

Ab Kettleby Community Primary School

Wartnaby Road, Ab Kettleby, Melton Mowbray, LE14 3JJ

Inspection dates 18–19 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The rates of progress pupils make in English and mathematics are good, reflecting recent improvements in teaching since the last inspection.
- Teaching is consistently good across all the mixed aged classes.
- Over time, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress that compares very well with similar pupils in other schools.
- The teaching of reading to younger age groups is good, and pupils become confident readers by the time they leave the school.
- Behaviour is outstanding, and the pupils support each other extremely well in their learning.
- Pupils feel very safe in school, and are very positive about recent improvements made to classrooms and play areas.
- The two headteachers make sure that teaching and pupils' progress is at least good, and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The governors have made significant improvements to the school environment, through effective use of resources.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Whilst teaching is mostly good, not enough is outstanding.
- More-able pupils do not always make as much progress as other pupils, given their starting points.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their mathematics skills using problems based on real life situations.
- Reception children do not make sufficient use of the outdoor learning area.
- Leaders and managers do not track the progress made by different groups of pupils as carefully as they should.
- Although well led by the Chair, almost all governors are new, and are not yet fully aware of the needs of the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 10 lessons. Joint lesson observations were undertaken with the two headteachers. In addition, the inspectors made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' books, listened to pupils read and examined display work.
- Meetings were held with pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. A telephone call was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 13 responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and talked to parents during the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Andrew Read, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all of the pupils are White British.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are all above average.
- The percentage of pupils joining the school at a time other than Reception is higher than average.
- A well below average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, for children in local authority care and for pupils with a parent in the armed forces).
- The school's most recent results cannot be compared to the government's floor standards, which set the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress, because there were not enough pupils to make such comparisons meaningful.
- Since 2009, the school has been led by two headteachers, who share responsibility for the school and who each work the equivalent of one half of the week in turn in this role.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by;
 - ensuring that, in all mixed aged classes, the teaching fully meets the needs of all pupils, particularly those of a higher ability
 - developing opportunities for pupils to practise their problem solving in mathematics, through real-life examples
 - ensuring that teachers give children more opportunities to use the outdoor learning area in Reception.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by;
 - developing more manageable systems for recording and analysing the progress made by different groups of pupils as they move through the school
 - ensuring that all new governors are fully trained and have a good understanding of the needs of the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Over the previous five years the standards reached by pupils in English and mathematics has been broadly in line with national averages.
- In 2012, a markedly below average percentage gained the expected level in English and mathematics. However, the cohort was exceptionally small, as it is in most years, and year-on-year attainment varies considerably as a result. Given their widely different starting points, pupils made good progress.
- Children enter reception with a wide variety of needs, with some children at and others below expected levels of development. However, they all make good progress, developing confidence and skills across a range of developmental areas. Good progress continues into Year 1, where early reading and letter formation skills are acquired rapidly.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across Key Stage 1. However, pupils of a higher level of ability make slightly less rapid progress than their peers. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make a strong start in Reception. They maintain consistently good rates of progress across all classes, doing particularly well when learning in small groups and receiving targeted tuition. For example, these pupils make very good progress in reading, due to an individualised and intensive support programme for those who find reading difficult.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to progress well overall. While a higher proportion of more able pupils are progressing to advanced levels than have done so in previous years, the progress made by more able pupils in English and mathematics is still variable.
- Pupils make better progress in writing than in mathematics. Pupils achieve well when presented with mathematical problems with which they are familiar. However, they are less confident when being asked to apply them to other contexts. For example, during the inspection pupils in both key stages were seen to be less confident when asked to transfer mathematical problem solving skills to other subjects, such as science.
- In English and mathematics, the achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is similar to that of other pupils in the school. Only small numbers are involved but, broadly, there is now no difference in the attainment of pupils receiving the premium and those who do not by the time they leave.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is mainly good, although very little is outstanding. Where teaching is less than good, higher ability children do not get enough challenge. For example, some work set for higher ability learners seen during the inspection was too similar to that of other pupils of a lower age or ability.
- Teaching in Reception is almost always good when delivered within a classroom setting. In particular the teaching of early language skills is a strength. During the inspection teachers were seen using puppets to encourage children to develop their speech and language in a non-threatening and fun environment.

