

Inspection of Great Abington Primary School

High Street, Abington, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB21 6AE

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils smile frequently. They enjoy playing on 'the mounds', growing plants in the greenhouse and having friendly chats in the canteen.

Pupils and their families are well known to staff. Pupils get the help and support they need. They are cared for well and feel happy and safe as a result.

Some younger pupils get off to a slower start with how fluently they read, but catch up later. As pupils move through the school, they become increasingly independent and responsible. Younger pupils have not done as well as they might in the past. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have increased. In most cases, pupils are now doing well, but in a few subjects they could still improve further.

Pupils are tolerant and respectful. They behave considerately and enjoy helping and supporting each other. For example, older pupils organise games for younger ones on the playground.

Pupils are enthused by the rich range of trips, visits and experiences they get. These inspire pupils because they bring learning alive. For example, pupils learn important skills such as scientific analysis by conducting mock forensic investigations.

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

The school has worked to successfully address the areas for improvement from the previous inspection.

An effective curriculum is now in place. The important knowledge that pupils should learn has now been clearly defined across most subjects. Pupils typically build their knowledge effectively over time. This is because teachers use examples that help pupils understand and remember important concepts. Staff regularly check what pupils know and provide further support where needed. Consequently, pupils produce high-quality work. However, in a small number of subjects, what pupils should learn is not as clearly defined or as aspirational. Where this is the case, pupils do not achieve as well as they do in most other subjects.

From the early years, the school has ensured that there is now a consistent approach to the teaching of early reading. Teachers have the training necessary in this new approach. The books pupils read now match the sounds they are learning. This helps pupils to be confident to read and spell unfamiliar words. However, there is still a small minority of younger readers that do not read with the fluency they should. However, over the longer term, pupils are supported to catch up and achieve well in reading by the time they leave school.

Staff enable pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to be fully included in learning and the wider school life. Leaders carefully identify the needs of pupils with SEND. They ensure that teachers appropriately adapt learning. This

means that there is suitable support for those who need it. As a result, most pupils with SEND achieve well.

The school celebrates positive values regularly. This helps to ensure that pupils behave well. This includes in early years, where children quickly learn to listen and share. Attendance is high. Few are regularly absent. Where pupils do have any challenges, either with behaviour or attendance, leaders are quick to provide effective support to address these.

A wealth of exciting experiences and trips helps bring learning to life. This includes in early years, where children explore the local village to understand the world. These experiences enable pupils to remember important knowledge and see why it is relevant.

Pupils get some of the best personal development opportunities possible. Leaders ensure that everyone benefits from them. In partnership with a local independent school, pupils benefit from highly enriching experiences. These include specialist sports coaching and Shakespeare workshops. As travel ambassadors, pupils are active citizens by working with the local council. Pupils learn about and practise democracy. They hold a vote on the charity they will support, for example. Pupils learn about diversity and difference by regular trips to both Cambridge and London. Experiences have included strawberry DNA extraction, visiting the Royal Opera House and activities with the university engineering department. These experiences significantly deepen pupils' knowledge and help them to understand how their learning relates to the world of work.

Leaders and governors have worked together to improve the school. They have sought appropriate support, for example from the local authority and English hub. Governors know the school well and support strong links with the local community. For example, the school organises the 'Abington 10k'. This brings the community together. The school is supportive of personal circumstances. Staff appreciate the positive impact of this on their well-being while helping them work effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff do not support a small number of younger pupils who fall behind with reading to catch up as quickly as they could. This means that these pupils make slower progress with reading. The school should ensure that all staff have the expertise to support pupils effectively at the early stages of reading.
- In a few subjects, the knowledge that pupils should learn is not as clearly defined or as aspirational as in other subjects. This means that, in these subjects, pupils

do not always build on previous learning well enough, because teachers are not able to take account of what pupils have learned previously. The school needs to ensure that all subjects clearly define the knowledge that pupils should learn, so that teachers can plan effectively to build on pupils' knowledge.

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	110611
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10294927
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mark Carter
Headteacher	Guy Underwood
Website	www.greatabington.school
Date of previous inspection	14 December 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The role of chair of governors is shared between two people. The 'co-chair' positions were appointed in September 2022. By agreement, one of the co-chairs is named chair on official forms.
- The school does not use 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 second 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 discuss governance, an inspector met with representatives of the local governing body including the co-chairs.

- An inspector met with the local authority school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, designated safeguarding lead, school subject leaders and staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spent time in early years on both days of the inspection and visited the outdoor provision.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects, including design and technology, science, PSHE and relationships and sex education (RSE).
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at social times. They considered pupils' views about behaviour and bullying in school. They also spoke with staff about pupils' behaviour.
- 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 considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. They considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text messages.

Inspection team

James Chester, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Julie Winwood

Ofsted Inspector

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