

# Inspection of a good school: Abbey Primary School

Glastonbury Road, Morden, Surrey SM4 6NY

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 January 2023

## **Outcome**

Abbey Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils at Abbey Primary are very proud members of their school. They are happy here and enjoy coming to learn each day. Pupils know that staff have high expectations of them.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. One pupil summed up how positively everyone feels about the school by saying: 'My journey through Abbey has been spectacular, I could not ask for a better school.'

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Their conduct around the school and in lessons is calm and orderly. Staff have high expectations for behaviour and pupils respond well to these. If low-level disruption does occur, it is dealt with quickly and does not impact the learning of others. Pupils are respectful and polite to each other and all adults. Pupils said that they feel safe and know that there are adults they can talk to if they have any worries. They trust adults to deal with any issues, such as bullying, if they arise.

Pupils enjoy the many wider opportunities and experiences that leaders provide. Older pupils can be a school council member, a house captain or a reading buddy, where they support younger pupils with their reading. Pupils also attend a range of extra-curricular clubs and enjoy going on educational outings, which enrich what they have been taught in class.

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

Leaders have ensured the curriculum that pupils are taught is broad and matches the expectations of the national curriculum. The school's motto of 'opening windows of opportunity' is well understood by everyone. Pupils know that learning is important, and this is reflected in their sharp focus and concentration in lessons. They are keen learners and want to do their best.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading and mathematics. Staff training in these subjects means that all staff have secure subject knowledge and deliver the curriculum consistently well. The teaching of early reading begins as soon as children start school. From Reception onwards, daily phonics lessons teach children the sounds in a logical and step-by-step manner. The books that children read are matched to the sounds that they have been taught and know. Most pupils become fluent readers by the end of Year 1. Support and extra practice are swiftly put into place for any pupil that is not keeping up and needs to catch up.

Throughout the school, pupils develop a love of reading. This is promoted through regular visits to the school library, as well as initiatives that encourage pupils to read widely outside of school.

In subjects other than English and mathematics, many leaders are new to the role. For some of these subjects, new curriculum thinking has not been in place for very long. Despite this, all subject leaders have a clear overview of what pupils should learn and when, including well-defined end goals. However, in some instances, the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn and remember in order to achieve these end points have not been broken down explicitly. Because of this, some teaching does not focus as effectively on building up pupils' knowledge progressively. Leaders are already addressing this. For example, they are refining their curriculum thinking to make the sequence of learning more explicit. They are also working with teachers to improve their expertise.

Teachers use the 'Abbey learning journey' in lessons. Leaders have devised this approach so that pupils are provided with regular opportunities to recall and recap what they have previously learned. Teachers check what pupils understand. They make sure that pupils receive swift support to address their gaps or misconceptions.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with SEND, and they are fully included in all aspects of school life. They expect them to achieve just as well as their peers. Comprehensive training for staff means that pupils are accurately and quickly identified if they need additional help with their learning. Leaders ensure that the right support is put in place, working effectively with external agencies where needed. Teachers support pupils well in classrooms, for example through providing adapted resources and deploying adults to work with pupils in small groups or on an individual basis.

Pupils get many opportunities and experiences to learn about the wider world. They are taught and understand that everyone has the right to be treated with respect. They embrace difference and know that it is okay for people to have different beliefs, values and opinions from their own. Pupils are also taught how to keep mentally and physically healthy.

Leaders, governors, families and pupils have worked together to create a shared school vision – 'Vision 25'. Central to this vision is the learning and well-being of both staff and pupils. This is reflected in staff's views of the school. They said that they are proud to work here and feel well supported by leaders and through working with colleagues across the trust.

Governors and trustees have clear roles and responsibilities. They provide leaders with the right balance of challenge and support.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that there are robust systems in place to safeguard pupils. Staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Training is regular and up to date for all staff and governors. Staff know the signs of abuse to look out for and how to report any concerns that they have. Leaders have regular meetings to share information and discuss support that is in place or needed for pupils and their families.

The curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe. This includes learning about online safety and the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In the foundation subjects, where the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn have not yet been explicitly identified, it is less clear how the curriculum builds on prior learning and prepares pupils for what comes next in the curriculum. This means that at times, teaching does not develop and deepen pupils' learning in a well-ordered sequence. Leaders need to precisely identify the essential knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn and how this links together to provide a coherent and well-organised curriculum. Leaders should continue their work to ensure that in all subjects, teachers have the expertise and confidence to deliver the curriculum effectively.

## **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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Abbey Primary School, to be good in June 2018.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	146160
<b>Local authority</b>	Sutton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255436
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	451
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Simon Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrea Stirling-Williams
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.abbey.sutton.sch.uk/">www.abbey.sutton.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Abbey Primary School converted to become an academy school in September 2018. When its predecessor school, Abbey Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- Abbey Primary School is part of The Willow Learning Trust. The trust consists of one secondary school and one other primary school.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher and subject leaders. They met with members of the governing body and the trust.
- The inspector did deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, the inspector 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. They also listened to some pupils read.

- Other subjects, such as art, geography and physical education, were also considered as part of this inspection
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, attendance, pupils' personal development and behaviour. The views of parents and staff were also considered, including through Ofsted's surveys.
- The inspector considered the effectiveness of safeguarding through discussions with leaders, teachers, support staff and pupils. They looked at records relating to safeguarding, including pre-employment checks on staff.

### **Inspection team**

Julie Wright, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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