

Inspection of a good school: Abbey Lane Primary School

Abbey Lane, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S8 0BN

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 February 2024

Outcome

Abbey Lane Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Abbey Lane Primary School is a warm and welcoming place. The pride that pupils, parents and staff feel about their school has been strengthened through some of the decisive actions that leaders have taken throughout this academic year.

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In most areas of the school, this is taught well. However, assessment does not always identify if pupils have understood what they have been taught. Leaders recognised that previous systems related to safeguarding and SEND were not efficient. The school has addressed this quickly and effectively. Leaders have implemented a well-considered action plan to ensure that new systems have been introduced and are understood by all staff.

Pupils are happy and safe. They are kind to each other, and bullying is not tolerated. Pupils attend well and come to school eager to learn. Lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.

Older pupils value the opportunity to contribute to the life of the school through a range of different leadership roles, such as peer mediators, team leaders, reading buddies or being part of the school council. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the different clubs that they can be part of, such as the cooking club, taekwondo, engineering club and playing sports.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils. It outlines the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn in each subject. Pupils are well supported to learn more, do more and remember more over time. Teachers help pupils to practise and remember their prior knowledge, skills and vocabulary. However, assessment systems do not consistently check that pupils have understood what they have been taught. This means that when some pupils make errors, that they are not always addressed.

Reading is prioritised by the school. Staff training ensures that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. Some pupils struggle to read these with fluency. When this is the case, pupils receive the support that they need to build their phonics knowledge and confidence to read fluently.

Older pupils and pupils who are new to learning English are supported by skilled staff. As a result, pupils quickly learn to read. This early love of reading is nurtured and developed throughout pupils' times at the school. Older pupils enjoy reading their class novel with their teacher. Pupils speak passionately about their favourite authors and books.

The school has rapidly improved the provision for pupils with SEND. Leaders have quickly established effective processes for identifying and supporting pupils with additional needs. Teachers and support staff receive precise information on how to support these pupils to access the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders provide training so that staff are well-equipped to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

Pupils' attendance is high. They do not want to miss valuable learning. Leaders monitor attendance carefully and use effective strategies to promote good attendance. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. They are resilient when learning difficult topics or concepts. Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that adults would deal with it quickly when it does happen.

The school's programme for the personal development of pupils is thorough and well planned. It centres around the school's core values, which permeate every aspect of school life. Leaders want to shape well rounded citizens as well as successful learners. Pupils understand the importance of respect and tolerance. Pupils know about different faiths and cultures. They value diversity. The school has put in place a wide range of inclusive clubs. Pupils make good use of them. Pupils relish the opportunity for extra responsibility and to build their leadership skills. They are proud of their work as peer mediators, reading buddies, team leaders and school councillors.

Those responsible for governance are knowledgeable about, and committed to, the school. They have a detailed understanding of the quality of education that pupils receive. Governors provide effective challenge and support to school leaders. The school has taken swift and effective action to address weaknesses that previously existed.

Staff, pupils and parents say that they are united by the school's current vision and leadership. They told inspectors that the culture of the school has been galvanised in recent months. Staff said that they felt valued and were proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment strategies do not consistently check that pupils have understood what they have been taught before moving on. This means that sometimes misconceptions or gaps in knowledge are not addressed. The school must ensure that there are consistent systems in place to check that pupils understand what they have been taught.

Background

When we have judged 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	106982
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10269229
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	555
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chairs of governing body	Jane Austin and Daniel Smith
Headteacher	Maxine Stafford (Headteacher) Tim Calcutt (Acting Headteacher)
Website	www.abbeylanepriaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	20 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- An acting headteacher was appointed in June 2023.
- The substantive headteacher was not present during the inspection.
- The new SENDCo was appointed in September 2023.
- The school does not use any alternative providers of education.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- 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 met with the headteacher, and leaders responsible for safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, geography and early reading. For each deep dive, inspectors visited lessons, reviewed curriculum plans and spoke with curriculum leaders and teachers. They also spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at the work they have completed.
- Inspectors reviewed curriculum documentation in science and physical education.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator. Education, health and care plans and other support plans for pupils with SEND were reviewed. Inspectors visited lessons to see how pupils with SEND are supported to learn.
- The team scrutinised the school's records of bullying and spoke with several groups of pupils to understand their experience of school.
- Inspectors met leaders to discuss pupils' behaviour and reviewed the school's data on suspensions.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the local governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised records relating to attendance and records of pupils who have joined or left the school roll.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys. They considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free text comments.

Inspection team

Stuart Voyce, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jenni Machin

Ofsted Inspector

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