

# Abbey Hill Primary & Nursery

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	136006
<b>Local Authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	364056
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kenneth Thomas

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	199
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Ball
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Chambers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Abbey Hill Primary & Nursery Abbey Road, Nottingham NG17 7NZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01623 484512
<b>Fax number</b>	01623 484513
<b>Email address</b>	office@abbeyhill.notts.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed eight teachers and saw 17 lessons. Inspectors observed two school assemblies and held discussions with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a local authority representative. They looked at pupils' books and viewed a wide range of documentation including school policies, self-evaluation information, planning, safeguarding and welfare arrangements, and records of pupils' progress. Inspectors also visited the breakfast club. Questionnaires returned by 41 parents and carers, 72 pupils and five members of staff were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are all pupils making enough progress, especially those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in receipt of free school meals?
- Is the quality of teaching consistently effective to ensure that pupils make steady progress as they move through the school?
- To what extent do senior leaders demonstrate the capacity to bring about rapid improvements in view of the many challenges the school faces?

## Information about the school

This is a below-average-sized primary school. Virtually all pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion with a statement of special need. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-above-average. The school provides a breakfast club that is managed by the governors. Following the amalgamation of a primary school and a nursery school, the school opened as a new school for pupils aged 3 to 11 in April 2010. The headteacher took up post in the old primary school in January 2010 and opened the new amalgamated school.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Abbey Hill Primary and Nursery School provides a satisfactory standard of education. The school has gone through a period of significant change over the last twelve months as the new school, providing for the extended age range, has been successfully established. Central to this success has been the clear vision and firm leadership of the headteacher, underpinned by accurate school self-evaluation. With good support from the local authority a determined start has been made on the school's improvement objectives. Pupils' behaviour has been improved and links with parents and carers strengthened. This is reflected, for example, in the effectiveness of the school's strategies to improve attendance, which has risen to match the national average. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they benefit from an attractive and supportive learning environment. It is a welcoming school and one in which staff know the pupils really well and provide good levels of care. A notable strength in provision is the effective support provided for any whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.

Although attainment is well below that expected at the end of Year 6, progress is satisfactory given pupils' original starting points. Achievement is satisfactory, as is the school's effectiveness. The most important improvement has been the introduction of more challenging targets to raise attainment, guided by rigorous procedures for tracking pupils' progress. The main reason that progress is satisfactory rather than better is that learning, progress and teaching, although consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are inconsistent in other years. There are examples of good lessons in the later stages of Key Stage 2, where pupils are making good progress because they are actively engaged in well-planned learning activities. However, in other lessons, learning activities are not well matched to the abilities of different groups of pupils, particularly those capable of attaining higher levels. Introductory and other teacher-led activities are at times too long and teachers do not always use questioning effectively to extend pupils' thinking. Because there are inconsistencies in marking, pupils are not provided with enough guidance on what they must do in order to improve. In order to further accelerate progress, the school has very recently introduced a topic-based curriculum that is intended to provide pupils with a broader and more engaging range of experiences. Staff rightly recognise that as part of this process there is a need to extend pupils' understanding of cultural diversity within national and international contexts.

To support the drive for improvement the school is in the process of introducing a new staffing structure and strengthening middle leadership. Staff with coordinating roles are keen to contribute more fully to this process by developing their monitoring and evaluation skills so that good practice can be identified and shared more widely.

