

Inspection of Ashill Voluntary Controlled Primary School

The Oaks, Ashill, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 7AP

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 September 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school at the heart of the community and where the community is at the heart of the school. Pupils love coming to school. They describe the school as one big family. Pupils and the wider community appreciate the care and support they receive from all the adults working at the school. Pupils thrive because of the high expectations and quality of care they receive.

Pupils enjoy an active and dynamic curriculum. Learning is memorable, fun and exciting. The curriculum is adapted to meet pupils' needs and interests. They are inspired to ask questions, discover new skills and talents and approach new learning with confidence.

Pupils have access to a wide range of clubs and extra-curricular activities, both after school and during the holidays. These are extremely well attended, open to all and supported by staff and collaborative partnerships with the community.

Pupils know and understand the school values of resilience, kindness, respect, aspiration, curiosity and independence. They show genuine care for each other. Pupils are reflective. They value and act upon the feedback they receive from their peers. Playtimes are opportunities to make choices and explore interests. Pupils behave well.

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

The school has developed a broad and balanced curriculum. This is revised and adapted to meet the needs of the pupils to ensure challenge and high expectations. The school has identified the core knowledge that pupils will learn across most subjects. In some subjects, this is still in development. In these subjects, it is less clear how pupils will build on what they already know to help them understand more complex ideas. Teachers do not know what knowledge and content they need to check that pupils can remember in these subjects.

Curriculum leaders have strong subject knowledge and a passion for their subjects. They have clear actions they are working on to further develop and improve the curriculum.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have the support and adaptations they need to access the full curriculum successfully. Adults are skilled and well trained. As a result, pupils receive the right support at the right time. Pupils value the support they receive. They gain the confidence and courage to try new things. Pupils' additional needs are quickly identified, sometimes before they start school. This ensures that children in the early years have the support they need to settle quickly and make progress.

Pupils love reading. They read a wide range of books and enjoy the class texts that are chosen to support curriculum themes. The school has created an effective

phonics scheme. Teachers spot any gaps in pupils' knowledge quickly and make sure books are well matched to pupils' phonic knowledge. By the end of key stage 1, children are reading with confidence and fluency.

Pupils behave well. Relationships are respectful. Older pupils enjoy playing with the 'Bumblebees' (the Reception class) and socialising at lunchtime. Pupils know what is expected of their behaviour. Their learning is rarely disrupted by the behaviour of others.

In the early years, children quickly settle into the routines and expectations. As a result, they quickly access the breadth of the curriculum. Transitions into school, between year groups and to secondary school are well planned. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

All stakeholders value the small school and its family ethos, and they are invested in the school and the community. Parents are very positive about the school. They cannot speak highly enough of the support and care their children receive.

The school's vision to be an inclusive school family, where every child is nurtured to grow and thrive, is being realised. Pupils' emotional well-being is a priority. Staff lead by example. Staff also grow and thrive. They appreciate and value the quality of leadership at the school.

The school provides opportunities for staff to share their knowledge and learn from colleagues through partnerships with other schools. This is a learning community. Partnerships with local business and community groups ensure that pupils can participate in a range of clubs and activities throughout the school year and during holidays.

Governors know the school and the community well. They offer both challenge and support. The school ensures that everyone has a voice and that their voice counts. Parents and the wider community are fully included in the life of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few areas of the curriculum, the important knowledge that pupils should know at different points is not clearly defined. Teachers do not know the knowledge that they should check that pupils can remember. This does not help teachers to plan sequences of learning that build towards pupils having a deeper understanding of more complex ideas. The school should ensure that, in all subjects, the important knowledge that pupils should learn is identified and

ordered so that it builds towards pupils understanding more complex content and concepts.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	121026
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10294997
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rosemary Norton
Headteacher	Steve Creasey
Website	www.ashillschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school operates breakfast and after-school provision.
- This is a Church of England school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place on November 2019. The next section 48 inspection will take place within eight years.

Information about this inspection

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

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with governors, staff, and parents. An inspector also had telephone conversations with a representative of the diocese and the schools' improvement adviser.
- Inspectors considered the 61 responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met 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.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' books, curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.

Inspection team

Oriana Dalton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Imran Khan

Ofsted Inspector

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