

Inspection of a good school: Abberley Parochial VC Primary School

Apostles Oak, Abberley, Worcestershire WR6 6AA

Inspection dates:

11 October 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.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being at this school because they feel cared for and safe. They feel proud that their school is part of a caring community that supports them to 'feel loved and to show love' to others. This helps them to understand that 'being kind is the most important thing to be'.

This kindness is seen in the positive relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils also get on well together. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to have a say in key decisions that are made in their school. Pupils take pride in holding such leadership roles and feel their views are listened to and that they help to improve their school.

The school holds assemblies and invites visitors in to speak to pupils about why the school's values are important. Pupils teach each other about 'being wise, courageous and compassionate'. Pupils think that a focus on compassion helps make bullying something that is uncommon at their school. If bullying does happen, pupils report it to a trusted adult.

The school has experienced recent leadership changes. After identifying that some aspects of the curriculum need to be improved, leaders have decided to make changes. Such changes are recent and there is work to do to make sure that such changes have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

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

The school has identified that the curriculum needs to change because the precise knowledge that it wants pupils to learn is not always made clear. Some subjects have plans that do this, but others do not. Governors recognise that they have not assured

themselves that the curriculum is improving pupils' learning, and that recent changes are required but are only just starting to be delivered.

Leaders have designed a reading curriculum that teaches pupils how to read while also developing a love of reading. There is a wide range of books, and pupils enjoy reading books by different authors and about different cultures. Most pupils learn to read well and also read for pleasure. The school teaches phonics and has given training to some staff. However, the school's approaches are not yet being used consistently. As a result, some pupils who find it more difficult to learn to read are not getting the help they need.

In Reception, some children are still learning to concentrate and to show positive learning behaviours. Staff have a good understanding of children's needs and are supporting them to make a good start at school. Children begin learning to read in the first week of joining the school and many enjoy sharing stories and choosing books.

The school's approach to assessment is being developed. However, assessment is not currently being used to spot gaps in learning. In some subjects, the sequence of learning moves on without considering whether pupils fully understand what they are learning. Some pupils are able to talk about facts linked to topics and a few can describe how they are becoming better in some subjects.

All pupils are expected to learn the full curriculum, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school and outside agencies work well to identify the best way to support these pupils. High-quality support plans identify what is most likely to prevent a pupil learning. Some pupils require additional support outside of the classroom to help them to progress well. Such sessions are led by well-trained staff who have an accurate understanding of what these pupils need to do to achieve.

Most pupils behave well and do so both in school and when representing it in the community. Parents and staff share the view that most pupils are able to learn without distraction. Pupils understand that they are responsible for their own actions and that the school rules help to keep everyone happy and safe.

The school offers a broad range of clubs and activities such as lacrosse and sewing, and these are of great interest to many pupils. A range of residential visits provide opportunities to allow pupils to see what life is like outside of their village. Pupils understand why this is important for them. The school also takes pupils to places of worship different to their own. Pupils understand that learning about different faiths and cultures helps them to be tolerant and inclusive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils are not being taught the phonics knowledge they need in order to be able to read well. This means that they are unable to segment, blend or pronounce sounds with confidence. The school should ensure that all staff are well equipped to use their agreed approach to teaching phonics so that all pupils quickly gain the knowledge and skills they need to read well.
- Governors have not assured themselves that what is being reported to them is accurate. As a result, there is a lack of knowledge about whether the curriculum is improving pupils' learning. Governors should consider how best to assure themselves that what is being reported is accurate.
- The school has not ensured that staff understand their subject leadership responsibilities. This results in them not knowing what effective practice looks like or whether the curriculum is developing pupils' knowledge and skills over time. The school should support subject leaders to undertake their roles effectively.
- Assessment is not used effectively and the information staff get from assessments does not always inform future learning. As a result, opportunities are missed to check what pupils know and can do. The school should make sure that all staff know how to use assessment effectively and do so consistently in order to maximise pupils' progress.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2014.

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	116780
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10290547
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	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jenny Buckley
Headteacher	Claire Shelley
Website	www.abberley.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is voluntary controlled.
- As a Church of England school, it received a section 48 inspection in January 2020. A further inspection is due three to five years following the previous inspection.
- This school does not use 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 inspection 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 inspectors met with the interim headteacher, other school staff, the chair of governors, and the director of education for the diocese.
- 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.

- The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- The inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and responses to the staff and pupils survey.

Inspection team

Antony Bradshaw, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Donna O'Toole

Ofsted Inspector

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