

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Abbey Primary School

Glastonbury Crescent, Mossley Estate, Bloxwich, Walsall, West Midlands WS3 2RP

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Inspection dates:

10 and 11 December 2024

## Outcome

Abbey Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Abbey Primary School because they feel well cared for. The kind and nurturing relationships they form with staff help them to feel safe. Staff understand their community and are dedicated to delivering the best quality education and care they can offer.

Pupils achieve well at this school because of the well-designed curriculum on offer. While some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) require adaptations to their learning, all pupils learn the full curriculum.

Pupils understand the importance of feeling included at their school. They learn about the importance of being tolerant and showing mutual respect. Pupils are empathetic and show kindness by supporting those less fortunate, for example raising money for a local hospice.

Pupils enjoy learning outdoors and are eager to share stories about their new playtime routines. Opportunities for those in the early years to play with pupils in Year 6 are a highlight of this new initiative. The behaviour of pupils at playtime has improved as a result.

The school has prioritised the wider personal development of pupils. It recognises the importance of pupils enjoying their time in school. Pupils benefit from the wide range of opportunities they are offered, for example when visitors and interactive experiences bring their learning to life.

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

This is a school with a 'can-do' approach to supporting pupils and their families. Leaders, helped by a knowledgeable governing body, are dedicated to doing all they can to improve the life chances of their pupils. An increase in pupils with complex SEND has made the school more determined to adapt the curriculum and classroom spaces. The school ensures that staff are trained to deliver the curriculum in different ways. This makes sure that these pupils are supported in their learning. Staff check pupils' understanding well. They offer support to those who need it and deepen the understanding of those who are ready to move on.

Staff appreciate the support they receive and know that their well-being matters. They know that to be successful at this school, they must show dedication, understanding and kindness. They are motivated and care deeply about their community because they feel the same is offered to them.

The school has sharply focused on ensuring pupils can read and solve mathematical problems with increasing independence. Those in the early stages of reading use books matched to the sounds they know. Pupils who fall behind with their reading receive timely support to catch up with their peers. There have been changes to the approach to support pupils to write with accuracy and greater fluency. These approaches are not implemented consistently well. Consequently, some pupils do not yet form letters correctly, spell and form sentences accurately.

The school identifies children with SEND and ensures it communicates well with parents at the earliest point. For example, children who arrive in Reception with significant language and communication difficulties quickly have support put in place to enable them to access their learning. The school works with outside agencies to ensure high-quality support is put in place.

Pupils are inquisitive when learning and enthusiastic about school. They understand that the school's values of 'explore and believe' are there to support them to develop their confidence and become independent learners. They know it is their responsibility to do the right thing for the right reasons. However, occasionally, the school's expectations for learning behaviours are not consistently applied. This means that learning can be disrupted or that it takes longer to complete learning activities.

The school has worked hard to support parents to understand the importance of their children being in school each day. The school offers personalised support to families who struggle to attend school. However, it remains the case that some pupils miss school too often, sometimes without good reason. These pupils miss important learning and the exciting wider opportunities that are on offer at the school.

Pupils' wider development is a strength and priority at this school. Pupils feel that their voice really matters and enjoy changing things at their school. The school council is proud to have been responsible for changing how playtimes run and for ordering new equipment. Being a mental health hero is seen by many pupils as the most important

leadership role in their school. They support pupils, as young as Year 2, to understand the importance of positive mental and physical health. Pupils talk excitedly about their knowledge of how to keep a healthy mind and feel lucky to belong to a school that really cares about them.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Despite the school's work to reduce persistent absence, too many pupils continue to be absent too often. This affects pupils' learning and means some miss the wider opportunities on offer at school. The school should continue to support parents to understand the impact persistent absence has on their child's academic and social development.
- The school's approach to early writing is not being delivered consistently. This means that some pupils are not supported to form letters, spell and write sentences at an age-appropriate level across the curriculum. The school should ensure that the expected approaches for writing are consistently implemented, so pupils develop their writing skills securely in line with age-related expectations.
- Occasionally, the school's expectations for behaviour are not consistently implemented. Learning is sometimes disrupted as a result. The school should ensure that the expectations for addressing low-level disruption as outlined in the behaviour policy are followed by all staff so that pupils show a readiness for learning.

## **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 school to be good for overall effectiveness in April 2019.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104168
<b>Local authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10343792
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	238
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Amy Phillips
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Gilbert
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.abbey.walsall.sch.uk">www.abbey.walsall.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	30 April and 1 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school does not use an alternative provision.
- This school run its own before- and after-school 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 visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with a range of leaders, including those responsible for the curriculum, teaching and learning, behaviour, attendance, personal development and safeguarding.
- 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 spoke with the local authority school improvement officer.
- The inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and four other governors.
- The inspector considered the survey responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments from parents.
- The inspector also evaluated the responses to the online staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Tony Bradshaw, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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