

Inspection of Abbey Park Middle School

Abbey Road, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 1DF

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Abbey Park Middle School is an inclusive and welcoming school. Pupils really enjoy their learning. They are happy in lessons and when playing with their friends on the playground. Effective safeguarding processes help to keep pupils safe.

Leaders and governors have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils are well supported to be successful in their learning. Pupils with additional needs achieve well because of their individual learning programmes.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are polite and courteous to each other and adults. Pupils have a secure understanding of the different types of bullying. They say there is very little bullying in school. When bullying does take place, staff deal with it well.

There are many clubs available to pupils. These are well attended. They include exciting activities such as fencing and Scottish dancing. The school dogs are a valuable addition to the school. They make a positive contribution to the pupils' school experience. Parents recognise that staff go the extra mile for their children. One parent summed up how many feel by saying: 'Fantastic support and encouragement. This helps to develop children beyond the curriculum and into their lives and their future.'

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders have created a new curriculum. It takes account of what pupils need to learn and when they should learn it. Subject leaders have worked with the first school to ensure that the curriculum builds on what pupils have learned before. The sequence of learning helps pupils to know and remember more over time. Subject leaders plan the vocabulary and knowledge they want pupils to know and remember. Staff use a variety of approaches to check how well pupils are progressing in their learning.

Pupils enjoy learning new things. However, there remains some inconsistency in how the curriculum is delivered. For example, presentation in books is generally of high quality, but this is not the case in all subjects. Also, while many pupils have a clear recall of what they have learned in lessons, in some subjects, pupils struggle to remember what they have learned before. A few pupils also struggle with their understanding of important subject vocabulary.

Pupils read with fluency, expression and confidence. Pupils at the early stages of reading are well supported to learn the sounds which letters make. Books are well matched to the letter sounds pupils are learning. Effective support helps pupils who have fallen behind in their reading to catch up. Pupils speak with passion about a wide range of authors and books they enjoy reading.

Pupils behave well. They are curious learners who enjoy their lessons. This means that lessons proceed with little or no interruption.

Pupils learn about and understand the difference between right and wrong. For example, in a recent physical education lesson, pupils enjoyed the dance based on 'Macavity: The Mystery Cat'. The visit of Rebecca Redfern, a local Paralympian, inspired and motivated pupils. This helped to raise their aspirations for the future.

Pupils have a secure knowledge of other faiths. They understand how important it is to have respect for others who may be different to them. Pupils also have a good understanding of fundamental British values.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Leaders and teachers quickly identify pupils who need extra help. Staff then use a wide range of support strategies to help them. Some specialist support helps to give pupils a sense of achievement to build their self-esteem. The additional support for pupils with SEND is very effective and helps these pupils to make good progress.

Governors support and challenge leaders in equal measure. Staff feel well supported and valued by leaders. Leaders have ensured that the well-being of staff and their workload is prioritised and considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff recognise the need to be vigilant for any signs of pupils being at potential risk of harm. All staff receive regular training about what they should do if they have concerns. The school has a robust system for logging and following up on concerns. Leaders work well with outside agencies to protect pupils when the need arises. They ensure that appropriate pre-employment checks take place before adults are appointed as staff members.

Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe. Age-appropriate safeguarding themes run through the curriculum. Leaders promote pupils' well-being effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils do not have a secure understanding of key knowledge and vocabulary in some subjects. This reduces their ability to remember and build on what they have learned. Leaders should place greater emphasis on embedding key knowledge and ensuring that pupils understand important subject vocabulary.
- The implementation of the curriculum is inconsistent in some subjects. This means that presentation is not always of the highest quality. Pupils are also exposed to differing vocabulary which hinders understanding in some subjects.

Leaders should provide teachers with further support and training to ensure that they all deliver the curriculum effectively.

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	116774
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10227527
Type of school	Middle deemed primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	9 to 12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	119
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rachel Clements
Headteacher	Rebecca Scully
Website	www.abbeyparkmiddle.worcs.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	23 and 24 October 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of a federation, which also consists of a pre-school and a first school. There is one governing body that is responsible for all three schools in the federation.
- There is a specially resource provision for pupils with SEND at the school which caters for up to 10 pupils with an education, health and care plan, as well as a diagnosis for autism spectrum disorder.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school uses one registered 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and senior staff from the school. They also met with the special educational needs coordinator and curriculum subject leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and three other governors.
- The lead inspector spoke with the local authority school improvement lead.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in early reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding policies, procedures and records. The lead inspector met with the executive headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding lead, and a senior colleague. Inspectors also spoke to staff, governors and pupils about the school's approach to keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors reviewed the text responses of parents and considered the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to the staff questionnaire and met with staff to discuss their views.

Inspection team

Declan McCauley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Diana Pearce	Ofsted Inspector

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