

Inspection of The Avenue Infant School

The Avenue, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN8 4ET

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The Avenue Infant School is a caring and welcoming community. Leaders make sure that everyone is part of the school. Pupils know how important it is for everyone to feel included. Leaders want the pupils to achieve well.

Adults expect pupils to behave well. Leaders have identified three 'golden rules' that are well known by pupils. These are 'be ready, be respectful, be safe'. There are a wide range of rewards that motivate pupils to stick to the rules. Pupils know that they can lose a 'playtime minute' if they do not. Pupils say that this is fair. In lessons, they work hard. At social times, pupils play happily together. There is lots for them to do. They build dens, play in the mud kitchen or spend time in the 'quiet area'.

Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Pupils know who they can turn to if they are upset or have any worries. This helps them to feel happy and safe.

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

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. They want them to succeed and leave the school ready for the next stage in their education. For example, leaders have identified that many children struggle to communicate when they start school in the Reception Year. They have made pupils' speaking and listening skills a priority across the school. Pupils learn new vocabulary in every subject. Teachers make sure that pupils speak in full sentences. Pupils learn to give their opinions and ideas with increasing confidence.

Leaders also know how vital it is that pupils learn to read well. Children start the journey of learning to read right from the start of school. The teaching of phonics is well organised. Staff receive the training they need to teach phonics well. They check that pupils are keeping up with the phonics programme. Pupils who struggle to read get extra help. Reading is promoted effectively across the school. There is an inviting school library. Leaders provide pupils with books so that they can build their own 'home library'. Story times are an important part of every school day. Pupils enjoy reading. They talk about the books they love.

The curriculum is well designed in the early years, reading and mathematics. In these subjects, leaders have made sure that the key knowledge pupils need to know and remember is precisely identified. It is clear how new knowledge builds on prior learning. Assessment is used well. Teachers check that pupils remember the intended learning and step in quickly to help pupils who need it.

The curriculum is not as well developed in some of the foundation subjects. While leaders have identified the end points they want pupils to reach in each year, the small steps of learning are not clear. Teachers have to work this out for themselves. Sometimes they do not get the order of learning right. This can mean that pupils are asked to complete work where they have not necessarily been taught the knowledge

or skills they need to experience success or learn facts without a sense of why they are important. Teachers do not check that pupils have remembered the intended learning with enough precision. As a result, pupils do not develop a deeper understanding of these subjects as they do in others.

Leaders assess and identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) without delay. Personalised plans identify the support that pupils need. Staff adapt lessons appropriately and provide additional resources to make sure that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum. External agencies provide advice when needed. Staff receive training to ensure that they know the best ways they can meet the needs of these pupils. Provision for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school.

Leaders provide pupils with a range of opportunities during their time at the school. 'The Avenue School Enrichment Promise' offers 18 experiences for every pupil. Pupils visit the beach, join the local library and take a trip to a farm. The school's values are at the heart of the school's personal development work. Respect is a key value. Pupils learn to accept difference in an age-appropriate way. One pupil said: 'If one person is running and someone else is jumping then they are doing different things and that is okay.'

Staff morale is high. They appreciate that leaders consider their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that keeping pupils safe is central to the work of the school. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They are vigilant to the signs that indicate that a pupil may be a risk of harm. They report their concerns without delay. Safeguarding leaders respond to these concerns quickly and make sure that pupils and their families get the help they need. Leaders include the support of external agencies at the right time.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe. Leaders provide parents with useful information to help them to keep their children safe online at home.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not identified the key knowledge that pupils should know and remember in some of the foundation subjects in sufficient detail. They have not given enough consideration to the small steps of learning that pupils need to make or the order in which they should be taught. Pupils do not learn in as much depth in these subjects and find it more difficult to make links with what they have learned previously. Leaders should ensure that all curriculum plans identify not only what pupils should learn, but clearly identify the precise order in which

new learning should be taught.

- Assessment in some subjects is too general. It is not used well enough by teachers to check that pupils know and remember the intended learning. Leaders should ensure that assessment in the wider curriculum is developed further so that teachers can successfully plug gaps in pupils' learning or address misconceptions in order to ensure that pupils are ready for new learning.

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	121871
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10254816
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stewart Miller
Headteacher	Helen Morrall
Website	www.theavenueinfantschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator. Further meetings were held with three members of the governing body and two local authority representatives.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in four subjects: reading, mathematics, history and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum documentation, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke

with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors reviewed further curriculum plans for geography, design technology, religious education, physical education and music.
- To inspect safeguarding the lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and one of the school's deputy designated safeguarding leads. Safeguarding documents were scrutinised, including the single central record. Inspectors also spoke to staff about the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school, in assembly and at lunchtime and playtime. They spoke with different groups of pupils to discuss their views of the school, including behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also took into consideration responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Caroline Poole, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Oliver

Ofsted Inspector

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