

Inspection of a good school: Abbey Village Primary School

Bolton Road, Abbey Village, Chorley, Lancashire PR6 8DD

Inspection dates:

7 July 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like coming to this small, friendly school. They said that everyone knows each other here. Children in the early years enjoy learning in their bright, well-organised classroom. Older pupils like to chat to their friends at playtimes. Pupils new to the school receive a warm welcome. This helps them to settle in quickly and to feel at home.

Leaders and staff expect pupils to achieve well. Most pupils try hard in class. However, pupils do not learn as well as they should in some subjects. This is because there are weaknesses in the curriculums in these subjects. Leaders' work to address these weaknesses is at too early a stage for pupils to have benefited.

Pupils show kindness to each other and generally get on well. Pupils said that bullying is rare at this school. Leaders respond quickly and effectively if ever it happens. Leaders expect pupils to follow the school rules, such as when to talk and when to listen to the teacher. Generally pupils follow these rules. At times, pupils are not reminded of these expectations promptly enough. When this happens, some pupils forget the rules and behave less well.

There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in clubs and activities. For example, pupils represented their school when they took part in a singing performance at a local town hall. Pupils enjoy hockey and running clubs. All pupils are encouraged to participate in these activities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils feel safe in school. They know who to talk to if they have any worries.

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

The school has experienced a period of considerable instability in leadership and staffing in recent years. This has led to a poorer quality of education than pupils received at the

time of the last inspection. This instability has now been resolved. Leaders have put in place a more ambitious curriculum for all pupils.

The curriculum covers a broad range of subjects from the early years to Year 6. In some subjects, new leaders have made improvements to the curriculums. They contain the important knowledge that pupils need to learn over time. Pupils learn well in these subjects, including those with SEND. In other subjects, the curriculums are at an earlier stage of development. Pupils do not learn as well in these subjects, including in the early years.

Some staff with responsibility for leading subjects are new to their roles leading those subjects. They have had limited training to help them to develop the curriculums in these subjects. This hampers their ability to support teachers to deliver the curriculum effectively for pupils.

Leaders have made reading a priority. They have made sure that pupils have plenty of high-quality books to read. Pupils enjoy visiting the attractive school library. Teachers guide pupils in their choices and encourage them to read widely. Pupils develop a love of reading.

Children in the early years learn about phonics from the start of the Reception Year. Teachers provide activities that help the youngest children to develop strong listening skills. This helps them to listen for letter sounds in words. They learn new letters and sounds each day. Children and younger pupils read books that contain the sounds that they know. This helps them to develop confidence at reading. Pupils at risk of falling behind are supported quickly to catch up. Children and pupils learn to read well, including those with SEND.

Teachers check in lessons to make sure that pupils have understood new learning. They provide extra help for pupils who need it. Pupils have opportunities to revisit earlier learning. This helps to make sure that they remember their knowledge over time.

Leaders and staff work together to identify any pupils who may have SEND. These pupils receive timely support to enable them to access the curriculum. Pupils with SEND are fully involved in all aspects of school life. They achieve similarly to other pupils. That said, along with their classmates, these pupils achieve less well in those subjects where the curriculum is not fully developed.

Mostly, pupils behave sensibly in school. For example, children in the early years learn how to share and how to tidy things away after they have used them. Pupils enter the hall in an orderly way for their singing practice. On some occasions, some pupils do not behave as sensibly. Sometimes pupils said that they especially do not like it when others chat in lessons because it disturbs their learning.

Leaders make sure that pupils learn about important values such as democracy and tolerance. Leaders have forged links with schools in other communities. Pupils learn about diversity, difference and similarity among people through a range of experiences when they visit these schools. Pupils learn to take responsibility, for example, when they

become librarians or members of the school council. All of these experiences support pupils' wider development.

Governors ask leaders challenging questions about their work to improve the school. Staff said that they are proud to work here. They appreciate the care and concern that leaders show for staff's workload and well-being. Governors and leaders work effectively with parents and carers. Parents said that they welcome the recent improvements that leaders have made to the school.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspectors agreed that early reading, science, and art and design may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding training. Staff know how to recognise the signs of abuse and neglect. They know how to report any concerns that they might have about a pupil's welfare.

Leaders communicate effectively with other professionals, such as those from the local authority safeguarding hub. This enables them to ensure that pupils and families who need help receive it promptly.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, when they are using the internet. They learn about the risks of sharing their personal information and what to do if they see something that makes them uncomfortable.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculums in some subjects are not fully developed. They do not contain all of the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. This prevents teachers from making sure the learning that they provide includes everything that pupils need to know. Work to develop these curriculums is in the process of being completed. Leaders should now ensure that the curriculums in all subjects are further developed and refined so that teachers can make sure that pupils, including those with SEND, learn all of the important knowledge that they need from the early years to Year 6.
- Those subject leaders who are new to their roles have had limited training. This prevents them from being able to provide the support and guidance that colleagues need to deliver the curriculums well in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders have appropriate training so that the full curriculum is delivered as intended.
- Staff's expectations for pupils' behaviour are sometimes too low. When this happens, some pupils do not behave as well as they should, including during lessons. Leaders

should ensure that all staff set high expectations for pupils' behaviour so that pupils across the school behave consistently well.

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 or outstanding 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 school to be good in November 2012.

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	119307
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10226087
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	54
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Wendy Curtis
Headteacher	Shelley Bennett
Website	www.abbeyvillage.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher was appointed to the school in January 2022.
- A new chair of governors was appointed in September 2021.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- Since January 2022, the school has begun to offer nursery places to 3- and 4-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

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.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders. The lead inspector also met with members of the governing body, and with two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the

curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. Inspectors also spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils. Inspectors also spoke with some pupils about school life.
- Inspectors spoke with staff to discuss leaders' support for their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Pippa Jackson Maitland

Her Majesty's Inspector

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