

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Ashton C of E Primary School

Roade Hill, Ashton, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN7 2JH

Inspection date: 14 January 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that aspects of the school's work may not be as strong as at the time of the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and enjoy their learning at Ashton Church of England Primary School. The school wants what is best for all pupils. The nurturing atmosphere around the school is built on genuine care for one another. Pupils hold their teachers in high regard.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. There are high expectations of behaviour and pupils meet these well. Staff know pupils very well. They create and grow strong relationships with pupils and families alike. Pupils care for and support each other. On the playground, pupils play and interact in mixed-age groups extremely well. They are encouraged to look out for each other, and they do this with pride.

The school is ambitious for pupils to achieve well, and many pupils rise to these high expectations. However, in some areas, the curriculum is not well developed, and in others, it is not implemented as well as it could be. This means that not all pupils achieve as well as they should.

A range of experiences are provided for pupils to enjoy. After-school clubs are available, in which many pupils take part. Art club is a firm favourite. There are strong links with the church and the local community.

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

The curriculum is well thought out and carefully designed in many subjects. The school has considered the needs of the mixed-age classes. It ensures that the curriculum caters for these. However, the curriculum for children in the early years does not identify

consistently what will be taught. As a result, some activities provided for children do not have a clear learning intention and the knowledge they gain is left to chance.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They give clear instructions and explanations in lessons. They model subject-specific vocabulary that pupils need to know. When done well, pupils use correct vocabulary to discuss their learning. For instance, in the infant class, pupils could explain what they knew about hibernation. Learning is adapted carefully to meet different age ranges and needs in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or abilities are usually supported well to allow them to access the same learning as their peers. The school is beginning to develop systems to check what pupils know and understand.

Sometimes, the curriculum is not implemented as effectively as the school intends. Some pupils' understanding of key knowledge in the wider curriculum is not consistently secure. Pupils sometimes struggle to remember what has been taught over time. This includes pupils' knowledge of fundamental British values and other faiths and cultures. The school provides opportunities for pupils to enhance their learning through trips and visits. However, some pupils tend to remember the activity or the trip rather than the intended learning.

The school is ambitious for all pupils to develop a love of reading. Many pupils say that they enjoy listening to books read to them by adults in school. Pupils discuss their favourite books and authors. There is a systematic approach to teaching early reading and phonics. Pupils benefit from daily reading lessons as soon as they start school. Books are well matched to pupils' knowledge of phonics. However, pupils who struggle to learn to read are not supported well enough so that they catch up quickly. Adults do not consistently model accurate sounds or correct pupils' mistakes. These pupils do not get enough opportunities to practise using their phonics knowledge so that they improve their reading skills.

The school has high expectations for pupils to attend school every day, and many pupils do. Systems in place to improve attendance are having a positive impact.

Pupils are provided with opportunities to lead. They take these roles seriously and are proud of them. For example, shed monitors ensure that equipment is respected and well looked after. They share the responsibility of independently creating the rota.

The personal development programme is well considered. Pupils are taught about healthy relationships. They understand what a good friend is and demonstrate this understanding in their daily lives. Pupils learn how to be healthy and how to keep themselves safe in school, at home, in the community and when online. They are supported to develop resilience and to recognise their own feelings and emotions.

Governors know the school well. They ensure that leaders keep them well informed and provide appropriate support. Overall, most of the school's actions have been well targeted and school priorities are accurate. Staff are overwhelmingly proud to work at the school. They feel valued, respected and supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's intentions for the curriculum are not realised consistently. For example, pupils do not get sufficient opportunities to rehearse learning or recall key knowledge. As a result, in some subjects, pupils do not learn as well as they should. The school needs to ensure that staff are supported to implement the curriculum effectively in all subjects so that pupils achieve consistently well.
- The teaching of phonics is not consistent. Staff do not always model sounds clearly, and pupils are not able to practise using what they know often enough. As a result, some pupils who fall behind do not catch up as quickly as they should. The school needs to ensure that all staff deliver the phonics programme effectively.
- The curriculum in the early years has not been thought through carefully enough. Too often, activities provided during continuous provision leave children's learning to chance. The school needs to ensure that the precise knowledge children need to know is identified clearly in all areas of 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 October 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

Unique reference number	121957
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10347456
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	35
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Allen Lee
Headteacher	Jude Busari (executive headteacher)
Website	www.ashtonceprimary.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in December 2019.
- The school does not use any 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, subject leaders, teachers, and leaders responsible for behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors met with two members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. They also spoke with two representatives from the local authority.

- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and took account of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils and staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 reviewed a range of documents, including information available on the school's website.

Inspection team

Heidi Bastock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Stuart Anderson

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025