

Inspection of Ashgrove School Ltd

116 Widmore Road, Bromley, Kent BR1 3BE

Inspection dates:

29 November to 1 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy here because it is a supportive environment where it is easy to make friends. Staff keep pupils safe.

Pupils typically behave well. They are polite and kind. Teachers provide support and guidance. Staff deal swiftly with any concerns of pupils, including incidents of bullying. Pupils said staff are caring.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and wider development. They consider carefully pupils' next stages of education. Pupils study a range of subjects. However, leaders are not clear how content in these subjects is organised and sequenced. This limits pupils' exposure to a high-quality curriculum across all subjects.

Staff help pupils to develop their confidence. For example, pupils sang with enthusiasm to a range of visitors, including parents and carers, in the Christmas concert. Pupils develop their musical talents to a high level. They contribute to their local community. For example, they visited a home for the elderly and sang carols with the residents. Pupils are particularly fond of the clubs on offer, including chess, choir and jazz band.

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

Leaders ensure that staff receive effective training in teaching phonics and early reading. Typically, pupils develop reading confidence. They read a wide range of books to broaden their understanding. Pupils read with accuracy, fluency and expression. On occasion, staff are not as precise with their support in helping pupils segment and blend words accurately.

Leaders' curricular thinking in most subjects lacks clarity. Subject planning is not well developed. Leaders have not thought carefully about the content pupils will learn in each subject. The curriculum in each subject does not build up pupils' knowledge and skills sequentially. As a result, in most subjects, pupils do not routinely build a deep body of knowledge.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They check for any misconceptions in pupils' understanding. In mathematics, pupils use different calculation strategies accurately. They apply their knowledge of algebra in solving complex problems. Opportunities to recap on previous learning help pupils to embed mathematical concepts.

Teachers manage low-level disruptions quickly in class so that learning is not interrupted. Working relationships between staff and pupils are positive. This underpins the respectful culture that exists within the school.

Leaders fulfil their statutory duties in providing a relationship and sex education programme. The personal, social, health education curriculum outlines what pupils should know, including how to have respectful relationships. Pupils are encouraged to keep physically and mentally healthy.

Pupils are taught about different religions, including customs and rituals. They understand that families come in different forms, including same-sex parents. Pupils discuss topical current affairs, such as the impact of war in Ukraine.

Leaders organise visits to the school from various performers and groups. For example, pupils interviewed an army veteran actor as part of their study of First World War. Pupils are taught to consider different types of careers. They have high aspirations for themselves, including to pursue ambitious careers as astrophysicists, engineers and architects.

Staff's morale is high. Staff described the school as a 'family'. Teachers' workload is manageable, and staff felt leaders supported them well. Parents are positive about the school.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have not responded effectively in order to improve the quality of education. Leaders do not effectively outline the curriculum content that should be taught, or when and in what order. There is no coordinated approach to the continued professional development of staff. This means that staff's subject expertise is not consistently strong across all subjects.

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets all the requirements of the independent school standards. The premises are well maintained. The school complies with schedule 10 of the equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders makes sure that adults working in the school are properly checked prior to appointment. They ensure that staff receive regular safeguarding training. All staff maintain a culture of vigilance within the school. Staff report any concerns and leaders respond effectively to these. Leaders liaise with external agencies when necessary and appropriately. Staff are tenacious in checking and confirming the destinations of pupils who leave the school.

Pupils are encouraged to keep themselves safe, including online. A suitable safeguarding policy is available on the school's website.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Those responsible for delivering subjects do not identify the subject-specific knowledge, skills and key vocabulary that pupils need to learn overtime. This means that in many subjects, pupils do not build up secure knowledge and understanding over time. Leaders need to make sure subject content is clearly identified, sequenced, and well planned across all subjects.
- Leaders have not ensured that there is a coordinated approach to staff professional development. Those responsible for subject leadership do not have a coherent strategy to improve the subject-specific expertise of staff. As a result, staff's expertise is not consistently strong across all subjects. Teaching does not securely develop pupils' subject-specific skills consistently well. Leaders must ensure that staff training leads to strong subject expertise that enables pupils to achieve well across all subjects.
- On occasion, staff do not support pupils to embed phonics strategies. This means that some pupils do not segment and blend words with accuracy. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the expertise to support pupils' phonics development consistently.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	101694
DfE registration number	305/6075
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10242737
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent School
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	14
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Patricia Ash
Principal	Patricia Ash
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,220
Telephone number	020 8460 4143
Website	www.ashgrove.org.uk
Email address	enquiries@ashgrove.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	25 to 27 February 2020

Information about this school

- Ashgrove School Ltd, opened in 1986, is situated in a detached house.
- The principal is also the proprietor.
- There is currently only one class in the school. This is a Year 6 class for boys and girls.
- The school is due to close in July 2023.
- The school's previous inspection was in February 2020, when the school was judged as requires improvement.
- There are no pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the proprietor-principal, vice-principal, staff and pupils.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in English, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and considered pupils' work.
- The inspector considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspector considered information provided about safeguarding arrangements. This included scrutiny of the single central record. The inspector reviewed safeguarding procedures and processes by talking to leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector considered the views of parents, pupils and staff in discussions and through taking into consideration responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Lascelles Haughton, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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