

Ashleworth Church of England Primary School

Address: The Green, Ashleworth, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL19 4HT

Unique reference number (URN): 115663

Inspection report: 11 March 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	●
Urgent improvement	● ● ● ● ●

✓ 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.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

This school requires special measures

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **special measures** because it is failing to provide an acceptable standard of education, and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Needs attention

Personal development and wellbeing

Needs attention 

Leaders are in the early stages of improving their personal development programme. They acknowledge that there is much more to do. Pupils have few opportunities to develop their talents, such as in music or sport. This makes it difficult for pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, from broadening their horizons and discovering new interests. There are also limited occasions for pupils to enhance their learning beyond the curriculum, including by experiencing life beyond their locality. Pupils visit the local church, which gives them a sense of community, but there are few other outings beyond this.

Pupils learn about how people can be different through the personal, social and health education curriculum. They understand the negative consequences of stereotypes. For example, they know how certain colours can be perceived to be suitable only for boys or girls. Pupils can describe the different types of discrimination that people face in society, such as racism and homophobia. Pupils learn how to stay safe online, such as the importance of not sharing passwords with anyone. Pupils know how to lead a healthy lifestyle and the importance of a balanced diet. While the school fulfils its statutory duties in teaching relationships and sex education and health education, pupils' knowledge of this is affected by the same weaknesses as in the other curriculum subjects. However, pupils do show mature and considerate views on how family structures can be different.

Pupils learn about moral and topical issues through assemblies and visitors into school, which helps them to become empathetic and caring individuals. They learn about fundamental British values and understand the importance of these. While there is appropriate pastoral support in place for pupils, some lack confidence that adults will sort out any issues, particularly regarding the behaviour of other pupils.

Urgent improvement

Achievement

Urgent improvement 

Pupils do not achieve well. Many lack the essential, age-appropriate knowledge and skills outlined in the national curriculum. Some are considerably adrift of these expectations. Gaps in pupils' knowledge have not been addressed and so these continue to widen. Consequently, pupils are not ready for their next stage of education. They struggle to recall

key ideas about even their most recent learning, reflecting weakness in teaching that affect the whole curriculum.

Pupils do not master the basics of reading, writing and mathematics. They struggle to write fluently and accurately. Very recent changes to the way in which pupils are taught to write have not had the time to have an impact on their achievement. Younger pupils' letter formation and pencil grip are often inaccurate. These deficits continue as pupils move through the school. This hinders the quality of their written work, which is often poorly formed and of low quality.

Attendance and behaviour

Urgent improvement ●

Pupils do not attend school often enough. Overall absence, including persistent absence, is too high. While leaders have clear systems in place to check pupils' attendance and punctuality, the impact on pupils' attendance is limited. The school works proactively with families to understand the reasons behind irregular attendance and help pupils to attend more often. External support is used where appropriate to support pupils to be in school more often. Leaders promote the importance of attendance, for example through the school's newsletters.

Many pupils' attitudes towards learning are not positive. As much of their learning is not well matched to what pupils know and can do, pupils' attention often drifts and they become distracted. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who lack the necessary support required to help them access their learning successfully. Pupils' learning is too often disrupted by the poor behaviour of some of their peers. Added to this, leaders' actions to tackle this are not consistent. At times, pupils do not respond positively to staff's instructions. This leads to staff feeling unsupported in dealing with disorderly or disengaged behaviours. Some pupils express their frustrations at how staff deal with behaviour, particularly about how some poor behaviours recur. That said, bullying is not typically an issue.

Curriculum and teaching

Urgent improvement ●

Teaching in the school is poor. Leaders have not understood, or acted to address, long-standing weaknesses in the quality of education that pupils experience. Leaders' view of the quality of teaching is not accurate. This has prevented them from holding staff to account well enough. While the school has planned for a broad and ambitious curriculum, it is not delivered effectively. Staff want the best for pupils, but they lack the expertise to implement the curriculum to different ages effectively. They do not know how to adapt learning to help pupils to learn well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff's expectations of what pupils can do are too low. Staff do not use what they know about pupils' prior learning to ensure that tasks match the knowledge that pupils need to gain. Lessons lack coherence. As a result, pupils' experiences in lessons do not contribute to their learning.

Teachers do not have a clear understanding of how best to teach basic skills, such as handwriting and phonics. Changes in staffing have added to these inconsistencies. Pupils do not get the precise support they need to help them to improve these skills, including older

pupils who fall behind. Staff do not routinely correct errors or misconceptions in pupils' work and so the errors persist.

Inclusion

Urgent improvement ●

Despite some very recent improvements, the school's support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is poor. While leaders have systems to identify the needs of pupils with SEND, these needs are not met well. Staff do not use information about pupils' needs to provide suitable support for these pupils in the classroom. Staff do not take into account well enough the targets that pupils with SEND are building towards. As a result, these pupils are unable to work independently and they are overly reliant on adult support. Pupils with SEND frequently disengage from their learning and do not progress well through the curriculum.

Leaders acknowledge the weaknesses in staff's subject knowledge that exist. However, while leaders have provided training for staff, much of this has been very recent. It has not been effective in improving staff's expertise in understanding and adapting learning for pupils with SEND successfully. This is despite leaders working with external agencies and families to ensure that everyone's voice is heard.