- While the resources available to children are generally good in Reception, they do not spend sufficient time undertaking independent learning activities outdoors. Although a new enclosed outdoor area has recently been created, teachers and children are not yet in the habit of using it. The area also lacks a covered area for use during rain or strong sun.
- Across all age groups the teaching of reading and writing is generally good, with provision for reading the strongest, due to additional intensive support for those who find reading hard. Parents and pupils value the use of reading logs, which also record any particular words or spellings that need to be learnt.
- Pupils can write well, and teachers use stimulating contexts to encourage reluctant writers. For example, pupils were seen writing imaginatively about the likely occupant of a 'dragon's egg' that had been buried in the grounds by the teacher, and found by the pupils. Such an imaginative approach serves to engage both boys and girls in their writing.
- While pupils generally develop good problem-solving skills in mathematics, and are able to describe different solutions to a range of problems, not enough emphasis is given to encouraging them to practise their skills in a wide variety of real-life situations. This is true across both key stages, and results in a lack of confidence in pupils when faced with an unfamiliar mathematical problem.
- Despite the need for pupils to be taught in mixed ability classes, learning is mostly well matched to their needs and abilities. However, occasionally more able pupils are set work that is not challenging enough. The school has recently increased the number of classes, in order to reduce the developmental range within each class.
- Marking is frequent and informative, and therefore pupils have a good understanding of their next steps in learning. Assessment is accurate, and used by teachers to plan learning on an individual basis. This is most apparent for pupils of a lower ability, who receive good levels of support.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium receive extra help from teachers and support staff, which enables them to make good progress. The funding has been used sensibly and effectively to give them extra learning resources and trips to extend their learning opportunities.
- The teaching of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across all years is good. Assemblies are invariably of high quality, and seek to challenge any pre-conceived views of others. Pupils say they particularly value this aspect of their school life, and are able to describe the breadth and depth of their cultural, artistic and spiritual learning. For example, links with the diverse culture of Leicester, have fostered a good awareness of multi-ethnic dance, drama and difference.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Disruption in lessons is very rare, and pupils have become used to supporting each other in their learning. Pupils learn in mixed age groups, and are thus good at helping those more or less able than themselves.
- Pupils enjoy going to school, and say that they feel safe and find their lessons engaging and exciting. As a result, attendance is well-above average. Pupils' attendance is closely monitored, and any unplanned absences are followed up.

- Pupils have a very well-developed sense of community. They are, for example, very aware of different forms of bullying and how to prevent or report it. This is particularly true in the case of older pupils, who keep a watchful and caring eye over their younger peers. As a result, there are almost no instances of bullying, and pupils feel that they can raise any concerns with adults.
- Pupils feel listened to because they have a wide range of ways to make their views heard, both through an active school council, and through close relationships with their teachers. They are thus confident that adults will listen to their ideas and are willing to respond helpfully.
- Teachers encourage the sharing of ideas in lessons by asking lots of challenging questions, and as a result pupils have learnt to be good listeners. This is a particular strength of the school, not least because the system of mixed-aged classes requires that children listen to the views of those older and younger than themselves.
- Pupils play very well together, and enjoy a child friendly outdoor environment, including a new nature area. Teachers ensure that pupils have good awareness of risk, and are independently able to care for themselves and each other. For example, from an early age, pupils can talk about the different risks associated with using the internet and social media, demonstrating that their e-safety awareness is very good.
- The process by which incidents concerning perceived racism, or those involving accidental injury, is recorded and investigated effectively. The school is very good at identifying pupils at risk, and parents feel that this is a particular strength of the school. Pupils are very well supported through such provision.

The leadership and management are good

- The school has two headteachers. Both have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have focussed well on the developmental needs of the school, recently restructuring the way pupils are grouped in order to better meet the diverse educational needs of their pupils.
- Subject co-ordination is good, and leaders ensure that all teachers have a good understanding of subject areas. The co-ordination of provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. Pupils' progress and welfare are closely monitored by teachers, and pupils receive support that is proportionate to their need.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The leader has ensured that the ways in which children are grouped for activities properly reflect their needs and enable all children to progress. The school recognises that better use should be made of the new outside learning zone and to provide more suitable all-weather cover.
- While teachers have a good understanding of the specific needs of individual pupils, the assessment information showing outcomes for different groups of pupils and for the whole-school is too broad and not collected frequently enough. For example, if pupils join the school in Key Stage 2, an assessment of their prior learning is not formally recorded. As a consequence, in the absence of an established starting point, the good progress made by these pupils within this time is not recorded precisely enough. Similarly, the small but important steps made by lower ability pupils are not able to be recorded using current whole school systems. This gives the inaccurate impression that some pupils do not make good progress.
- The school's teaching programmes provide highly positive experiences and rich opportunities for

high-quality learning. They contribute very well to pupils' academic achievement and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A very wide range of activities and experiences are planned, including numerous educational visits, trips to music shows and cultural events.

- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority gives minimal support to the school and has not felt it necessary to offer specific school improvement support or challenge as it correctly believes that the school has a good capacity for self-sustained improvement. The local authority monitors the school's performance through end-of-key-stage national assessment data.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is generally good, particularly in the case of the Chair, who is effective in his leadership of the school. However the recent high turnover of other governors has meant that almost all are now new to the school. It is too soon for them, as a body, therefore, to have a clear picture of teaching quality or of the effectiveness of the arrangements for managing the performance of teachers. The school recognises that a period of stability is required, within which new governors can become better acquainted with the needs of the school. A training plan has already been put in place to meet this need, and roles and committee responsibilities are now better linked to priority areas. Whilst the governors hold leaders to account for the school's performance, and performance indicators are closely focused on the broad overall attainment of pupils, information that reports on how well pupils are doing is not in a format that governors feel is easy to understand. For example, governors know broadly how the pupil premium funding is spent, and that it is leading to generally good levels of attainment for the pupils eligible for this funding but they have little knowledge of detail. In contrast, through highly effective planning and good financial control, the governors have redeveloped the school buildings and got the school onto a sound financial footing, following a period of administrative uncertainty.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	119902
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	411990

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	44
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wilson Boardman
Headteacher	Alison Bailey & Clare Allen
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2010
Telephone number	01664 822302
Fax number	01664 822302
Email address	office@abkettleby.leics.sch.uk

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