

Abbeydale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106983
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	356066
Inspection dates	6–7 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Jane Hughes

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	268
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Zahoor Hussain
Headteacher	Ms Mary Lynes
Date of previous school inspection	17 October 2007
School address	Glen Road Sheffield South Yorkshire S7 1RB
Telephone number	0114 255 0926
Fax number	0114 250 7387
Email address	headteacher@abbeydale.sheffield.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons and observed 10 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body and staff and talked with pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined questionnaires from 79 parents and carers, as well as those from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How well the school works to raise pupils' attainment in writing.
- Whether teaching sufficiently engages boys in literacy work.
- How well the curriculum supports rising attainment.
- How effectively the school promotes regular attendance.
- The impact of leaders at all levels, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, in promoting sustainable improvement in pupils' outcomes.

Information about the school

This school is larger than average when compared to other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. Fewer pupils than average have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Almost 90% of pupils are of Pakistani heritage and very few have a White British background. The school has Healthy School status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Abbeydale Primary is a good school. Its excellent curriculum engages pupils thoroughly in their work and is fully adapted to meet their individual needs. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from equally strong learning support and timely interventions from skilled support staff. Pupils behave well. They are courteous and supportive of each another. These characteristics are key features of pupils' positive attitudes to learning and support their good achievement. Pupils feel exceptionally safe here. They confirm that school is interesting and highly enjoyable.

Parents' and carers' overwhelmingly positive confirmation of the school's success is best summed up with their typical comment, 'Great school. Great people!' Another view expressed to inspectors is that, 'This is very much a community school'.

Pupils learn and progress well. Their work provides clear evidence of consistently improving skills. Almost all pupils speak English as an additional language, and standards in English, particularly writing, are not as high as in mathematics or science.

The strong teaching picture is closely monitored by senior leaders. Staff receive effective feedback on how to improve classroom practice. The needs of the most vulnerable pupils are carefully met and the quality of care is consistently high. Overall attendance rates are below average. This is due mainly to religious festivals and the proportion of pupils who take extended leave to visit families abroad throughout the school year. The school is making strenuous efforts to deal with this and there has been a reduction in absences this term.

The stable senior leadership team provides a sharp focus on key priorities. These are well known to staff, governing body and parents and carers alike. The school accurately assesses its strengths and weaknesses and has robust strategies in place to address these. Previous good performance has been consolidated and used as a foundation for further improvement. As a result, the school demonstrates good capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by:
 - consolidating and consistently implementing teachers' best assessment practices throughout all year groups.
- Raise pupils' levels of attendance by:
 - introducing more creative communication, incentives and rewards that appeal to parents, carers and pupils and are catalysts for pupils' more regular attendance.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils achieve well and enjoy school. Boys and girls focus equally well on tasks set. Pupils show confidence when justifying their points of view. They respond in extended sentences during regular question and answer sessions. They know what to do at each stage of the lesson because staff clearly outline objectives and tasks. Pupils get on well with independent activities and persevere until tasks are complete. Pupils behave well and there are many instances of exemplary behaviour around the school and in classrooms. At times, pupils are too eager to respond to teachers' questions and talk over each other or call out replies. Pupils are unfailing supportive of one another. In Year 6, for example, during independent work in the computer suite, individuals supported each other's learning by pointing out next steps when some could not work out exactly how to proceed with a particular aspect of their Christmas presentation. This consolidated and developed their skills well. From mostly well below average starting points, pupils reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6 and make good progress through the school in English, mathematics and science. Their lower attainment in English, particularly in writing, reflects their generally lower starting points. Pupils' desire to reach higher standards in their work is not helped by often lengthy absences from school as they accompany their families on visits to relatives abroad. Their overall attendance is below average as a result, although there has been rapid improvement this year.

Pupils agree that at school, 'There is always something to do and we learn as well. It's better than being at home.' They report that they feel very safe and well cared for at school. They understand the principles of healthy living. Pupils demonstrate good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, including respect for the faith of others. For instance during collective worship, although the theme was 'Advent', the clear teaching aligned this to the way other major religions look at aspects of their faith. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and many praise the code of conduct which they feel makes expectations very clear. They work well together in teams and develop secure skills to help their future success.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Most lessons are well planned and resourced and capture pupils' attention and interest. Teachers select individual pupils to respond to questions during whole-class introductions so that feedback is increasingly personalised. Teachers continually check, model and extend pupils' language to ensure all are learning well. High levels of respect and strong relationships underpin a mutually supportive ethos for learning in classrooms. Teaching assistants provide carefully targeted support for pupils that meet their academic or linguistic needs well.

In Years 2 and 6, assessment procedures are first class because staff consistently record in great detail what pupils know, understand and can do. They provide crystal clear pointers to pupils about how to improve their work. Pupils are also encouraged to complete regular self-assessments of their work and these are carefully reviewed by class teachers. The work in these pupils' books provides evidence of how they are able to improve the quality of their work as a result. However, this level of detail is not wholly established throughout the school. Senior leaders and staff accurately track pupils' progress and alter provision in line with individual needs.

