

Inspection of Ashlands Church of England Primary School

North Street, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 7AL

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They benefit from positive relationships with adults and each other. The pastoral care for pupils is strong. Pupils understand the school values. They understand how the values help them to be better people.

Pupils do not learn well enough across some subjects and phases. This is because in these subjects the curriculum does not clearly outline the knowledge and skills pupils need to learn. Actions the school has taken have not yet ensured that pupils know more, remember more and can do more over time.

Pupils usually listen well and follow instructions. Their behaviour does not disrupt learning. However, some staff's expectations of pupils' attitudes to their learning and what they can achieve are not high enough. As a result, some pupils do not produce work, particularly writing, that is of a high quality.

Pupils are proud of the many charitable and community events that they organise and take part in. These experiences provide them with an understanding of local and global citizenship.

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

The school has changed the curriculum to reflect the mixed-age classes. The curriculum in phonics, and in mathematics in key stage 1, is sequenced well. Pupils build knowledge based on prior learning. However, in some subjects and classes, pupils' learning is disjointed. Pupils have different experiences of the curriculum depending on which class they are in. Consequently, some pupils are unable to recall content they have been taught, or link knowledge they have covered during their time at the school.

Pupils learn to read through a sequenced phonics programme. Most can segment words and blend sounds in order to read with fluency. Pupils read books that are matched to the sounds they know. However, a minority of pupils who need to catch up are taught letter sounds they are not ready for. This hinders their progress in becoming confident and fluent readers. Older pupils enjoy reading. Their work as 'library champs' encourages other pupils to become keen readers.

Many pupils enjoy learning. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning history and mathematics. Pupils can recall content they were recently taught. For example, in early years, children recall and understand their learning about the composition of numbers to five. However, in some subjects, the school has not identified the important content or appropriate order in which pupils learn. Where this occurs, pupils' knowledge is not secure. For example, in science, pupils in key stage 1 learn about the use of particular materials before they have learned the properties of these materials. This means that pupils are unable to build knowledge in an order that would make sense. In history, the school has not identified the important

concepts that pupils should learn in each time period. Pupils have a limited understanding of chronology. In addition, pupils' knowledge is not well connected.

The school has improved systems to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils' individual targets are precise and relevant to their needs. Staff provide them with the help and resources they need to learn alongside their peers.

The school's values underpin the behaviour policy. However, the policy is not applied with consistency. Behaviour is managed differently in different classes. As a result, some pupils view rewards and consequences as being unfairly applied. Some pupils' attitudes to learning and lack of pride in work are reflected in low-quality written work. In the early years, some children do not learn the school's expectations quickly enough. They do not yet have the stamina to listen and concentrate for sustained periods.

Pupils develop their character through a range of experiences. They enjoy the breadth of clubs and activities available to them. Pupils learn to accept everyone as an individual regardless of difference. However, the school's work to ensure that pupils understand different cultures and fundamental British values is still developing.

Governors do not have a precise understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are not able to fully assure themselves of the impact of the school's actions. This is because they do not have all the information they need.

Most staff are proud to work at the school. They value the training they receive on phonics and support for pupils with SEND. Some staff would like more opportunities to carry out checks on the effectiveness of the subjects they lead.

The majority of parents are positive about the school and would recommend it to others. Many commented on the welcoming staff and range of activities outside of the school day.

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 school has not identified the important knowledge it wants pupils to learn. As a result, pupils are not able to build on what they already know. The school must identify the important knowledge it wants pupils to learn across the curriculum and check that pupils know more, remember more and can do more over time.

- The school's expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes too low. For example, expectations of pupils' attitudes to learning are not high enough, particularly in writing. As a result, some pupils do not produce work that is of a high quality. The school needs to ensure that all staff have ambitious expectations of pupils so that pupils achieve well.
- Governors do not have the information they need to fully hold leaders to account for the quality of education pupils receive. As a result, they are not able to evaluate effectively the impact of the school's actions. Governors should ensure they have appropriate information to check the impact of the curriculum.

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	123749
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10288154
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	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Roger Evans
Headteacher	Nicola Ball
Website	www.ashlandsprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Bath and Wells.
- The school's last section 48 inspection was carried out in 2017, when the school was Ashlands Church of England First School.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, 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.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, teaching and support staff, governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- 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 lead inspector listened to pupils read to an adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. In addition, they met with pupils, formally and informally, to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also took into consideration responses to the staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation form.

Inspection team

Angela Folland, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jo Hicks

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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