

Abbotswood Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116482
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	357982
Inspection dates	8–9 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Wendy Ratcliff HMI

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	591
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	julie Brown
Headteacher	Tina Bunting
Date of previous school inspection	15 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. They observed 28 part lessons taught by 21 different teachers. They met with a member of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at: pupils' books and writing assessments, tracking data on pupils' attainment and progress, the school's development plan, examples of monitoring, minutes of the governing body's meetings and a range of policies. The team received 148 questionnaires from pupils, 183 questionnaires from parents and carers and 27 questionnaires from staff.

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

- How effective is the school in its assessment and tracking of pupils' progress in order to raise levels of attainment for all groups of pupils?
- How effective is leadership at all levels in raising standards and the quality of teaching through monitoring, evaluation and improvement planning?
- How effective are self-assessment strategies in helping pupils understand how well they are doing in their learning and what they need to do next?

Information about the school

Abbotswood Junior School is a large school of its type. Almost all pupils are White British with few from minority ethnic groups. There are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Fewer pupils than average are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has a nurture group that provides specific support for those whose individual circumstances make them potentially vulnerable.

The school holds the enhanced National Healthy Schools award and the Activemark. A private provider provides a before- and after-school club on the school premises.

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

2

Main findings

Abbotswood Junior School is satisfactory. It is an improving school with many good and some outstanding features. It offers outstanding care and provides an extremely supportive environment where each pupil is highly valued. The staff are passionate about their school and highly committed to their work and the pupils. One parent said, 'I feel the school does a really good job of meeting the needs of all children.'

Staff have worked hard and effectively to improve the attainment of pupils over the last three years. Pupils arrive in school at the start of Year 3 having reached broadly average levels in their learning. Attainment in English and mathematics is, currently, average and pupils make satisfactory progress overall, with no groups underachieving. The school is carefully tracking the progress that pupils make and providing well-targeted, additional support for those identified as not making the progress expected. This is helping them to catch up and, as a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making satisfactory progress.

The quality of teaching and assessment is satisfactory overall. The monitoring of teaching and a coaching programme have been effective in bringing substantial improvements to the quality of provision since the last inspection. While much teaching is good or better, learning on occasions is slowed by a lack of pace or when assessment information is not consistently used to plan precisely enough to meet all pupils' needs. A focus on improving standards in writing is particularly successful and is a result of well-focused teaching. Teachers involve pupils in assessing their own work, helping pupils to understand how well they are doing and what they need to do next through marking. However, this good practice is not yet fully consistent across the school.

The outstanding care, guidance and support, along with the exciting opportunities provided by the improved curriculum, are motivating, engaging and having a significant impact on the well-being of all pupils. As a result, they enjoy coming to school and behave well. The school provides an inclusive learning environment where individual needs are given the utmost priority, which is helping those who are potentially more vulnerable to remove their barriers to learning. One pupil said that the school 'makes us feel like someone special'. Safeguarding is seen as high priority and the school is working effectively with others to ensure the well-being of potentially vulnerable pupils. Pupils have a high awareness about how to keep themselves safe and their understanding of factors that may affect their mental health and emotional well-being are exceptional. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and are keen to take on additional responsibilities, such as being part of the Healthy Schools Team or a peer mentor. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the local community and regularly organise their own fund-raising events. For example, pupils in Year 3, with the support of the adults, recently organised a raffle to

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raise money for the Dog's Trust. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural skills and understanding are exceptional for their age and stage of development.

The headteacher works effectively with the senior leaders and middle managers. Together with the members of the governing body, they are clear about improvement priorities. The development of the leadership team and strategies implemented since the last inspection are having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress both of which have risen, especially pupils' competence in written work. However, the school recognises these strategies need to be embedded even further in order to continue to accelerate learning to help pupils do as well as they can. Improvements in provision are having a significant impact on pupils' well-being. There is a strong, whole-school commitment to improvement and, as a result, the school has a good capacity to build on its success and improve further.

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 attainment and help all individuals and groups of pupils to make faster progress by:
 - ensuring assessment information is used more consistently to inform planning for learning across all groups
 - involve pupils more in assessing their own work and ensure that the best practice in marking is spread throughout the school so pupils are aware of how they can improve their own learning
 - ensure more lessons are as good as the best and teaching takes full account of individual learning needs.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The school has focused, successfully, on raising the level of attainment in mathematics and English, particularly writing. Overall, the progress of pupils from all social and ethnic backgrounds has risen to be satisfactory. In most lessons, pupils are attentive and keen to learn. They respond well to adults' challenging questions and high expectations, as seen in a Year 5 literacy lesson where pupils were improving how to write a set of instructions for making porridge. Where lessons are planned well, they engage all pupils and in these lessons, pupils make good progress. However, this good practice is not seen consistently in all classes. One-to-one or small-group interventions are working well and ensuring that those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those identified as needing additional support are catching up and making satisfactory progress. Pupils apply their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills to sound effect. This along with their strong personal skills is preparing them for their future learning.

