

Inspection of a good school: Aylburton Church of England Primary School

Church Road, Aylburton, Lydney, Gloucestershire GL15 6DB

Inspection date: 28 September 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The executive headteacher of this school is Emma Isaac. This school is part of Severn Federation Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Rachel Dare, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Louisa Davies. The executive headteacher is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils arrive at Aylburton keen to learn. They live up to the school's values in how they conduct themselves. For example, pupils firmly believe in treating others with respect and compassion. Warm and nurturing relationships are the bedrock of the school community. This makes the school a safe place where everyone belongs and gets on well together.

Regardless of their background, the school aims for all pupils to succeed academically. In some subjects, they do. However, many improvements to the curriculum are new. They have not had time to embed. Therefore, pupils do not gain a secure body of knowledge in all subjects.

Pupils generally behave well and show good manners. Staff act as positive role models. This gives pupils the confidence to speak to a member of staff if they have any worries.

Charitable actions are the norm at Aylburton. Pupils donate food for good causes and litter pick in the community. Older pupils are proud to serve as role models to the youngest children. For example, they lead a gardening club and help others look after nature. Staff raise pupils' awareness of future aspirations and physical well-being through the 'world of work' and 'minilympics' events.

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

The school has constructed an ambitious curriculum. It is underpinned by 'key drivers' that provide the essential knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils need in order to succeed. Where subjects are well established, pupils can recall prior learning and how it links to new concepts. For example, in computing, pupils use their coding skills to create a series of instructions. However, in other subjects, such as history and geography, changes to the curriculum are very recent. Therefore, pupils do not have the same secure knowledge in these subjects as they do in others.

Reading is central to the curriculum. The school has created a varied set of books for each class to read and get to know well. Staff teach pupils new words and help them understand the wider world. For example, pupils learn about and debate topics such as slavery and racism from what they read. Weekly visits to the library and daily stories help foster a love of reading.

From the start of Reception Year, children develop their early phonic knowledge well. They build on this in Years 1 and 2 so that most pupils learn to read simple words and sentences. Even so, for pupils who need to catch up, including some pupils in key stage 2, the books they read are too hard. Additionally, when pupils hesitate with unknown sounds, staff do not always know how to move their learning forward. This prevents pupils from developing fluency when reading.

Teachers recap and revisit learning at the start of lessons to help important knowledge stick in pupils' memory. For example, in mathematics, they use rapid revision challenges to ensure that pupils understand what they need to do in order to move on in their learning. However, some staff do not check precisely enough whether pupils have grasped important content. When this happens, some misconceptions go unnoticed and persist in pupils' work.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified early. They learn well alongside their peers. Many benefit from high-quality social and emotional support, such as the 'listening post'. Staff offer pre-teaching to help pupils learn challenging concepts. Pupils with SEND take part in all aspects of school life.

Pupils' conduct around the school is calm and orderly. In Reception Year, children quickly learn to follow the rules set out by staff. In all classes, pupils know the importance of doing the right thing.

The school make learning relevant and engaging. Visits from the police promote the importance of staying safe when online. Pupils celebrate diversity and learn to respect different family types. Year 6 pupils enjoy a residential visit to France to immerse themselves in French language and culture. A favourite for many pupils is singing at festivals and leading church services. These and other activities help them to develop their confidence and resilience.

Staff feel valued and enjoy working at Aylburton. Parents and carers are equally positive about the school. The local academy committee and trust staff hold the school to account.

For example, they check that disadvantaged pupils get the most out of extra-curricular activities. The school is well placed to improve further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some curriculum subjects, changes to the curriculum are recent and need time to embed. In these subjects, pupils have gaps in their knowledge. The trust and the school need to continue to develop and embed the curriculum so that pupils know more and remember more across all subjects.
- Occasionally, staff do not use information about what pupils know and can do to adapt the curriculum. As a result, some misconceptions persist. The trust and the school must ensure that they check pupils' understanding and act swiftly to address any misconceptions.
- For some pupils who need to catch up, the books they read are too hard. Staff do not routinely know how to move pupils' learning forward when they listen to them read. This prevents pupils from developing fluency when reading. The trust and the school should ensure that reading books closely match pupils' phonic knowledge and that pupils who struggle to read receive the precise support they need to become confident and fluent readers.

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, Aylburton Church of England Primary School, to be good in March 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' 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	148211
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10268657
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	77
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Louisa Davies
Headteacher	Emma Isaac (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.aylburtoncofe.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Severn Federation Academy Trust, a multi-academy trust of five local primary schools. The school joined the trust in January 2021.
- There have been many changes to staffing since the previous inspection. The executive headteacher joined the school in November 2021. The executive deputy headteacher took up post in September 2022. They both oversee another school in the trust.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Gloucester. At its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character in January 2023, the school was judged to be good.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school had 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.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the executive deputy headteacher and other school staff. Inspectors also met with local academy committee members and trust representatives, including the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, 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 discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 read to an adult.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. They spoke with pupils, parents and staff about behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and responses to staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Marie Thomas

His Majesty's Inspector

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