

Inspection of Aspley Guise Village School

Spinney Lane, Aspley Guise, Bedfordshire MK17 8JT

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

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|------------------------------|-------------|
| 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 | Outstanding |

The school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 16 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at that time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under Section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Many pupils come to school happily each day. They flourish in the safe, nurturing atmosphere at Aspley Guise Village School. Adults expect pupils to be respectful, responsible and ready to learn. Pupils strive to meet the adults' high expectations.

From the Reception class to Year 4, pupils participate enthusiastically in lessons. Adults encourage all pupils to aim high. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils enjoy earning praise from the adults for their efforts. Rewards, such as house points or tokens for the school's book vending machine, provide further incentives for pupils to work hard. Most pupils achieve well and make progress from their various starting points.

Pupils learn about important values for life alongside the academic curriculum. They focus on a particular value each half term, for example generosity. Pupils try hard to show the values in their conduct and in their approach to each other. Relationships throughout the school are warm and respectful.

Pupils, including pupils with SEND, pursue existing or new interests through a range of extra-curricular activities. These include various sports clubs, as well as gardening, coding and French. Many pupils participate in competitive sporting events. Older pupils develop their independence and resilience on residential trips.

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

The school has developed a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum. It is carefully sequenced so that pupils build their learning over time. The curriculum starts in the early years. Children in the Reception class learn the essential knowledge that they will need for later learning. In science, for example, children begin to learn about plants by cutting up pumpkins and observing the seeds inside them.

The curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills pupils will learn. It breaks these down into small steps. Each step prepares pupils for the next one. For example, in mathematics, pupils learn the column methods of addition and subtraction before tackling word problems involving these operations.

In some subjects, the school's ambitious vision for the curriculum has not yet been fully realised. In these subjects, the curriculum does not set out what pupils should learn with enough precision. As a result, pupils' learning is not as secure or detailed as it should be. Some pupils struggle to recall what they have learned in these subjects.

Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. They explain new learning clearly. From the Reception class to Year 4, lessons are language rich. Teachers ensure pupils learn the vocabulary that goes with each new topic. Teachers check pupils' understanding through skilled questioning, quizzes and ongoing

dialogue during lessons. They adjust their teaching effectively if they spot gaps or misconceptions.

Reading is a priority. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often. They develop a love of reading through the stories teachers read to them and the books they choose from the school library. Early reading is skilfully taught. In the Reception class and key stage 1, daily phonics lessons teach pupils the sounds they need to learn. Most pupils are fluent readers by the end of key stage 1. Adults ensure that any pupils who need extra help with phonics get it quickly. This includes less-confident, older readers and those who arrive at the school from other countries.

The school is quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND and to put effective support in place for them. This sometimes involves liaising with external services. Teachers ensure pupils with SEND have the resources and adapted tasks they need to be able to access the curriculum. This helps them to succeed.

Adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They praise and encourage positive behaviour. Adults help pupils to understand their emotions and to manage them so they are ready to learn. Consistent routines help pupils to do the right thing. The small number of pupils who struggle to meet adults' expectations are supported appropriately.

The school places a high value on pupils' wider development. A proactive eco-council promotes pupils' engagement with environmental issues. Carefully planned assemblies allow pupils to explore topical issues in an age-appropriate way. Pupils actively support their local community by litter-picking and planting bulbs. Pupils' understanding of diversity is well developed. They are kind and tolerant, regardless of any differences between them.

Leaders are supported and challenged appropriately by a committed governing body. Governors know the school well and provide valuable oversight of its work. They have confidence in leaders' ability to continue to drive improvements. Staff feel valued and are proud to be part of the close-knit school community. Parents' views on the school are extremely positive.

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 subjects, the curriculum does not set out what pupils should learn with enough precision. As a result, teachers do not always select activities to maximise pupils' progress. Pupils' learning is not as secure or detailed in these subjects as it should be. The school should ensure it continues to develop these areas of the

curriculum, precisely identifying the knowledge pupils should learn and the order in which they should learn it.

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

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| Unique reference number | 109428 |
| Local authority | Central Bedfordshire |
| Inspection number | 10211773 |
| Type of school | First |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 9 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 130 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Jamie Ross |
| Headteacher | Jamie Brown |
| Website | www.aspleyguise.school |
| Date of previous inspection | 18 September 2007, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- There is childcare provided before school every day. This is run and managed by the school.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.

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.
- Inspectors met with a range of leaders, including senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and governors, including the chair of governors.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. The lead inspector listened to several pupils read to a familiar 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents and policies. These included the school development plan and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted's questionnaires for parents and staff. They also spoke with pupils, parents and staff to gather their views on the school.

Inspection team

Caroline Crozier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Bridget Harrison

His Majesty's Inspector

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