Governance is satisfactory. While the school benefits from the full support of the governing body, many governors are new and have yet to acquire the skills necessary to

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be fully involved in the direct monitoring and evaluation of school performance. Nevertheless, the determination of the headteacher, staff and governors to move the school forward is seen, for example, in the willingness of all to seek and adopt best practice from other schools and external agencies. This is underpinned by a well-structured strategic plan that clearly prioritises the raising of attainment and identifies the actions needed to achieve this objective. This, together with the improvements seen since the opening of the school and enthusiasm of all to tackle weaknesses, gives the school satisfactory capacity for continued improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning to raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress by:
  - raising expectations and ensuring that learning tasks are appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils, particularly those capable of attaining higher levels
  - ensuring that lesson introductions are not too long and that the pace of learning is brisk
  - making more effective use of questioning to assess, challenge and extend pupils' thinking and reasoning skills
  - ensuring consistency in the marking of pupils' work so that they are given clear guidance on the standard they have reached and how to improve, and that they respond to the advice given.
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the new topic-based curriculum to ensure that it:
  - provides more opportunities for active learning and has a positive impact on pupils' interest, engagement and progress in all year groups
  - promotes the development of pupils' understanding of the diversity of faiths and cultures in national and international contexts.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - defining the roles and responsibilities of middle leaders and ensuring they have the skills needed to monitor and evaluate work in their areas of responsibility and contribute fully to school improvement
  - developing the roles of members of the governing body so that they have the skills needed to offer challenge and support in equal measure.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Most children's skills and experiences are low in relation to those expected for their age when they start in the Nursery, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Because provision in the Nursery and Reception classes is good, standards improve, although they remain below age-related expectations when pupils enter Year 1. Pupils'

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work in lessons and in their workbooks indicates that standards and progress are uneven across the school. Pupils achieve well in the later years of Key Stage 2, where there are more examples of lessons that are stimulating and engaging. In these lessons, pupils behave well and show good enthusiasm for learning. This was exemplified in a Year 5 English lesson where pupils made good progress in writing because they were motivated and engaged by the effective use of stimulating resources. Reliable school assessment information and other inspection evidence show that there are no significant differences in the progress of different groups of pupils, particularly the sizable group entitled to free school meals. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because they are well supported in class or receive specialist support.

Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that they can turn to an adult to sort out any concerns. They are aware of how to avoid risks, both at school and in the community. Pupils also understand the importance of exercise and a balanced diet to their healthy development. The school council provides a forum for pupils' voices, and pupils contribute to the school in other ways, for example, by acting as Eco-warriors, playground buddies or as members of the tuck shop team. Cultural development is not better than satisfactory because pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn about cultures and communities other than their own. Improving basic literacy skills, satisfactory social development, average attendance and satisfactory punctuality mean that pupils are adequately prepared for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

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

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## How effective is the provision?

While teaching and learning are satisfactory overall there are some good aspects throughout the school. For example, good relationships characterise all lessons and these form the basis of a supportive learning environment. In the best lessons, pupils make good progress because assessment information is used well to guide the planning of learning tasks: pupils are expected to work independently, stretching themselves and others as they talk things through. Perceptive questioning is used to extend pupils' thinking. This was seen in a Year 5 numeracy lesson, for example, where pupils clearly enjoyed the challenge of calculating the areas of different shapes and made good progress as a result. The effective use of suitable resources and good support from a teaching assistant in helping pupils master small steps in learning ensured that the progress of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities was also good. However, in other lessons, teachers sometimes take too much time introducing learning, which gives pupils too little time to practise, extend and apply their learning and skills. This also limits the work of teaching assistants who spend too much time listening to the teacher and not enough on supporting learning.

The curriculum provides pupils with a satisfactory range of learning experiences. A topic-based curriculum is being introduced to make more meaningful links between subjects while maintaining an emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Currently, pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to apply and develop these skills across the curriculum. Curriculum strengths include good provision for pupils' personal, social and emotional development, including health education. The curriculum is enhanced well through partnerships with local schools and other providers. These links broaden pupils' experiences. Pupils benefit from a well-attended range of extra-curricular activities. These contribute much to pupils' enjoyment, as do trips out of school. Parents and carers rightly say that pupils are looked after well in this nurturing family community and pupils enjoy good quality care in the breakfast club. All adults are well informed about the needs of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. They monitor pupils' well-being and progress carefully, and intervene sensitively and effectively with well-judged support when needed. A number of initiatives are being taken to successfully increase the involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Although there are good aspects to the new leadership team's work, the lack of time for this to have had much impact means that this aspect is satisfactory but improving.

