

Inspection of Abbey Hill Primary & Nursery

Abbey Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG17 7NZ

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

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| 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?

The pupils at this inclusive school have a strong shared identity. They are happy and proud to be 'Abbeyhillians'. Pupils feel safe in a school community where everyone can be themselves. Parents say how much they value what one described as 'a gem of a school'.

Leaders sets high expectations for how pupils learn and behave within a culture of care. Pupils know what is expected of them. They work hard and do their best the vast majority of the time. Pupils enjoy lessons and playtime. They attend well. They know it is important to treat everyone with kindness and respect. If they fall out or if bullying happens, pupils trust the adults to sort it out quickly.

Reading is at the heart of everything at Abbey Hill. Books take pride of place in corridors and classrooms. The school's 'patron of reading' works with pupils to write and publish their own book of poetry.

'Abbeyhillians' get strong support to develop their character and resilience. They learn to be 'upstanders', to persevere and to lead. They give back to their school as lunchtime helpers, members of the pupil parliament or anti-bullying ambassadors. They comment that by doing these roles they gain confidence and courage.

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

Leaders and staff have worked with commitment and a strong sense of moral purpose to improve this school. Leaders want pupils to become confident communicators, with a clear sense of what they have to offer the world. To achieve this, they have developed an ambitious curriculum that prioritises reading and personal development. Subject leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge and skills that pupils should acquire. Their plans set out how pupils' knowledge will build, step by step, from the early years to Year 6. A very small number of subjects are not as fully developed as others. Leaders recently reviewed and improved some areas of the curriculum. Some others are not yet as fully developed as leaders want. They have clear plans to complete this work.

As a result of high-quality training, teachers take a consistent approach to lessons. They make sure that pupils have lots of opportunities to go back over what they have learned before. They explain new learning clearly, showing pupils how best to approach a task or problem. They check pupils' learning, spot misconceptions and address them. Teachers use assessment well to inform the next steps for pupils' learning. Leaders are already working to improve how they assess learning in the foundation subjects. At the end of key stage 2, last year, pupils' progress in mathematics and writing matched national averages, while their progress in reading did not. Leaders have taken effective steps to address this.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength. This reflects leaders' determination to make sure that all pupils develop

academically and personally. Leaders have effective systems to identify and meet pupils' needs. A small number of pupils follow an appropriately adapted curriculum. They and others benefit from working with skilled adults in 'the barn', the school's SEND base. In lessons, teachers make effective adaptations so that all pupils can successfully access the curriculum.

Children in the early years get off to a strong start. Staff prioritise developing children's language. Play is purposeful and supports children's development. Leaders are developing their approach to outdoor play so that it is as precisely focused as indoor play. As is the case throughout the school, children are well prepared for the next stage of learning.

The school's curriculum for early reading is of a high quality. Children learn phonics from the start of Reception. Staff make skilful use of assessment to identify and provide support for pupils who need extra help. Leaders make sure that pupils at all stages read a variety of books and texts. They have chosen texts carefully to reflect and celebrate the diversity and wonder of the world.

Pupils and staff have warm, positive relationships in this calm, orderly school. Some pupils need help to improve their behaviour, attendance or punctuality, and staff support them effectively.

Leaders have a well-established approach to personal development. It is a strength of the school. Pupils grow in resilience and learn good communication skills during their time at Abbey Hill. They develop the knowledge and character traits they need to thrive in modern Britain. Pupils would like more opportunities to develop their interests and talents. Leaders agree that this is a priority for development.

Governors perform their duties well. Along with school leaders, they are mindful of staff's workload and well-being. Staff feel well supported. They are proud to be part of the 'Abbeyhillian' community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong, well-established culture of care and vigilance at this school. Staff know pupils very well. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained. As a result, they are alert to signs that a pupil might have a worry and know how to respond.

Leaders take swift action to support pupils and their families, including working closely with external agencies. They place great importance on open communication with families. They go above and beyond what is expected to support their pupils.

Pupils learn to keep themselves and others safe and well. For example, they know how breathing can help them to cope if they feel anxious.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not fully developed the curriculum in a small number of foundation subjects. The curriculum in these subjects is not as effective as it is in other areas of the curriculum. Leaders should continue with their plans to improve the curriculum in these subjects so that pupils' learning is consistently strong across all areas 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](#)' 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

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| Unique reference number | 136006 |
| Local authority | Nottinghamshire County Council |
| Inspection number | 10268174 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 2 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 257 |
| Appropriate authority | Local authority |
| Chair of governing body | Karl Simpson |
| Headteacher | Helen Chambers |
| Website | www.abbeyhillprimaryandnurseryschool.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 5 and 6 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, history and physical education. 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 spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects and visited a range of lessons.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders. The lead inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority. She met with members of the governing body.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding the lead inspector reviewed the school's policies, procedures and records. She met with the designated safeguarding leads. Inspectors also spoke with staff, governors and pupils about the school's approach to keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. An inspector visited breakfast club.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff questionnaires. They spoke with parents at the school.

Inspection team

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Aoife Galletly, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Ben O'Connell | Ofsted Inspector |
| Steve Tague | Ofsted Inspector |

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