

Inspection of a good school: Abington Vale Primary School

Ashford Close, Abington Vale, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 3NQ

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 February 2024

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 be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Laura Cichuta. This school is part of NPAT, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Julia Kedwards, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by James Marscheider.

What is it like to attend this school?

Abington Vale Primary School is welcoming and inclusive. Pupils, staff and parents and carers agree that the school is a warm, friendly and caring place to learn. The school has very high expectations for every single pupil to succeed.

The school provides a calm environment in which pupils can thrive. Pupils behave in a sensible manner, which allows them always to be ready to learn. They have trusting relationships with staff and say that they feel safe. Staff help pupils to sort out any problems they may have. Pupils know that adults would stop anyone being unkind straight away.

Pupils say they really enjoy taking on responsibilities such as 'young leaders' and being part of the school council. They are keen to discuss how the school council has actively changed aspects of school life, such as improving the provision for play at breaktimes. Pupils value equalities and are able to speak in depth about the rights of different people. Older pupils value that everyone can take part in any of the after-school clubs.

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

The school has a highly ambitious curriculum. This helps to build pupils' knowledge and skills in a logical way. For example, the curriculum includes a sequenced block of work on Shakespeare, which clearly inspires pupils from the early years to the end of key stage 2. This means that pupils from all year groups discuss aspects of the plots of individual

plays, know characters and can begin to think about drama and performance. Older pupils even have the chance to take their learning further and perform at the local theatre. Pupils say they want to know more about Shakespeare and his work in the future. The school has carefully sequenced the most important knowledge and vocabulary that it wants pupils to know and remember in all subjects. Staff have strong subject expertise, which is shared across the school.

The planned curriculum is implemented very well across the school. The school ensures that staff access regular training to keep their subject-specific knowledge up to date. They work well with other colleagues, including those from other schools in the trust, to share ideas and expertise. Staff provide regular opportunities for pupils to recall prior learning through carefully planned checks on what pupils know and can remember.

Pupils are motivated and behave very well in class. Their positive attitudes and respect for each other mean that everyone can learn without distraction.

Staff are determined that children in the early years will do well. On both school sites, staff tailor the curriculum to the individual needs of the children, ensuring that they get off to a flying start.

The school has encouraged pupils to be inquisitive and hungry to find out more. Pupils show a real interest and curiosity in their learning. The love of reading is strongly promoted across the school. Pupils enjoy reading books that have been specifically chosen to reflect a range of backgrounds and cultural heritages. The school quickly identifies any pupils who need support with reading. Staff skilfully use interventions to help pupils catch up if this is necessary. Right from the start of the early years, early reading and phonics lessons are very carefully planned and delivered across both of the school sites. Leaders support staff and ensure that phonics is consistently well taught. Staff pick up on any misunderstandings pupils may have straight away. For example, in mathematics lessons, staff constantly and consistently check pupils' understanding at all points of the lesson. They intervene swiftly if a concept has not been understood by pupils.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress. Teachers know their pupils' needs in depth and skilfully adapt the work that is set, allowing pupils to learn in all areas of the curriculum. Learning activities are broken into scaffolded steps to help pupils with SEND access the curriculum. Staff support these pupils in classrooms so that they can learn well alongside their peers.

Pupils benefit from very many activities beyond the classroom that support their personal development. These opportunities include visitors to the school, trips and residential activities. Pupils enjoy activities that encourage a healthy lifestyle. These include sporting events and after-school clubs. Pupils have a deep understanding of fundamental British values. They are tolerant and respectful of each other and celebrate the fact that everyone is different. They are very knowledgeable about a range of world faiths. This means pupils leave the school well prepared to be active and informed members of the community, ready for their next steps in education.

The school is very well led and managed. Those responsible for governance are well informed about the school's priorities. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about how issues relating to their well-being and workload are carefully considered by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 November 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	138952
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10313283
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	James Marscheider
Headteacher	Laura Cichuta
Website	www.abingtonvaleprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspections	19 July 2018 under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses no 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 received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss curriculum thinking, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of their work.
- Inspectors listened to some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders.

- The inspectors met with representatives from the local governing body, trustees from NPAT, pupils, parents and staff, and also took into consideration the feedback from Ofsted's questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons.

Inspection team

Ryan Brown, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Linda Azemia

Ofsted Inspector

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