

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Abbot's Hall Community Primary School

Danescourt Avenue, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 1QF

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 November 2024

Outcome

Abbot's Hall Community Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Daniel Pettitt. The school is part of The Children's Endeavour Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Daniel Jones, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ian Scott.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and enjoy attending the school because they feel cared for by adults. Pupils say they are not aware of any bullying but know that adults will listen to, and act on, any concerns. They demonstrate respect and kindness to adults and to their peers.

Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations for their learning. They know the school's mission statement of 'be the best that you can be' and show this attitude in their lessons. Pupils say that their teachers make lessons fun and challenging and help them. As a result, most pupils achieve well.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. At lunchtimes and breaktimes, pupils play happily together. Year 6 'play leaders' support younger pupils in their play, through sporting activities such as dodgeball. Pupils' positive behaviour in their lessons enables them to learn uninterrupted.

There is a range of extra-curricular activities, such as gymnastics and football, that pupils can attend. Pupils speak positively about visits, including the Years 4 and 6 residential visits, and a trip to an Anglo-Saxon village that supported their learning in history. These opportunities develop pupils' confidence effectively.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious and designed to ensure that pupils receive a broad and balanced education. Lessons are typically well sequenced, enabling pupils to build their understanding over time. Teachers swiftly identify any errors made by pupils. These misconceptions are quickly addressed through additional help across the school. As a result, most pupils produce work of a high quality. Younger pupils are supported effectively to practise their sounds, letters and numbers through a wide variety of both teacher-led and self-chosen activities. However, sometimes there are inconsistencies in the delivery of the curriculum. When this happens, some pupils cannot always remember or build on their learning.

Pupils benefit significantly from the school's effective approach to early reading and phonics. Staff are well trained to deliver the school's chosen programme. Pupils in Reception are confident to blend letter sounds together to read simple words. They enjoy learning and practising new sounds. Older pupils read well. Pupils make good use of the well-stocked library. They read books that match their ability. When pupils fall behind with their reading, there is appropriate intervention to ensure they can catch up and keep up with their peers. Regular checks are made on pupils' progress in reading.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are met through a combination of adaptations in lessons, appropriate intervention activities and additional adult support. Pupils with very high levels of SEND receive an excellent standard of care alongside a well-planned and implemented curriculum, matched to their specific needs. As a result, the academic and social progress they make is strong. However, not all parents and carers fully understand the school's offer and systems for supporting pupils with SEND.

The school actively promotes pupils' regular attendance. When pupils do not attend regularly, the school works well with parents to support a return to school. As a result, pupils benefit from the good quality of education and the routines associated with school. The overwhelming majority of pupils behave well during lessons and unstructured times.

The school's personal development provision is strong. Pupils demonstrate tolerance and respect throughout the school day. Pupils say, 'Uniqueness should be celebrated.' The school's personal, social, health and economic education curriculum supports pupils in broadening their understanding of how to stay healthy, keep safe and manage their mental health. For example, Year 6 'well-being ambassadors' support younger children on the playground and help staff to deliver 'well-being club'. Pupils are proud to undertake leadership roles, such as 'junior road safety officers' and 'eco-councillors'.

There have been recent changes to senior leadership at the school. Despite this, leaders at all levels have taken effective action to ensure continued improvement. Leaders are well supported by the trust and the local governing body. Training and development opportunities for staff enable them to develop their subject expertise and broader skills. Staff feel well supported and listened to in terms of their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, there are inconsistencies in the delivery of the curriculum. When this happens, some pupils cannot always remember or build on their learning. The school should ensure consistency of delivery across all classes.
- The way the school supports pupils with SEND is effective. However, some parents of pupils with SEND do not fully understand some of the school's provision. This leads to confusion among some parents about how their child is being supported. The school should ensure that its SEND offer, including support for parents, is effectively communicated to parents.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Abbot's Hall Community Primary School, to be good for overall effectiveness in February 2018.

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	147933
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10345528
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	359
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ian Scott
CEO of the trust	Daniel Jones
Headteacher	Daniel Pettitt
Website	www.abbotshall.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Abbot's Hall Community Primary School converted to become an academy in May 2020. When its predecessor school, Abbot's Hall Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good for overall effectiveness.
- The school is part of The Children's Endeavour Trust.
- The new headteacher joined the school in April 2024.
- The school presently uses one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with senior school and trust staff, including the CEO and other school leaders, the chair of the standards committee and other trust representatives, including the head of school improvement, the chair of the local governing body and other governors.
- The inspector met with other staff, including teachers and support staff.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their work and looked at samples of pupils' work with leaders.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector considered the views of staff and pupils through Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys, and of parents and carers through responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspector spoke to some parents on the playground. The inspector also gathered the views of staff and pupils through meetings and discussions throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Stephen Cloke, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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