

Inspection of a good school: Ashwater Primary School

Ashwater, Beaworthy, Devon EX21 5EW

Inspection date:

29 November 2022

Outcome

Ashwater Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Ashwater Primary School model the 'Carey Qualities' to 'aim high, be resilient and take care of each other'. They are happy to come to school and love to learn. Parents and carers who responded to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, commented that their children receive effective support and nurture from staff.

Pupils understand what is expected of them. They are calm, well mannered and considerate of others. Pupils value the rewards they receive for their conduct, their learning and for reading regularly. They say that bullying is rare and that everyone gets on well together. Pupils know that staff would quickly sort out any worries or incidents, and this helps them to feel safe.

Pupils take part in a range of extra-curricular visits and clubs which enhance the curriculum. Pupils value these opportunities, as do parents. Pupils spend time in their local community. For example, they visit a residential care home and the parish church. They also sing at the nearby cathedral. Most pupils attend an extra-curricular club, such as gardening in 'The Secret Garden'. They proudly represent their school at sporting competitions.

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

Leaders ensure that reading is a priority. Pupils read widely and often. Staff deliver a well-sequenced phonics curriculum that supports pupils to learn new sounds and letters. Children learn to read as soon as they start school. The books they read are carefully matched to their reading ability. Teachers make regular checks on the sounds pupils remember. They use this insight to make adaptations to the curriculum. As a result, all pupils become confident, fluent readers. This helps them to learn successfully across the wider curriculum.

Leaders are ambitious for what pupils should learn. In many subjects, they have considered what they want pupils to learn and by when. Pupils use ambitious vocabulary

in each subject. Staff support pupils to share their views and speak in full sentences. For example, in history, pupils in key stage 1 talk confidently about Mary Seacole. In mathematics, pupils use the vocabulary they know to answer worded problems successfully. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the support they need to learn the same ambitious curriculum.

Despite this, in some subjects, the curriculum is not broken down into small enough steps of learning for some pupils in mixed-age classes. When this happens, pupils do not remember what they have learned well enough.

Leaders provide well-thought-out professional development for staff. This ensures that staff present knowledge to pupils clearly. They consider pupils' starting points and use what they know to address any gaps in learning. The youngest children get off to a flying start. Staff provide opportunities for these children to practise what they have learned. For example, children accurately draw and name two-dimensional shapes.

At lunchtimes, pupils eat together as a whole school family. The school hall has a 'buzz' of friendly conversations. Older pupils have responsibilities to support games at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils play well with each other.

Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. This is because leaders ensure that they learn about life beyond their village. Pupils meet people from a range of different religions and cultures through regular school visits or online conversations. For example, pupils had the opportunity to speak with a photographer living in Asia. They have also visited a local mosque and cathedral. Pupils demonstrate respect for others. They also learn about their own cultural heritage and are proud of where they live.

Leaders, including governors, continually strive to improve the school further. Senior leaders have strengthened wider leadership roles across the school. Leaders communicate with parents regularly, which parents value. Staff comment that leaders are 'supportive and understanding' of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a culture of vigilance towards safeguarding. Staff understand that 'it could happen here'. Leaders provide regular training for staff and governors. This supports staff to report any concerns swiftly. Leaders follow up on concerns so that pupils get the help that they need to be safe. Governors monitor the school's approach to safeguarding regularly. Leaders make the right checks when new staff join the school.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They respect each other's personal space. Pupils participate in regular safeguarding assemblies. For example, a local charity recently visited pupils to talk about animal safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not sequenced well enough to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-aged classes. This means that the curriculum does not take into account the starting points of some pupils sufficiently. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is broken down into small steps of learning and sequenced carefully so that all pupils can build successfully on what they know.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 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.

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	113126
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10211227
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	29
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Lawlor
Headteacher	Ruhaina Alford
Website	www.thecareyfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Ashwater Primary School is a small village school.
- The school is part of The Carey Federation.
- There is a breakfast club for pupils aged two and above.
- There is a pre-school for two-, three- and four-year-old children. However, on the day of the inspection, there were no pre-school children scheduled to be on site.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, teaching and learning leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector also met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and a local authority representative.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics

and history. 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 lead inspector spoke with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the school's procedures for keeping pupils safe. She considered the school's recruitment procedures, staff induction and training, records of concern and engagement with external agencies. The inspectors spoke with staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also considered responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Donna Briggs, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Shirley

Ofsted Inspector

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