The pupils are extremely proud of their school and take an active part in both the school and local communities. For example, they enthusiastically serve on the school council and proactively work with the community police officers to collect litter. Pupils are exceptionally polite and helpful. The school consistently applies effective behaviour-

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management strategies and, because there is a strong ethos of valuing people, pupils respond very positively to this and, as a result, behave well. Assemblies provide excellent opportunities for reflection. Pupils fully embrace these opportunities and are exceptionally thoughtful and reflective. Pupils have a secure understanding and concern for others as they consider how natural disasters such as floods and famine affect other people. Pupils highly value the opportunities that the school provides to help them adopt healthy lifestyles, such as extra sporting activities, healthy school meals and sessions to share how they are feeling. Pupils feel exceptionally safe in school and well cared for particularly, they say, by the adults in the medical room who look after them when they feel unwell or have hurt themselves. Their above-average attendance is reflected in their impressive personal attributes and skills to equip them for the future, but not yet, fully, in their academic attainment.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

Very well-targeted support for all pupils has enabled them to make the best of the opportunities provided by the school. The school's work with pupils in the nurture group, their families and others to remove any barriers to learning is outstanding. Effective support workers are helping parents and carers who have a concern about their child so any issues can be quickly resolved. The school uses a rigorous assessment system to support the emotional well-being and safety of those who are experiencing difficult

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circumstances. Transition arrangements for all pupils are highly effective so all settle quickly in order to begin the next stage in their learning. The quality of this support, coupled with a revised skills-based curriculum, is having a powerful impact on pupils' wider personal development and well-being, and helping to accelerate progress. The UNICEF Convention of the Rights of the Child is firmly being embedded across the curriculum in topics such as 'fair-trade' week and exploring child labour through a project on the Victorians. As a result, pupils are developing an exceptional understanding of different cultures, religions and respect for others. One parent said, 'There is a strong emphasis on moral values, on fair play, and right and wrong.' There are many enrichment opportunities, such as residential trips, trips for the nurture group to Paultons Park, visits to a tennis centre and partnership working with other schools through the leadership project.

School facilities are bright, attractive and spacious. Resources are used well to stimulate learning, including effective use of the ICT suites and interactive whiteboards in classrooms. Pupils use their computer skills well as they use a software programme to test their understanding of using 'there', 'their' and 'they're'. In the best lessons, learning proceeds at a good pace and teachers' planning is informed by accurate prior assessment of pupils' attainment. Where marking is used well, it is helping pupils understand where they are at in their learning and what they need to do next. However, this good practice is not yet being consistently applied across the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team is successfully inspiring and motivating the school community to overcome previous weaknesses and ensure that the school continues to improve. Monitoring systems are becoming securely embedded and are effectively bringing about improvement. Leaders are moderating teachers' assessments so the school is accurately tracking pupils' progress and identifying where additional support is required. Such interventions are ensuring the school is effectively promoting equality of opportunity and helping any individuals who fall behind to catch up in their learning. Consequently, there are minimal differences in the performance of different groups of pupils and all participate enthusiastically in the good range of learning opportunities available to enhance, greatly, their personal development and well-being. Achievement is improving well. The leadership team has a regular cycle of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in lessons and this, with the coaching programme, has already had a very positive impact on the quality of teaching, which has risen considerably since the previous inspection. However, there is still some way to go to ensure all teaching is, consistently, good or better. The

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governing body is fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for development and gives clear direction. It has implemented an effective monitoring system to ensure the school is addressing identified weaknesses.

All safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and are rigorously applied. The school has carried out detailed risk assessments and a range of well-applied policies ensures pupils feel exceptionally safe at school. Effective engagement with parents, carers and the local community reflects the hard work by a wide range of staff. The school effectively promotes community cohesion. Pupils have an excellent understanding of their own community and other communities around the world as a result of effective partnerships the school has established. For example, at Christmas, pupils and their parents and carers place a gift for a child around the tree during the 'tree service'. A member of the governing body then takes these gifts to a community in South Africa. A video is then shown to the pupils of the children receiving their gifts as well as how they live their life. The school has plans to extend their links with communities within the United Kingdom.

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	3

Views of parents and carers

The response to the questionnaires was very supportive of the school. Most parents and carers felt their children were making enough progress. Almost all agree that the school keeps their children safe and the vast majority say they are happy with their child's experience at school. A few parents and carers voiced reservations relating to individual concerns, which were explored but did not follow a particular pattern. Other parents and carers made many positive comments about the school as a whole. One parent said 'Teachers do an amazing job. Without their dedication and hard work the children would not enjoy learning.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Abbotswood Junior 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 183 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 591 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	114	62	65	37	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	93	51	78	44	7	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	52	28	117	64	9	5	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	63	34	94	51	16	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	69	38	106	58	4	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	28	110	60	16	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	67	37	109	60	2	1	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)	64	34	105	57	5	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	65	36	107	58	7	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	24	111	61	14	8	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	24	110	60	16	9	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	65	36	95	52	14	8	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	78	43	97	53	5	3	2	1

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	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).

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">■ 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.



10 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Abbotswood Junior School, Totton, SO40 8EB

This letter is to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school and to tell you what we found. You made us feel so welcome and helped us find our way around your school. We especially enjoyed talking with you, looking at your work, seeing you in lessons and attending your assembly. We thought your singing was excellent.

We were particularly impressed with your good behaviour. Your school is a bright, spacious and welcoming place to learn. You told us you really enjoy school. We were not surprised having found out about some of the exciting things your teachers plan for you. It was good to hear about the canteen project and how some of you were involved in designing such a bright and attractive place to eat. The adults care for you and know you extremely well. One of you told us how the adults, 'make us feel like someone special'. You told us that you feel very safe at school and know you can go to the adults for extra support when you need to. For example, you told us how the adults in the medical room take good care of you when you feel ill or have hurt yourself. You are very proud of your school and enjoy taking responsibility by being part of the landscape project or a peer mentor.

Your school is satisfactory and most of you make satisfactory progress in your learning. There are so many things it does well, but some things could be even better. We have asked the staff to make more of your lessons as good as the best, to make sure that the work you are given is at the right level for you and to make sure that regular marking in your books helps you to understand what you need to do next in your learning in order for you to make even better progress.

You can help by continuing to work hard in your lessons and telling your teachers when you find the work too hard or too easy. Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we came to your school.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Ratcliff

Her Majesty's Inspector

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