

Inspection of a good school: Arbury Primary School

Carlton Way, Arbury Primary School, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB4 2DE

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 September 2023

Outcome

Arbury Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Arbury is a welcoming and inclusive school where pupils are happy. Each morning, staff greet children and their families on the playground. This contributes to a positive start to the school day. Pupils have warm and trusting relationships with adults, which helps them feel safe. Pupils are confident that a trusted adult will deal with any concerns they have.

Pupils enjoy being in school, both to learn and to play with their friends. They like their teachers and describe the school as being 'like a big family.' Pupils achieve well during their time at Arbury. They enjoy the many trips and enrichment experiences linked to the topics they learn about. For example, Year 4 pupils spoke excitedly about their forthcoming trip to Colchester Castle. This links to their learning about the Romans. Clear routines and high expectations ensure calm and sensible behaviour at all times.

Parents are very positive about the school and what it provides for their children. The comment of one parent, typical of many, is that Arbury Primary is 'a diverse and inclusive school, where all children are treated equally regardless of background.'

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

The school's curriculum is carefully thought out. It is ambitious, well considered and well sequenced across all subjects.

In the early years, the curriculum is thoughtfully designed and links to pupils' learning in key stage 1. Leaders at all levels check and reflect on the impact of different curriculum plans. They identify what could be further developed and make these improvements.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They teach the intended curriculum with enthusiasm, using effective resources and considering what pupils already know. There is a strong focus on helping pupils to know and understand important vocabulary. For example, Reception children learn the vocabulary of 'more', 'fewer', and 'equal' when they learn about number. Effective strategies are used to aid pupils' understanding. Regular

training and support ensure that all staff develop their expertise. This includes those staff who are new to the school.

Teachers use a range of different ways to check how well pupils are learning. They question effectively to probe pupils' understanding. Teachers use activities that help pupils retrieve previous learning. They give pupils regular feedback as to how to improve their work. In a few curriculum subjects, these systems are not as fully developed. Where this is the case, teachers do not identify as precisely as they could what pupils' next steps are. As a result, pupils do not learn as much as they could.

All staff have received training to teach the chosen phonics scheme. They teach phonics consistently well from the start of Reception. Pupils read books that match the sounds that they are learning. Staff are quick to identify any pupils who need extra support to keep up. This is put in place swiftly. Consequently, most pupils read fluently and confidently by the end of key stage 1. Pupils enjoy reading. The whole school celebrates reading for pleasure.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified accurately. Individual support plans show clearly what each pupil needs to do to help them access the curriculum alongside their peers. This helps pupils with SEND make good progress from their starting points.

From Reception upwards, there are clear expectations for positive behaviour. Pupils work hard and value their learning. Pupils like their teachers. They respond well to the high expectations of behaviour and learning.

The school has prioritised pupils' personal development. There is a well-structured personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme. This helps pupils to develop their wider knowledge in an age-appropriate way. Pupils are thoughtful and express their views with maturity. They understand what being different means. They value the diverse nature of the school.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility. This includes roles like school council and eco-committee members, reading ambassadors, sports leaders, and monitors. Such opportunities help to develop pupils' leadership skills. Pupils are enthusiastic about the enrichment experiences on offer. These include residentials, trips to the seaside, visits to local museums and sites of historical interest, and school visits from authors. These help to broaden pupils' experiences.

Staff feel well supported by leaders to manage their workload. They appreciate that leaders are mindful of their work-life balance.

Governors know the school and community well. They support leaders in their desire to ensure that pupils' best interests and the promotion of equality are at the heart of all decisions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few curriculum subjects, the systems for checking what pupils have learned are not fully developed. In these subjects, teachers do not know precisely what pupils have learned and what they need to learn next. The school should continue to refine the assessment systems so that these are consistently effective in all areas of the curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2014.

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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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	110664
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10294929
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Maher
Headteacher	Ben Tull
Website	www.arbury.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Wraparound care is provided for pupils and is managed by those responsible for governance.

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 this into account in her evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the quality of education, the inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, considered curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and scrutinised samples of pupils' work. Other aspects of the curriculum were also scrutinised to provide further evidence for the quality of education.

- The inspector observed some pupils read to staff. She also spoke to pupils about reading.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour across the school. She met with groups of pupils to seek their views of the school. She also spoke to pupils informally in class, around the school and at breaktimes. The inspector considered 61 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector scrutinised the single central record and reviewed safeguarding systems. The inspector spoke with senior leaders, teachers, support staff, members of the governing body, and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- The inspector held meetings with senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, and the subject leader for PSHE. The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair. Additionally, she held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including curriculum plans, headteacher reports to governors, minutes of governing body meetings and school development plans.
- The inspector considered the views of parents. She spoke with parents at the end of the first inspection day. The inspector also considered 69 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 14 free-text comments. Additionally, the inspector considered two letters from parents and met with another at the end of the second inspection day.
- The inspector spoke with different groups of staff to gather their views, including about their workload and well-being. Additionally, she considered 30 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Joan Beale, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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