP

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Ashby Fields is a happy school. Pupils like their learning. One pupil told inspectors, 'The staff are nice, and the children are friendly. We like it here.' Pupils say that they feel safe. They know that there is always a member of staff they can speak to if they are worried.

The school's new leaders have set high expectations of pupils. Pupils enjoy working hard. The new leaders have quickly identified that pupils do not always remember what they have been taught across the curriculum. They know that on occasions, teachers do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of how successfully the curriculum supports pupils to know and remember more. This includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils behave well. They know that bullying is not tolerated. Pupils say that staff are quick to sort out any concerns for them. Pupils are polite and respectful. They care for each other. Pupils have a very clear understanding of difference and equality.

Most parents and carers are positive about the school. However, a significant minority of parents say that they would like more information from the school about their child's progress and changes in staffing.

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

Over time, leaders have not ensured that the quality of education is good in all subjects. It is not always clear what pupils should be learning and when. In some subjects, improvements are already underway. Leaders have identified some of the key content they expect pupils to learn. Leaders have not yet identified ways to teach the curriculum content successfully. This prevents some pupils from remembering the most important knowledge and building their understanding over time. Subject leaders do not check regularly enough how successfully pupils access the curriculum in the foundation subjects.

Reading is prioritised across the school. However, there has not been sufficient training to ensure consistency in how all staff teach phonics. Some pupils find the work too hard. Not all staff ensure that the books pupils read match the sounds that pupils know well enough. Some pupils struggle to read unfamiliar words as they have too many gaps in their phonic knowledge. Some of the pupils who struggle to read do not always receive the support they need to help them catch up.

The mathematics curriculum is well planned. However, staff have not been trained sufficiently well to teach the curriculum successfully. There is inconsistency across classes in how teachers teach knowledge in this subject. Teachers' subject knowledge is inconsistent. This means that they do not always present subject content clearly. Consequently, pupils sometimes confuse mathematical concepts,

such as shape and space. Pupils often struggle to remember previous curriculum content. For example, some pupils cannot remember how to read temperature on scales, despite recent lessons in this area.

Until recently, leaders' work to identify pupils with SEND has not been precise enough. Staff do not always identify well enough the additional needs of these pupils so that they can provide the right support. As a result, access to the curriculum is variable for these pupils. Some pupils with SEND do not make the progress that they should. Leaders are aware of this and have identified what needs to improve.

Leaders have started to set out how learning in the early years connects with the learning that pupils will encounter as they move through the school. This is very clear in some areas. However, sometimes, children do not remember what they have been taught across the curriculum in the early years. For example, some children could recall what they had learned about capacity in mathematics, but not their learning in other areas. Relationships are very positive between children and adults in the early years. Leaders provide an engaging environment inside and outside the classroom.

Leaders have organised the curriculum so that pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils understand the different forms that families can take. They understand right from wrong. Pupils know how to eat healthily and keep fit. However, pupils' understanding of fundamental British values and different faiths is fragile.

Trustees and representatives of the multi-academy trust know the school very well. They understand the school's strengths and have acted quickly to bring about improvements. Trustees fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Leaders work very well with staff. They provide regular training. They consider the staff's well-being and workload. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the leaders and the professional support from the trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe, including when online. Pupils know who to go to if they have a concern. They know that staff take their concerns seriously.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff know how to spot pupils who may be at risk of harm. They pass on concerns promptly. Leaders provide regular training for staff and governors. Leaders support pupils' welfare. They work well with external agencies to provide additional help when needed. Governors and trust representatives regularly check the school's safeguarding procedures.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are partway through developing a sequenced curriculum. In some subjects, leaders have yet to identify the key knowledge that they wish pupils to learn. As a result, on occasions, there are inconsistencies in what pupils can recall about their learning. Leaders should ensure that there is clarity about what pupils should learn and when across all subjects, so that all pupils, including those with SEND, build their understanding over time.
- Staff are inconsistent in their implementation of the school's phonics programme. They have not been trained well enough to deliver the school's phonics programme consistently. Some pupils who struggle to read have reading books that are too challenging. Some do not receive sufficient support to enable them to become confident readers. As a result, some pupils across the school struggle to read unfamiliar words and find it difficult to access the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to deliver the school's phonics programme well, including by ensuring that reading books match the sounds that pupils already know, and by providing pupils who struggle to read with the support they need to enable them to read with greater confidence.
- The school's approach to assessment is inconsistent. Staff regularly assess what pupils know. However, staff are not always clear about what they are trying to achieve through undertaking such assessments. It is not always clear when teachers use assessment whether they are aiming to help pupils embed knowledge, trying to inform their own teaching, or attempting to understand gaps in learning due to the pandemic. Leaders need to ensure that all staff understand the rationale behind their use of assessment and that the use of assessment does not place unnecessary burdens on staff or pupils.
- Leaders do not ensure that pupils with SEND access the curriculum well enough. Leaders have not established rigorous systems to assess and meet these pupils' individual needs. As a result, pupils with SEND do not always benefit from a good-quality education. Leaders should make sure that all pupils with SEND receive the support they need to enable them to access the full curriculum and achieve as highly as they should.
- Leaders' approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of education in the different subjects is not rigorous enough. As a result, they do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of how well pupils access the curriculum in each subject so that they know and remember more. Leaders, including subject leaders, should ensure that their approach to monitoring and evaluating the curriculum is sufficiently rigorous to inform them about what aspects need to improve further, so that the school's quality of education is good.
- Some pupils' knowledge of British values and different faiths is fragile. Although they know to respect difference, some pupils are not as aware as they should be of what these differences may be. Leaders should ensure that pupils have the necessary knowledge and understanding of British values and different faiths.

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	145446
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10227024
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	378
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Linda Brooks
Interim Executive Headteacher	Rachel Edkins
Website	http://www.ashbyfields.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Ashby Fields Primary School converted to become an academy in January 2018. When the predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of the InMAT Trust.
- At the time of the inspection, an interim executive headteacher had been in post for one week.
- The school provides an on-site breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received 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.

- The inspectors met with the interim executive headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, the acting leader with responsibility for provision for pupils with SEND, and teaching and support staff.
- One inspector met with representatives of the multi-academy trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science, art and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. He considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's free-text service. They also considered the responses to the staff survey and the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Damien Turrell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Ben O'Connell	Ofsted Inspector
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