Exemplary curriculum planning ensures teachers across all year groups build on pupils' knowledge and skills at appropriate levels. Pupils' work shows a systematic and progressive building of literacy and numeracy skills that, in turn, support pupils' progress in different curriculum areas. The highly developed writing structure enables pupils in

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general and boys in particular to make good and sometimes better progress in developing the required skills. Parents and carers recognise the wealth of experiences their children receive with the comment, 'The children do lots of wonderful things, thank you'.

Breakfast club provides a warm and nurturing start to the day. Pupils enjoy chatting with the staff who clearly know them well. Lunchtime supervisors take good care of pupils' needs. Although the school offers rewards for regular and improved attendance, these do not sufficiently encourage enough families to ensure consistent school attendance by their children throughout the year. More than one fifth of all pupils took extended absence from school last year. Most recent data show a clear rise in attendance for the year so far. The school has a teaching assistant dedicated to working with families and outside agencies to discourage extended absence and to support vulnerable pupils. However, methods of communication with families lack creativity and the current range of incentives and rewards for families to ensure their children attend school more regularly is limited.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders are ambitious for the school and drive improvement well. There is strong team work and a keen sense of purpose fostered by leaders at all levels. Various curriculum teams collaborate well to enhance provision. The headteacher, governing body and staff work with determination to ensure that the school takes a central role in the local community. The school's leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the school's context and a keen recognition of the importance of active promotion of community cohesion. Staff provide strong role models so that pupils and families accept and celebrate diversity. The school works effectively to involve parents and carers more closely in pupils' learning. The governing body is proactive in involving parents and carers in the life of the school. A highlight is the 'Dads' and 'Lads' reading club where fathers work with sons in fun situations. This is actively supported by the governing body and results in a high level of improvement through shared reading.

All staff take their duty of care seriously and promote child protection and safeguarding well. Policies and procedures are detailed and well known to all. The school promotes equality of opportunity well so that all groups of pupils make at least good progress. Well-established tracking and skilful support programmes ensure that previous gaps in achievement are narrowing. Discrimination is not tolerated. The school runs smoothly day-to-day due to efficient administrators, caretaking, lunchtime and ancillary staff. The school provides good value for money.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly into school routines and feel secure in the welcoming and well organised environment. They engage happily in all the activities and achieve well during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are now reaching the national average in most areas of learning by the end of reception, although this was not so for older year groups in the school. Children's creative development was not as strong last year. A clear emphasis on children's speaking and listening skills is bearing fruit. Adults engage children well in conversation and model spoken English clearly. This helps the very large majority for whom English is an additional language to begin to listen, speak, read and write in English.

Provision in the outdoor learning environment continues to develop, although the layout of the Early Years Foundation Stage makes it difficult for all children to access the outdoor area independently.

Adults take good care of the children and know them well. Careful assessment, regular observations and well resourced learning environments ensure that children make good progress according to their individual needs and skills. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Parents and carers are fulsome in their praise. 'Play and stay' sessions are particularly successful. They provide a strong bridge for young children before they begin to attend the Nursery class. As a result, children are arriving in nursery with better developed personal and social skills. Leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage is strong and ensures that staff have a clear overview of the learning and development programmes. Induction and transition arrangements are well thought through and some features of early years' provision continues into Year 1 to support effective transition.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

There was a strongly positive response from the 30% of parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire. These demonstrate how highly parents and carers value the welcoming and safe school environment. This feedback reflects that gathered by the school from its own surveys. Very little negative feedback was received and there was no underlying pattern to this. Any general issues have been covered in the body of this report. Typically, parents and carers say that they are 'delighted with the school and the education their children receive'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Abbeydale Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 79 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 268 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	66	25	32	0	0	2	3
The school keeps my child safe	53	67	24	30	1	1	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	43	54	33	42	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	54	31	39	4	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	46	58	30	38	2	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	51	34	43	4	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	39	42	53	4	5	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	33	42	32	41	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	49	34	43	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	43	39	49	4	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	43	40	51	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	53	34	43	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	59	31	39	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



8 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Abbeydale Primary School, Sheffield, S7 1RB

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We enjoyed listening to your views and reading your questionnaire replies. You told us that you are happy at school and enjoy your lessons and we saw that for ourselves during our two days with you. We were very impressed with how well you work together, help each other and the positive attitudes you bring to lessons.

We judge that Abbeydale is a good school. It helps you to learn well and to develop useful skills for the future. It has outstanding strengths in the way it makes sure you all feel safe and secure in school. The excellent curriculum keeps you all interested in learning. The headteacher, staff and governing body make sure the school improves all the time. They encourage your parents and carers to become involved in your learning.

Part of our job is to see what your school could do better. Your headteacher and all the adults are already doing a good job in setting a clear direction for the future. We have asked them to look particularly at ensuring more of you come to school regularly. You can help with this by reminding your parents and carers how much work you miss when you have even one day away from school. We have also asked that all the teachers make certain that they give you enough clear feedback about how to improve your work. Please read what your teachers write in your books and remember what they tell you when you complete your next piece of work.

Carry on working hard, enjoying all your lessons and being kind to each other.

With our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Hughes

Lead inspector

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