

Inspection of Abbey Woods Academy

Wimblestraw Road, Berinsfield, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 7LZ

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and motivated to try their best because leaders have created a culture in which pupils' achievements are promoted and celebrated. Pupils look forward to the weekly celebration assemblies to find out which house has gained the most house points. They understand that success requires hard work and commitment, which they demonstrate in lessons. Pupils are proud when their names are recorded in the 'golden book' in recognition of personal achievements, and they are equally proud to see their work displayed on the 'star board'. Collectively, these opportunities motivate pupils to achieve the high expectations of leaders. Parents and carers are very positive about the school. One captured this, saying, 'The school is such a positive and encouraging environment for my children.'

Pupils understand the 'CARE' values of 'community, aspiration, respect and equality'. They demonstrate these values through their interactions with each other and staff. In lessons and around the school, pupils show consideration and value kindness. Pupils appreciate that their teachers know them well and are confident to report any worries. They know that teachers will support them to resolve any issues. Bullying is not tolerated, and pupils are clear that, if it occurs, staff quickly take action to address it. Consequently, there are very few instances of bullying.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, which covers the breadth of the national curriculum. They have carefully embedded commercial schemes which sequence the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. For example, the early years curriculum is designed in accordance with the knowledge and skills children need for success in key stage 1. Subject leaders regularly review and implement further improvements to the curriculum, and school leaders support subject leaders in their professional development.

Approaches to teaching are mostly consistent across subjects. Teachers use modelling and questioning effectively to support pupils' learning of new knowledge. For example, in early years, teachers ask questions to prompt children to give explanations to develop their language. When introducing new knowledge, teachers frequently check pupils' understanding, correcting any misunderstandings quickly. Teachers and teaching assistants adapt activities carefully, ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make strong progress. In core subjects, teachers use assessment to address knowledge gaps in previous learning, which means pupils build secure knowledge over time. However, in some foundation subjects, pupils are not consistently able to explain their prior learning. In these subjects, prior learning is not adequately woven into current topics, which means that, over time, pupils develop gaps in their knowledge.

Leaders prioritise reading throughout the school. All pupils enjoy daily 'class reads', where they read a book with the teacher. Pupils have easy access to books, with

'book corners' in every classroom. They explain what they have read with interest and insight. The curriculum for early reading ensures that all children become confident and fluent readers. Teachers closely track children's progress, and any who struggle receive prompt support, helping them to catch up quickly.

Leaders have improved behaviour across the school, embedding clear and consistent expectations effectively. This begins in the early years, where children learn how to respond to 'silent signals'. Teachers use effective routines and address any low-level disruption consistently, which ensures that it does not escalate. Pupils respond positively to the high expectations and proportional consequences. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is calm and orderly. At playtime, pupils are friendly and respectful. They value the opportunity to gain 'playmaster' awards for excellent conduct.

Staff encourage pupils to participate in the many wider opportunities available to them. Pupils value the thoughtfully relaunched house system, which motivates them to try new activities. Consequently, many pupils, including those with SEND, attend clubs and enthusiastically take part in events. Pupils learn how to stay safe, including online, and they learn about the importance of well-being. They value the inclusion room, where they learn how to resolve problems and overcome challenges. At playtime, trained mental health ambassadors in Year 6 provide support for anyone who needs it. Pupils understand the importance of equality through learning about historic figures such as Rosa Parks. Consequently, pupils embrace difference, as it matters to them that everyone should feel included in their community. Leadership roles such as 'house reps' and 'eco-warriors' provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to influence changes in the school.

Leaders are determined for all pupils to be aspirational and achieve the best they can. All leaders work diligently to raise standards and continuously review the impact of any changes. Leaders have taken specific steps to ensure that workload is manageable. Consequently, staff feel valued and enjoy working in the school. Governors and trustees accurately understand the schools' strengths and priorities for improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise safeguarding. They provide effective training for staff, which includes understanding current local safeguarding concerns. Staff know how to recognise the indicators of potential harm and understand the clear procedure for reporting these.

Leaders promptly report concerns to external agencies. They work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils and families receive the support they need.

Leaders maintain detailed safeguarding records. Safer recruitment practices are embedded. Governors and trustees are diligent in their approach to overseeing that safeguarding practices are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, pupils do not remember what they have been taught in earlier topics. This means they have gaps in their knowledge that have not been identified. In these subjects, leaders need to ensure that staff know how to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge, ensuring that, over time, pupils build secure understanding across the whole 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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	139709
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10268302
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	169
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jay Bhutani
Headteacher	Sophie Charter
Website	www.abbeywoods.anthemtrust.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 July 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Anthem Schools Trust.
- The governing body manages before- and after-school childcare provision.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, representatives from the local governing board, the board of trustees, including the chair of trustees, and the director of education.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and design technology. For each deep dive, inspectors

discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, spoke to teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their work and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors also spoke to pupils, formally and informally, around the school and at playtime.
- The views of staff and parents were gathered through discussions and Ofsted's online surveys. One of the inspection team also spoke to parents at the start of the second day of the inspection.
- The lead inspector spoke to pupils from different year groups and considered responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- Inspectors reviewed self-evaluation documents and audits.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks, talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding and looked at the school's safeguarding records and documents. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils about safeguarding.

Inspection team

Phillip Blagg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Diane Charman

Ofsted Inspector

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