

Ashford Hill Primary School

URN: 149425 | Inspected: 25 November 2025

Safeguarding

standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils achieve highly in the end of key stage 2 national tests. Leaders ensure that pupils gain the essential knowledge, vocabulary and skills needed in many subjects across the curriculum. They check carefully that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those who are disadvantaged, typically achieve well. As a result, pupils leave the school confident to take on the challenges in the next stage of their education. Overall, across different subjects, pupils experience a curriculum that is purposeful, ambitious and positive. This enables pupils to secure their basic knowledge in reading, writing, and mathematics especially. Typically, teachers provide opportunities that encourage pupils to apply their learning across the subjects they study. However, pupils do not develop detailed knowledge and understanding in a few subjects in the wider curriculum.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

The curriculum in all subjects is well sequenced and ambitious. Leaders have set out precisely the important knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which it should be taught. Pupils build a broader appreciation of different subjects through a range of experiences, such as visits to art galleries and the theatre. The vibrant curriculum equips pupils with the knowledge and skills they need for future success. In lessons, staff put the right support in place for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Throughout the curriculum, there is a deliberate focus on ensuring that pupils use and apply their technical vocabulary to discuss and develop their ideas. Reading has a high priority. Leaders make sure that pupils who need extra help with their reading are supported well and catch up quickly. Staff take every opportunity to promote pupils' love of reading. Highly effective monitoring means that leaders have an astute understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching. They use their monitoring well to prioritise staff's professional development. Consequently, teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. They deliver the curriculum with confidence and clarity, particularly in English and mathematics. However, in a few subjects in the wider curriculum, teaching does not build on what pupils have learned previously as well as it could.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils thrive in this welcoming and nurturing school. They benefit from being part of a small, close-knit and

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harmonious community where staff know them very well. Pupils rise to meet leaders' high expectations of their behaviour and academic progress. Staff forge supportive and caring relationships with pupils and their families. Parents appreciate the help and care that staff provide to ensure that their children flourish in their learning. Pupils embrace the school's motto to 'be the best we can be'. They work hard and take pride in their work. All groups of pupils achieve highly in national tests and assessments, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. However, there are some inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is taught in a few subjects other than English and mathematics. Pupils are friendly, respectful and confident citizens. They look after others by collecting donations for charities and causes they support. Pupils delight in the many opportunities the school has to offer. For example, they thoroughly enjoy taking part in sports tournaments or organising assemblies. The school's musical production is a high point of the year. Pupils revel in the experience of participating in the performance, which is staged at a professional theatre. In addition, pupils pursue their hobbies in clubs such as choir and drumming. Pupils look after each other. They are proud of the role they play in making their school a happy and inclusive community. Breaktimes are sociable occasions. Pupils enjoy organising games, playing together or taking a moment to catch up with a friend on the 'buddy benches'. Pupils learn how to keep safe, including when online. Adults deal with pupils' concerns straight away. Any form of bullying or unkindness is not tolerated here.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue their work to ensure that teaching across the wider curriculum builds on what pupils already know and can do so that their achievements further improve.

Early years

Strong standard

The early years curriculum is well sequenced and tailored precisely to children's individual needs. The curriculum provides a sound foundation to help all children to learn well. Consequently, children, including disadvantaged children and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are very well prepared for their future learning in key stage 1. The school places a particular emphasis on developing children's language and vocabulary. Across the different areas of learning, staff introduce and model key words extremely effectively. They invite children to express themselves in full sentences and encourage them to use descriptive vocabulary confidently. Children are introduced to early reading and phonics as soon as they join the school. Staff expertly identify and address any gaps and misconceptions quickly. This means that children, including those with SEND, become confident readers. Mathematical learning is equally embedded, through purposeful play and real-life contexts. Staff consistently encourage children to ask questions, explore their ideas and take ownership of their learning. Children behave extremely well and respond positively to adults, who foster their independence and self-confidence. Routines are established and transitions between activities are calm and purposeful. The school's nurturing ethos means that parents and carers are welcomed as partners from the outset.

