

Inspection of Ashfield Junior School

School Lane, Bushey, Hertfordshire WD23 1SR

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade **Good**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Ashfield Junior School. There is a warm and caring atmosphere throughout the school. The core values of respect, kindness, resilience and cooperation are central to the pupils' school life. Pupils helped to decide on these values. Pupils are kind and show respect to each other and adults. Bullying is rare and it is dealt with effectively when it happens.

Pupils behave well, both inside and outside of the classroom. They understand the school's behaviour system and value rewards for positive behaviour. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning mean that they participate in lessons enthusiastically. Pupils are proud of their achievements. They spoke proudly of the French cafe they held for parents to showcase their learning. Pupils achieve well.

Pupils benefit from the wide range of clubs and additional activities on offer, such as football and chess. Clubs enable pupils to pursue their interests and develop their talents. Pupils learn how others are different from them through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum and appropriate visits, such as to the Hindu temple. Pupils learn about leadership through responsibilities, such as being on the school council.

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

Leaders have recently updated their curriculum. The curriculum is broad and interesting. It covers the full range of national curriculum subjects. Across all subjects, leaders' curriculum plans clearly set out what pupils need to learn and when.

Most teachers, use the new plans well to help them teach effective lessons that support pupils' learning. Many teachers have secure subject knowledge, which helps them to check learning regularly and, in most cases, spot if a pupil does not know or understand an idea. Consequently, in most subjects' pupils progress well.

In a few subjects, teachers are just getting used to the new curriculum plans. In a minority of cases, teachers do not plan lessons that are as helpful to pupils' learning. Additionally, some leaders are not consistently checking what is working well and what needs to improve. In these instances, pupils do not make as much progress. More staff training would ensure that all subjects are taught well.

On the whole, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) progress well through the curriculum. This is because most staff adapt their lessons well around pupils' needs. There are some instances, however, when this is not the case and teaching is not as helpful for these pupils. This is due to the lack of training for staff. As a result, some pupils with SEND find learning trickier than it could be.

Pupils enjoy reading. They are excited to share their books with other pupils. Phonics teaching is used effectively to support pupils who need extra help with their reading to catch up quickly. High-quality training supports staff to know what reading help to give. Consequently, pupils develop accuracy, fluency and confidence when reading.

The well-planned PSHE curriculum supports pupils to have the tools, skills and knowledge to be responsible future citizens. As part of this curriculum, pupils have the opportunity to develop their aspirations for the future by studying inspirational and relevant people, for example Marcus Rashford.

Transition to and from the school is carefully considered. Leaders ensure that pupils feel welcome when they arrive by having a 'buddy'. It is the buddy's responsibility to show them around and make them feel welcome. Transition of responsibilities within the school is also considered. Year 6 pupils train year 5 pupils to become sports leaders before they leave the school. This develops their confidence in being good role models before they move to secondary school.

Leaders responded quickly to the changing behaviour needs of pupils in the school. A clear behaviour policy is in place. It outlines leaders' high expectations and is consistently followed by all staff. The number of negative behaviour incidents is reducing. The introduction of the house point reward system motivates the pupils to behave well.

Staff are well supported by leaders. Despite recent changes to the school, such as the curriculum and behaviour policy, staff workload is well considered. Governors effectively support and challenge leaders to ensure that they make the right decisions to improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained. They know how to keep pupils safe and report any concerns that they have. Leaders act quickly and effectively to ensure that pupils are safe. They ensure that pupils get the support they need from external agencies when it is needed.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including when online. For example, they know when to call 999. Pupils have developed a safety network and can identify their trusted adults. Older pupils have worked with the police and understand what cyber bullying is.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders do not check that the curriculum is being delivered as intended. This means that leaders do not always see where staff need more training or support to help them to teach the new curriculum well. Leaders should ensure that all curriculum areas are regularly evaluated, so that staff get appropriate support and training to implement the curriculum well.
- Some staff do not adapt learning and classroom activities well enough around the needs of pupils with SEND. This means that in these instances, pupils with SEND find learning more difficult and do not make the best possible progress. Leaders should ensure that all staff are trained well in how to adapt learning around the needs of pupils with SEND.

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	117391
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10268048
Type of school	Junior School
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Chris Holt
Headteacher	Andre Dourado
Website	www.ashfield.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 and 3 March 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2022.

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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, geography and French. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of work.

- Inspectors also considered other subject areas such as history and computing. Inspectors spoke to curriculum leaders and looked at a range of work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors held meetings with a range of leaders, including the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator and governors. The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors held meetings with leaders responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements. Safeguarding records, and the school's record of pre-employment checks for staff were scrutinised. Inspectors spoke to pupils and checked staff members' understanding of how to keep pupils safe from harm.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils from different year groups across both days of inspection.
- The inspectors considered 61 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View. The lead inspector spoke to the parents at the school gate.
- Inspectors considered the 20 staff responses to online staff survey as well as speaking to groups of staff, including non-teaching staff.

Inspection team

Katie Devenport, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Emma Breckenridge

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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