

Inspection of Ashfield Valley Primary School

New Barn Lane, Rochdale, Lancashire OL11 1TA

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils described their school as a safe, warm and welcoming place to learn. Pupils are happy here. There is a culture of tolerance and respect for others.

Pupils strive to display the 'Ashfield Valley Way' of being kind, honest, resilient, respectful and responsible at all times. Pupils also know that staff have high expectations of their behaviour. As a result, pupils typically behave well. The school is calm and orderly. Staff deal with any incidents, including any bullying, quickly and effectively.

Leaders and staff expect pupils to achieve well. Pupils focus on their learning and they try hard. Pupils are keen to share what they have learned with others. Leaders ensure that pupils who speak English as an additional language get the extra help that they need. In the main, pupils achieve well, including children in the early years.

Pupils talked with enthusiasm about the books that they enjoy reading. They also described their preferred authors. There is a passion for reading across the school.

Pupils are keen to contribute to their school community. They take great pride in their roles as eco, pupil and digital leaders. School leaders help pupils to see how their actions can have a positive impact on others and on the environment.

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

All pupils access a broad and ambitious curriculum, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Across the curriculum, leaders have carefully identified the essential knowledge that pupils must learn. They have also established the order in which teachers should deliver new information. As a result, pupils successfully build new learning on secure foundations. Most pupils learn well.

Leaders have ensured that staff access a range of appropriate training to enable them to deliver the curriculum effectively. Nonetheless, in some subjects, a small number of teachers do not have sufficiently secure subject knowledge. Occasionally, in these subjects, teachers are unable to provide pupils with consistently high-quality explanations or models to help pupils understand new concepts and ideas. As a result, a few pupils do not develop the depth of subject knowledge of which they are capable.

Children in the early years benefit from a calm and purposeful learning environment. Leaders have designed a curriculum that supports children to learn and develop well. Staff are adept in their use of questioning to deepen children's learning and to broaden their vocabulary. As a result, the majority of children are well prepared for key stage 1.

In most subjects, leaders have developed systems for assessing pupils' knowledge that are effective and take account of the workload of staff. This means that teachers and leaders have an accurate picture of how well pupils are learning across the curriculum. In some lessons, however, sometimes teachers do not identify and address the misconceptions that pupils develop. Occasionally, this means that a few pupils develop misunderstandings that go unaddressed.

Leaders successfully prioritise reading. They have carefully selected a phonics programme that meets pupils' needs. The scheme is taught with fidelity by all staff, using books that are well matched to the sounds that pupils are learning. This, coupled with targeted support, ensures that pupils quickly develop into fluent readers. Those pupils who find reading difficult catch up apace.

Pupils with SEND receive appropriate, timely and targeted support. Leaders and staff have an accurate knowledge of pupils' ability and the barriers to learning that they may face. Staff take all reasonable steps to overcome these barriers, working in close partnership with parents and carers and with external agencies. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils behave well and engage positively in class. They rarely disrupt their peers' learning. Pupils play well together in their free time. Most pupils attend school regularly. Where pupils are frequently absent, leaders challenge this well. Parents are supportive of the school. In the main, they spoke positively about the guidance that leaders provide for them.

Leaders have implemented a well-designed programme to support pupils' personal development. Pupils are clear about what constitutes a healthy and unhealthy relationship. They learn to value and respect the differences between people. Pupils engage in a wide range of extra-curricular activities that meet their interests and talents.

Governors provide effective support and challenge that help leaders to continually improve the quality of education that pupils receive. Governors fulfil their statutory duties with diligence. Governors take pride in their roles.

Staff appreciate the support that they receive for their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have an in-depth knowledge of pupils and their families. There are clear and effective systems in place to identify and manage potential safeguarding cases. Staff are well trained in safeguarding arrangements. They make timely referrals to leaders, when required. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to protect the welfare of pupils.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe in the local community. This includes when near water, when cycling or when using technology and social media.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, teachers do not identify and rectify the misconceptions that pupils develop. This means that some pupils have misunderstandings that go unaddressed. Leaders should ensure that teachers successfully pinpoint and rectify any misconceptions that pupils have about different topics and concepts.
- In a small number of subjects, staff sometimes have gaps in their subject knowledge. This prevents some pupils from learning all that they could. Leaders should provide additional training so that staff are well equipped to deliver 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

Unique reference number	105783
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10289898
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Shabana Anwar
Headteacher	Heather Edge
Website	https://www.ashfieldvalley.rochdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- There is a daily breakfast club at the school.

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 early reading, science, and art and design. For these subjects, inspectors spoke with senior leaders and met with curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils. Inspectors also carried out a review of pupils' work and visited a sample of lessons.
- Inspectors heard pupils read. They also met with leaders of other subjects to consider the curriculum in these areas.

- Inspectors observed pupils at breaktime and lunchtime. They spoke with several groups of pupils about behaviour. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted’s pupil survey.
- To evaluate how well the school safeguards pupils, inspectors looked at how effectively the school checks whether adults are suitable to work with pupils. Inspectors looked at records of attendance, behaviour and cases referred to social services. They spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff during the inspection and took account of the responses to Ofsted’s survey for staff.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors visited the on-site breakfast club.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documents, including leaders’ self-evaluation, their improvement plans and the information contained on the school’s website.

Inspection team

Alex Reed, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Moxham	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Berry	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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