

Inspection of Ampney Crucis Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Ampney Crucis, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 5SD

Inspection dates:	21 and 22 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since December 2014. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's motto is 'Together we live, learn and flourish'. This reflects what it is like to attend this school. It is a friendly, harmonious community. Everyone is welcome, valued and cared for. Staff focus on making sure that pupils are safe, happy and achieving well. When something is not working to that end, the school changes it.

The school's values are respect, courage and compassion. These qualities shine through all elements of school life. Pupils speak to each other respectfully in class and in the playground. Staff encourage pupils to be brave and push themselves beyond their comfort zone. Pupils' compassion is seen in the way they resolve disputes and fallings-out.

Pupils value their education highly. They approach lessons with enthusiasm and interest. They want to do well, and they work hard to achieve this. Pupils' appreciation of school shows in the fact that their attendance is so high.

The school's curriculum provides pupils with a broad, rich range of experiences. A carefully designed programme of additional activities enhances the offer considerably. This combination prepares pupils very well for their next steps in life. It helps them to develop confidence, self-awareness, moral purpose, empathy and an appreciation of the world around them.

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

The school puts pupils' best interests at the heart of every decision. If something is not working as well as they wish, leaders change it. For example, uncertainty about staffing over the past year has presented much challenge. The school focused its efforts on providing the best possible teaching to pupils under the circumstances. This is because meeting pupils' needs is seen as crucial.

The school's aim is to develop well-rounded, well-educated and socially responsible pupils. This is described as a 'toolkit for life'. This is established through an intricately crafted approach to developing their character. It builds pupils' leadership skills systematically, from Reception through to Year 6. Every single pupil in Year 6 has a leadership role. This might be as a head pupil, house captain, reading ambassador or a sports captain, for example. As a result, pupils are very well equipped to move on to secondary school.

Pupils learn to appreciate difference. They show a sophisticated degree of tolerance and respect for people from all backgrounds. This leads them to behave exceptionally well. They care about, and actively support, one another as a matter of course. For example, older pupils encourage younger ones to join in their activities at lunchtime. The older ones help the younger ones to carry heavy equipment, climb higher or jump further.

Teaching pupils to read is central to the school's vision. Children begin to learn to read immediately when they start in Reception. Phonics lessons help them learn letter sounds quickly. As pupils move through Year 1, lots of reading practice helps them to become

fluent at decoding words. This well-delivered reading programme ensures that pupils learn to read confidently and fluently by the end of Year 2.

Reading continues to be a priority as pupils get older. Books are an important part of school life. Pupils enjoy hearing their teacher read high-quality novels every day. 'Reading ambassadors' take a lead in promoting reading among their peers. For example, they make recommendations about books to read. They also organise reading-focused events, such as the highly anticipated school literature festival.

The school's curriculum is continuously under review. This is to align it to pupils' changing needs. For example, following last year's published outcomes for mathematics, the school took swift action to adapt how the subject is taught. Pupils now spend much more time thinking mathematically in lessons. These changes are making the difference that the school wanted. Pupils' mathematical understanding is now more secure.

The school caters for several pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that pupils' needs are identified swiftly and accurately. Staff take the time to understand these needs and support these pupils to learn effectively. Teachers break down learning into manageable steps, when needed. This helps pupils with SEND to learn the same curriculum as other pupils at an appropriate stage for them.

Most pupils achieve well across the curriculum. However, a small number could achieve better. This is because they lack the basic skills needed to write their ideas quickly and accurately. They are not confident in handwriting, spelling and punctuation. This gets in the way of them completing written tasks in other subjects.

A committed and hardworking board of governors sets a clear direction and ethos for the school. The governing body provides support where needed. Equally, it holds leaders to account diligently for the quality of pupils' education and their wider development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are asked to carry out complex writing tasks before they have mastered their basic writing skills. These skills include handwriting, spelling and punctuation (transcriptional skills). As a result, a few pupils move into Year 3 and beyond with insecure transcriptional skills. This stops them being able to write ideas down quickly, which gets in the way of learning in some subjects. The school needs to make sure that pupils develop secure transcriptional skills to prepare them for the demands of key stage 2.

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	115673
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10374099
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Howard Beddoe
Headteacher	Tana Wood
Website	www.ampneycrucis.gloucs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	3 and 4 December 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Ampney Crucis is a small, voluntary-aided school within the Diocese of Gloucester. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in November 2019. The next inspection is due before the end of July 2026.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in other subjects.
- To evaluate pupils' behaviour and attitudes and the provision for personal development, inspectors: observed pupils in class, as they moved around the school and at breaktimes; spoke informally to pupils in lessons and at breaktimes and met with four groups of pupils; held discussions with staff; and scrutinised documentation relating to attendance, behaviour and the provision of clubs, trips and other activities.
- Inspectors spoke to parents before and after school and took account of the written comments in the Ofsted Parent View survey. Inspectors considered the information in the online survey for staff.

Inspection team

Sandy Hayes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Paul Smith

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025