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Inclusion

Strong standard

Leaders place inclusion at the heart of their work. The school is an inclusive place where all pupils can belong and thrive. Leaders identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly and accurately. They work constructively with parents and carers and other agencies, such as children's social care. This has a highly positive impact on pupils' experience of school. Staff benefit from regular training to enhance their expertise, in areas such as autism. This ensures that they understand precisely how to help pupils to overcome any barriers to their learning. For example, staff adapt tasks skilfully in response to pupils' emerging needs. They address any gaps or misconceptions swiftly. They check and ensure that pupils with SEND make progress against their individual targets. Consequently, these pupils achieve very well from their starting points and flourish alongside their peers. Leaders make sure that adjustments to support pupils are timely and appropriate. Where necessary, they adapt the curriculum and provide highly effective support. Leaders' decisions are made in pupils' best interests. They use additional funding efficiently so that disadvantaged pupils and their classmates achieve equally well.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard

Leaders know the school extremely well. They have worked highly effectively to secure rapid improvement in standards of education, pupils' achievement and staff morale in the past 3 years. Leaders have successfully embedded a culture of high aspiration for staff and pupils. As a result, there is a clear ethos of collaboration and teamwork in all areas of the school. Leaders and trustees are united in their vision to provide the very best opportunities for pupils and their families. They have an accurate view of the school's performance. Leaders identify appropriate areas for development, ensuring that pupils' interests are always at the forefront of decisions. Trustees are knowledgeable in their roles. They provide leaders with appropriate challenge and support to ensure that the school continues to move from strength to strength. They fulfil their roles and responsibilities to a high standard. Leaders ensure that teachers receive high-quality training to strengthen their expertise. They are considerate of staff's workload and wellbeing. Staff appreciate reductions to their workload and the high-quality support and feedback they receive from the trust and leaders. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the impact the school has on their child's educational experience. Personal development and well-being Strong standard The school's work to promote pupils' character is highly effective. Pupils have a detailed understanding of the differences in the world because of the rich and extensive experiences provided by the school. Pupils learn about other cultures, festivals and religions. Pupils discuss topics such as refugeehood, racism, neurodiversity and equal rights respectfully. They use their democratic voice to vote on key decisions which affect them in school. Pupils enjoy taking part in a wealth of enrichment opportunities. These contribute significantly to pupils' experiences and build their character and resilience. Pupils willingly extend their support for the different causes they choose. For instance, pupils sponsor a Christmas lunch for children in another country and generously volunteer their help at events in the village. Pupils know how to

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look after their physical and mental health. They understand how to stay safe online and are aware of the benefits and potential risks in the use of artificial intelligence. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships and know how to look after their physical and emotional wellbeing. Pupils value the wide range of clubs which promote their creativity and confidence. Clubs include drumming, choir, crafts and multi-sports. Pupils relish taking on different roles and responsibilities, such as school councillors, eco-warriors, librarians and digital leaders. They gain insight into careers from visitors such as musicians, the dentist and members of the fire service. These visitors also help pupils to learn about the wider world. Pupils learn about their unique locality through trips to the museum, the farm and the nearby church. Leaders monitor pupils' participation in clubs and activities closely to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all that the school has to offer. Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Pupils revel in coming to school. Their zest for learning is evident in their high rates of attendance. Leaders act proactively and purposefully to support pupils and their families. They identify emerging concerns quickly. Leaders provide timely help to swiftly resolve any issues. Where concerns arise, leaders work very well with appropriate agencies to remove barriers. Consequently, pupils' attendance is consistently above the national average and persistent absenteeism is low. This consistent focus on attendance ensures that all pupils thrive academically, form positive friendships and flourish personally. It also ensures that all pupils develop a palpable sense of belonging here, whatever their individual needs. The school has a tangible air of harmony and kindness in all areas. Pupils are courteous and behave extremely well. They follow instructions with thought and care. Pupils look forward to their learning and take great pride in presenting their work neatly. Staff take every opportunity to nurture and celebrate positive behaviour, which pupils appreciate and value. Pupils trust adults to deal efficiently with any concerns they have. Leaders identify pupils who need additional help to manage their behaviour or emotions. They provide timely and highly effective support.

For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:

<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/ashford-hill-primary-school-thatcham>