

# Inspection of Appledore School

Richmond Road, Appledore, Bideford, Devon EX39 1PF

---

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 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?**

Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to Appledore School. They attend regularly and look forward to their learning. This starts in the early years where children are curious about the world around them. Pupils are encouraged to work together and ask questions. They talk positively about their relationships with adults. This is a priority for leaders and ensures that pupils learn well in a positive and nurturing environment.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for all pupils to be successful. They are determined for pupils to learn well through a broad and ambitious curriculum. Leaders set routines for pupils to follow that make the school calm and orderly. Staff know pupils' individual needs and respond to them appropriately. Many pupils value the support available through the learning mentor initiative.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. Pupils enjoy the wider opportunities available to them. Leaders plan visits to enrich the curriculum. For example, to support the history curriculum, pupils visit a Viking commemorative stone locally and the Roman Baths further afield. Leaders provide many roles of responsibility for pupils to contribute to the school. Pupils value these and know that their voice matters.

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

Leaders have designed a carefully sequenced curriculum. It is well constructed and identifies the knowledge pupils need to learn to be prepared for their next stage. The curriculum is built around developing pupils as 'explorers, gatherers, explainers and evaluators' as they move through the school.

Leaders have used staff training to strengthen teachers' subject knowledge to support the curriculum design. Subject leaders use this to check how well the curriculum is implemented. However, in some subjects, leaders do not check the implementation of the intended curriculum in enough depth. As a result, they are not fully aware of how well pupils learn, or where progress through the curriculum has stalled.

Teachers use a variety of strategies to help pupils learn. Pupils revisit prior learning regularly to deepen their understanding. Assessment is used effectively to establish how well pupils build their knowledge over time. Any gaps in knowledge are identified and learning adapted to address these. Pupils value the support they receive in their learning.

Leaders have considered the adaptations to learning needed to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They ensure that these pupils have the same opportunities as their peers. However, some pupils and their needs

are not identified early enough. In addition, some pupils have learning targets that lack precision. This slows some pupils' progress.

Leaders prioritise teaching pupils to read and to develop a love of reading. Starting in the early years, children take home a 'bedtime story book'. This continues across the school as pupils enjoy a range of high-quality texts to promote reading for pleasure. Pupils enjoy reading and sharing their favourite books and authors. One pupil said, 'this school really encourages reading'. While learning to read, pupils are supported by staff who have a secure understanding of the phonics programme. Leaders identify pupils who fall behind and support them to catch up quickly. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. This helps them to build their confidence and fluency.

Children in the early years learn with success. Leaders prioritise learning opportunities that help children to develop their communication and language skills. Children show high levels of curiosity and independence. For example, they enjoy discovering which materials are magnetic, and why, as they develop their understanding of the world.

Leaders support pupils' personal development successfully. They have created a well-sequenced curriculum that makes clear the important knowledge they want pupils to gain. This promotes pupils to be responsible, respectful and active citizens. They talk confidently about equality. Pupils know that everybody should be included. They build their character through carefully planned opportunities. For example, groups of pupils visit the local care home.

Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. They behave well and know the expectations staff have of them. Pupils enjoy the recognition they receive for being successful. For example, individual pupils are nominated by their peers when they have displayed one of the school values. Bullying is not a concern for pupils. They know any issues will be sorted out.

All staff are proud to work at the school. They say that their workload and well-being are supported by leaders. Governors are ambitious about making a difference to the school. Parents value the care and nurture that staff provide.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular safeguarding training. This helps them to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Leaders have clear systems in place to manage any concerns. The needs of pupils and their families are well known. Early help is in place for families who may need it.

All pupils feel safe. They know adults will help if they have any worries. Pupils are taught how to keep safe. They explain with confidence how to keep safe online.

Leaders make the necessary recruitment checks on adults who work in the school. Minor issues were identified with the recording of these checks, which have now been rectified.

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

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

- Leaders have constructed a well-sequenced curriculum. However, in some subjects, they are not evaluating the implementation of this with enough rigour and precision. As a result, some pupils do not build their knowledge as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum is securely and consistently embedded across the school so that pupils develop a deeper understanding over time.
- The needs of some pupils with SEND are not met well enough. Some pupils' learning targets lack precision. As a result, these pupils do not progress through the curriculum as well as they could. Leaders must ensure that these pupils and their needs are identified early and learning targets focus on moving pupils' learning forward quickly. This will enable leaders to check that all pupils receive the support they need to learn well.

## **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>	113125
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297894
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	241
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Richard Thomas
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jeremy Cooper
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.appledore-primary.devon.sch.uk">www.appledore-primary.devon.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 April 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Appledore School is part of the Atlantic Coast Co-Operative Trust.
- Leaders provide a before- and after-school club.
- The school does not use any 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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the 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.

Inspectors also spoke to leaders and pupils about the curriculum in some other subjects.

- The inspectors spoke with school leaders, subject leaders, parents, pupils, governors and representatives from the trust.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a trusted adult.
- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspectors spoke to the designated safeguarding leader, staff, governors and pupils, and evaluated record-keeping and staff training.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents. The inspectors considered comments made by parents online during the inspection and met with some parents at the start of the second day. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils and staff.

### **Inspection team**

Esther Best, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Gould

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023