There is little impact of the government's additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders' and governors' systems for checking the effectiveness of this lacks rigour. As a result, not enough has been done to tackle the low achievement of disadvantaged pupils over time.

Leadership and governance

Urgent improvement ●

Leaders have not acted quickly enough to address the widespread issues in the school. This means that decisions have not been taken in pupils' best interests and the school's performance has declined over time. This has particularly affected pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. These groups of pupils achieve especially poorly. Leaders have revised their plans to reflect the urgency with which the school needs to improve. However, it is too recent to see any benefits to pupils' education.

Frequent changes in staffing have meant that staff training has had little impact. Furthermore, leaders' recent efforts to enhance professional development have been overwhelming for staff. There is confusion about the best approaches for teaching and how to address poor behaviour. As a result, staff lack the expertise to do much of their work effectively. Staff and leaders do not share the same vision for the school's development. Staff lack confidence in the changes being made by leaders and their capacity to make the school better. While staff feel that their workload is usually managed appropriately, their morale is low. Leaders do not support staff well enough, for example to manage misbehaviour.

The governing body is committed to the school. However, the scope of improvements that are necessary have led to governors being overstretched and unable to hold the school to account effectively. The school has drawn upon a significant amount of external support to

help leaders. However, the school is overly reliant on this support and leaders do not have the capacity to improve the school without it.

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

Pupils experience a poor standard of education at this school. Many pupils do not enjoy their lessons or feel a positive sense of belonging to the school. This is reflected in their infrequent attendance. By the end of Year 6, pupils lack the knowledge expected of them for their age across the curriculum. They are ill-prepared for secondary school.

Relationships between the school and many in its community are strained. Turbulence in staffing has created further instability. This lack of successful partnership working has contributed to a decline in standards at the school and means that actions to support improvements have had little effect.

Staff lack the subject knowledge necessary to teach well. Consequently, pupils' learning across the curriculum is weak. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not get the help they need to be successful in their learning. For some pupils, the lack of appropriate support affects how well they behave. While staff try to ensure that all pupils play a full part in school life, they lack the expertise to ensure that pupils with SEND complete tasks independently and confidently.

Pupils generally feel safe and staff typically deal with bullying effectively. Older pupils play with younger pupils positively on the playground. However, pupils sometimes experience behaviour from a few of their peers that makes them feel unsafe. Furthermore, in lessons, some pupils do not focus well on their learning.

Pupils gain experience of leadership and a sense of responsibility through roles such as school councillors, playground leaders and librarians. They learn about other faiths and cultures which give them some understanding of life in modern Britain. However, they do not benefit from a wide range of interesting opportunities, such as experiences beyond the classroom, to develop their talents and interests.

Next steps

- Leaders, and those responsible for governance, must ensure that they urgently improve their capacity to identify, tackle and monitor the weaknesses in the school, so that these are addressed rapidly.
- Leaders must ensure that staff develop the expertise they need to teach the curriculum well, ensuring that there are high expectations of what pupils can do.
- Leaders must ensure that pupils master the basic knowledge and skills they need in reading and writing so that they can access learning across the whole curriculum.
- Leaders must ensure that pupils' gaps in knowledge across the curriculum are accurately identified and urgently addressed so that they securely develop the essential knowledge and skills they need to progress to the next stage of education.

- Leaders must ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are disadvantaged, receive the precise support they need to help them learn with increasing independence and develop positive attitudes to their learning.
 - Leaders must ensure that staff understand and implement behaviour systems fairly and consistently to ensure that pupils behave consistently well.
 - Leaders must ensure that their systems for attendance improve overall attendance and reduce persistent absence for all groups of pupils.
 - Leaders should further develop the personal development programme so that pupils benefit from a range of suitable opportunities that broaden their experiences and enable them to develop their talents and interests in areas such as the arts, music and sport.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Bridgette Nulty.

The school works in a formal partnership with another local school. The executive headteacher leads both schools. Each school has its own governing body.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher, members of staff, pupils, a representative from the local authority, a representative from the diocese and some parents and carers during the inspection.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection. The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any monitoring inspection we carry out.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The school is part of the Diocese of Gloucester. The school's last section 48 inspection took place in September 2023.

The executive headteacher took up his post in January 2025. Prior to this, the school had a period of interim leadership.

The school has experienced a high number of staff changes since the last inspection.

The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.

At the time of the inspection, there were 15 pupils on roll.

Executive Headteacher: Mark Davies

Lead inspector:

Jason Edge, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Tracey Porter, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 11 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

23

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

56

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

56.52%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

17.39%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

39.13%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	11%	61%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	62%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	61%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	33%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	75%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	74%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	73%	S

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	11%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	72%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	72%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	71%	S

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	33%	73%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	74%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	73%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	73%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	S	46%	S
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	S	62%	S
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	S	59%	S
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	S	60%	S
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	S	68%	S
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	S	80%	S
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	S	78%	S
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	S	80%	S
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	11.6%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	10.0%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	11.4%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	35.0%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	35.3%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	38.1%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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