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However, the work to improve behaviour and to assess strengths and tackle weaknesses in other aspects of the provision clearly shows the potential for much improvement. Significantly, the school is open about what it needs to do to improve and leaders are willing to look for and make effective use of outside support to help raise standards. For example, expertise available from a Local Leader of Education school is being well used to improve teaching and learning and staff demonstrate very positive attitudes towards accepting advice and trying new ideas. Such partnerships with outside agencies have a positive impact on provision.

Arrangements are secure for safeguarding the welfare of pupils and for making sure that those working with them are properly vetted. Responsibilities are clear, so that the school provides a safe environment for all. The procedures meet statutory requirements and underpin the school's caring approach. The school is very mindful of the community it serves and promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. Appropriate measures are in place to tackle any form of discrimination. The school's work to promote community cohesion is satisfactory. Although the school has a strong understanding of its immediate community context, it does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to gain a meaningful insight into what life is like for others from different religious and cultural backgrounds. Links with parents and carers are satisfactory and they are positive about the direction the school is taking.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because good leadership and management ensure that teaching is consistently good and that children are provided with an engaging range of learning activities. The variety of resources captures their imaginations and helps them develop and build on their starting points.



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Assessment information is used effectively to plan activities that meet children's needs and skilled teaching, especially in communication, language and literacy, is raising standards. While there is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities, opportunities that arise to develop children's reasoning skills through questioning, for example, are not always taken. Adults ensure children are kept safe and healthy so that they are able to enjoy their learning. Good and improving links with parents and carers help children to quickly settle and secure a good introduction into school routines. Positive relationships and a strong emphasis on developing the children's personal skills ensure that they become more confident as they move to Year 1.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

The response rate from parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire was much smaller than the national average for primary schools. Most respondents are satisfied with the school and the progress their children make. A few parents and carers felt that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with effectively and that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors found that the behaviour of the overwhelming majority of pupils is at least satisfactory and often good, and that the management of the very few who occasionally exhibit challenging behaviour is generally effective. Inspectors also found that the headteacher and staff make themselves available to parents and carers at the start and end of school days so that any concerns or suggestions can be dealt with promptly.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Abbey Hill Primary and Nursery 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 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 199 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	51	18	44	2	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	49	21	51	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	15	37	25	61	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	41	23	56	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	37	25	61	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	46	21	51	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	39	24	59	1	2	0	0
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)	11	27	28	68	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	34	24	59	2	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	41	17	41	6	15	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	17	30	73	4	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	39	22	54	2	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	39	24	59	0	0	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



16 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Abbey Hill Primary & Nursery, Nottingham, NG17 7NZ**

Thank you for the help you gave us with the recent inspection of your school and for the friendly way you received us. We spoke with many of you, and you were really helpful. We particularly liked the way you showed how much you appreciated the success of others in assembly.

You receive a satisfactory education. You make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make satisfactory progress in other years. To help you make good progress in all years and reach higher standards, we have asked your teachers to make sure that you are actively engaged in learning in all lessons and really stretched so that you make the best progress you possibly can. You enjoy school and most of you listen carefully to what your teachers have to say. You understand the need to eat sensibly and to take part in physical activities. You learn to work and play well together and to help each other. Your teachers also spend a lot of time marking your work and we have asked that, when they do this, they give you clear guidance on what you have to do to improve it. You can all help yourselves to make more progress by making sure that you try hard to follow the advice you are given.

Adults at school look after you well, so that you are safe and happy. Your headteacher, all the other staff and the governing body are determined to make things even better. To help this we have asked that subject leaders and governors are more closely involved in checking the work of the school. We have also asked that senior staff check that you find the new curriculum really interesting. We think that everyone at Abbey Hill can work together to do these things and that you will all want to play your part by behaving well and working really hard in all of your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Kenneth Thomas

Lead Inspector

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