

Inspection of an outstanding school: Almondsbury Church of England Primary School

Sundays Hill, Almondsbury, Gloucestershire BS32 4DS

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2023

Outcome

Almondsbury Church of England Primary School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Almondsbury Primary School. Adults and pupils are proud to be part of the school family. Most parents are unwavering in their support for the school. Adults know the pupils well. Relationships are warm and supportive. Pupils feel safe and know that adults will help them if they have a worry or concern.

The quality of education the pupils receive is exceptional. Pupils are curious and keen to learn. All pupils progress extremely well through the intended curriculum. This means pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Adults have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils respond well to this. This begins in Reception Year, where children learn to take turns and work as a team to solve problems. Pupils demonstrate the school rules of 'ready, respectful, safe' as they move around the school and during learning. As a result, classrooms are purposeful and calm.

Pupils develop their talents and interests through the rich opportunities available. Trips to France, London and the local area support pupils to understand the world around them. Pupils enjoy the range of clubs available, including golf, running and karate.

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

The school is led with passion and determination. It is aspirational for all pupils. The meticulously designed curriculum begins in Reception Year. It provides the strong foundations for future learning. The school has identified the precise knowledge they want pupils to know and remember in all subjects across the curriculum. The sequence of learning provides opportunities for pupils to revisit what they have previously learned. This ensures that knowledge 'sticks' and pupils build on what they already know. Pupils

develop a real depth of understanding in subjects. The strong focus on vocabulary is key to this.

Adaptations made to learning, for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), ensures they have full access to the same education as their peers. Adults know the pupils' needs well. They support pupils effectively. This means that all pupils progress extremely well through the intended curriculum.

Staff continue to reflect on and adapt aspects of the curriculum so that it continues to improve. Subjects beyond English and mathematics have as much priority as the core subjects. Pupils' work demonstrates the broad and balanced curriculum. In geography, older pupils can explain their current learning about the different parts of a river and the impact of a growing population on the demand for homes. They can recall the names of oceans and continents that they learned in key stage 1. All of this helps them to 'think like a geographer' and succeed in their learning.

Reading is a priority. The school ensures that pupils read a wide range of diverse texts by classic and modern authors. As soon as children begin in Reception Year, they learn to read sounds and build words. This helps them to develop into confident and fluent readers. Adults swiftly identify pupils who struggle to read. These pupils receive the support they need to keep up. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. Older pupils continue to develop their reading knowledge and can explain how to retrieve and infer meaning. All of this helps pupils to develop a love of reading. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their favourite authors and stories.

Pupils' wider development is key to the work of the school. Pupils learn about the importance of fundamental British values and understand that democracy is a fair process to elect leaders. Pupils are very proud of the leadership roles they have. These include school parliament, sports council and the department for worship. Pupils know that key people from the past have helped to shape life in modern Britain today. They can explain about the impact of slavery and the right to equality for all. Pupils are adamant that everybody is welcome at their school.

The schools' emphasis on enhancing the curriculum is commendable. Trips and visits are carefully designed to support learning across different subjects. For example, pupils visit to Gloucester supports their understanding of the journey of the River Severn and key aspects of human geography. A planned visit to the Houses of Parliament will further develop pupils' understanding of government and democracy.

Pupils have impeccable manners. They are kind and considerate towards each other and adults. Pupils welcome visitors to their school. They are keen to talk about their 'great' school. Pupils recognise that some of their peers need additional help from adults to regulate their behaviour. Adults support these pupils well. This means that pupils remain focused on their learning and succeed. Pupils appreciate each other as individuals and know that tolerance and acceptance is important.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 outstanding in June 2017.

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 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	109157
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10297878
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	311
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Simon Begbey
Headteacher	Paul Smith (executive headteacher) Katie Good and Tim Dean (co-heads of school)
Website	www.almondsburyprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses three unregistered alternative providers.
- This school is part of the Diocese of Bristol. At the most recent section 48 inspection of the school, carried out in June 2019, the school was judged to be excellent.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club.
- Since the last inspection, there is a new leadership structure in place. This consists of an executive headteacher and two co-headteachers.

Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, co-headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders and representatives from the local governing board.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects, including art and design and science.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. The inspector also considered responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Wendy D'Arcy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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