

Inspection of a good school: Amberley Parochial School

Amberley, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 5JG

Inspection date: 12 January 2023

Outcome

Amberley Parochial School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Relationships between pupils and staff build on the school's Christian values. They treat each other with respect. Pupils are sensitive to others' needs. They listen to each other with care and patience. They think it is important to hear about people's lives and opinions. For example, pupils learn about faiths different from their own. They have opportunities to debate and discuss world issues.

During breaktimes, pupils of all ages play together well. Pupils are considerate of others. They believe that treating everyone equally is fair. Pupils say that bullying does not happen at their school.

Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. They are keen to take on roles of responsibility as school councillors, worship team members, play leaders and librarians. Pupils value opportunities to learn outdoors and take part in educational visits. They say these activities help them to learn in real life. For example, pupils recall facts about habitats from their visit to a wildlife park. Pupils particularly look forward to community events such as the annual 'cow hunt'.

Parents say their children are happy and safe. They describe the school as being at the heart of the community, where staff 'bring out the best' in their children.

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

Leaders, including governors, have high expectations for pupils' learning. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have prioritised pupils' learning to read well. This begins as soon as children join the school in the Reception Year. Right from the start, children learn phonics. Staff quickly spot children who need additional practice. Extra sessions ensure these children keep up with their peers. Children learn to join together the sounds they know to read words successfully.

Pupils visit the school library regularly to choose their own books. They know which authors they like and why. Teachers carefully select class texts to introduce pupils to the joy of books. A diverse range of authors and types of books open pupils' eyes to the wider world. Pupils enjoy listening to these stories.

Many of the books shared in class link to the 'Amberley immersion curriculum'. Leaders and staff have crafted a curriculum that aims to deepen pupils' knowledge. As a result, pupils are starting to make connections between areas of knowledge. However, some subject curriculums do not identify the essential knowledge leaders want pupils to know and remember. In these subjects, the content is not broken down into small, achievable steps. Teaching does not secure and deepen pupils' knowledge sufficiently well. For example, pupils cannot recall useful information such as the chronology of events in history.

Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge. They use subject-specific vocabulary correctly. Nevertheless, sometimes, pupils cannot recall these words when answering questions. In mathematics, pupils do not always recall the vocabulary necessary to explain their answers in depth. Leaders have plans to rectify this.

Staff know the pupils and their individual needs well. They use resources effectively to make appropriate adaptations to the learning activity. This particularly supports pupils with SEND.

Each year, pupils and staff review the school's behaviour agreement together. This leads to clear and shared expectations that pupils uphold. Pupils know how the school values help them to make the right choices in life. This starts in Reception Year, when children learn how to take turns, share and get along with others. They quickly gain the skills needed to work together and make friends.

Pupils understand how the need for rules, to make their school a happy and safe place for everyone, links to British values. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. They understand it is important to be physically and mentally healthy. Pupils are keen to find out about the different cultures found in modern Britain.

Staff say that leaders, including governors, consider their well-being and workload. Staff appreciate this support. They are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders complete the necessary safeguarding checks before staff and volunteers begin working at the school. Governors regularly check the accuracy of safeguarding records. Staff receive training to help them identify the needs of vulnerable pupils. They record concerns and share them with leaders responsible for safeguarding pupils. Leaders respond appropriately. They know the external agencies to seek advice and support from for pupils and families in need.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils know how to cross the road safely.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, leaders have not identified the essential knowledge and vocabulary they want pupils to remember. The curriculum does not guide teachers precisely enough about what knowledge and vocabulary should be taught. Where this occurs, pupils are unable to explain their thinking using subject-specific vocabulary. Leaders need to identify the essential knowledge and vocabulary in these subjects so that pupils know more and remember more.

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 February 2013.

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	115689
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10256753
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	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	James Holmes
Headteacher	Sharon Cale
Website	www.amberleyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Gloucestershire local-authority-maintained school.
- It is a Church of England school within the Diocese of Gloucester.
- The headteacher was in post at the time of the last inspection.
- The school does not use any 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, staff, pupils, governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a local authority representative. A representative from the Diocese of Gloucester attended the final feedback meeting.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a known adult.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, looked at curriculum plans, 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 observed pupils during breaktimes and spoke with pupils and leaders about personal, social and health education and opportunities for pupils' personal development.
- The inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including records of safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. They considered how well the designated safeguarding lead acts on concerns about pupils' safety and welfare. The inspectors spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding practices.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. She also took into consideration the responses to the survey for staff. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Marie Thomas, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Marcia Northeast

Ofsted Inspector

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