

Abbots Farm Junior School

Abbots Way, Rugby, CV21 4AP

Inspection dates 25–26 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Leaders and managers have not yet secured consistently good teaching.
- Their recent work to make sure pupils' progress is consistently good across the school has not yet had a full impact on achievement, particularly in writing.
- Pupils are not always aware of the purpose of each lesson and what they should achieve by the end.
- The planning of lesson activities sometimes has weaknesses, especially in writing and mathematics. Sometimes the work is too hard or too easy.
- Teachers do not always make clear in their marking how pupils can improve their work, or make sure that pupils respond to the advice given.
- Some middle leaders are new to their posts, so have not yet had sufficient time to focus fully on what needs to be done to improve teaching.

The school has the following strengths

- After a dip in standards following the last inspection, well-directed action by the headteacher has resulted in improvements in both teaching and progress.
- Since the last inspection governance has much improved. Governors know the school well and ensure that plans for school improvement are appropriate and effective.
- Reading is taught successfully. Pupils are confident readers and make good progress.
- Behaviour is good and attendance is above average. Pupils feel safe and enjoy school.
- The school works hard to ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes and observed teaching in 17 lessons or part lessons. The headteacher and deputy headteacher were invited to accompany inspectors during observations and did so on five occasions. Additionally, inspectors observed group work, playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took account of questionnaires completed by 18 members of staff and 44 responses submitted by parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors looked at data about pupils' achievement. They reviewed the work in pupils' books, heard pupils read and held discussions with pupils about their learning and experience of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings and discussions with the headteacher, senior members of staff, subject leaders, teaching assistants, the Vice Chair of the Governing Body and two parent governors. The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority, and held discussions with a 'local leader of education' and the school's independent adviser.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness, the school improvement plan, records of governing body meetings and the monitoring of teaching and learning, external evaluations of the school's work, behaviour records and safeguarding checks.

Inspection team

Lynda Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kathryn Hill

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Abbots Farm Junior School is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a small number from other ethnic heritages.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- A fifth of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, which is similar to the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding given to schools for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils from service families.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- A new headteacher and most members of the governing body have been appointed since the previous inspection. The current senior leadership team have been working together since September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
 - show high expectations of what pupils can achieve by insisting on high standards of work
 - plan and provide learning activities that accurately match the needs and abilities of all groups of pupils, especially in writing
 - regularly check in lessons that pupils have a clear understanding of the purpose of their work and the intended outcomes, particularly in mathematics
 - consistently use marking to provide clear guidance to pupils about how to improve their work, and check that pupils follow and respond to this advice.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders at all levels focus on the above key ways of improving teaching to improve progress, especially in writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement is rising, but it requires improvement because progress has not been consistently good over time. From starting points that are broadly average, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is also broadly average. Progress varies from year group to year group, especially in writing, and has only very recently become more even.
- Progress is accelerating and so standards are rising. For example, more pupils are reaching higher levels of attainment in mathematics in Year 6 than in previous years. However, pupils' progress is sometimes restricted when teachers do not make clear enough the purpose of the tasks set, or how pupils can judge their success in completing them.
- Recent improvements in the teaching of writing, and the greater emphasis on pupils using phonics (the sounds letters make) to support their spelling, are having a positive impact. However, progress slows when all pupils have to complete the same work, regardless of what they already know and can do.
- Progress in reading is good. Pupils use a wide range of skills to tackle unknown words and understand what they have read. Pupils are confident and enthusiastic readers and have regular set times throughout the week to read.
- Pupil premium funding is being used for additional learning support. School evidence shows that this is leading eligible pupils to now make at least the same progress as their classmates. This is an improvement which is narrowing the gap compared with previously. In 2012, attainment for Year 6 pupils known to be eligible for free school meals was about three terms behind their classmates in English and two terms in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are increasingly well supported. The school accurately identifies their specific individual learning needs. Specialist and additional teaching is ensuring that these pupils are increasing their progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well provided for, and achieve in line with their classmates.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it has not consistently led to good progress over time, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Not all teachers use their knowledge of what pupils already understand to plan or adapt activities precisely to their needs. Learning slows when pupils are given general rather than individual goals for their work and have to listen to information that some already know well, particularly in writing. In mathematics, teachers do not always make clear what they are expecting from pupils.
- Teachers' marking does not always give clear enough information to show pupils how to improve their next piece of work. Checks by teachers to ensure pupils have acted on the advice given are not always thorough enough. However, there are some good examples of marking, not only by teachers, but also by pupils who have been given opportunities to assess their own and others'

work and suggest possible improvements.

- Teaching has much improved recently. All teachers show good subject expertise. They have good relationships with pupils. In the best practice teachers have high expectations and ask probing questions to check understanding and challenge pupils to try hard. Pupils are excited by such well-considered learning activities and persevere with challenges that really make them think deeply.
- Reading is taught well. Purposeful links between reading, writing, drama and practical activities support pupils' understanding and enjoyment of the texts they are reading. Groups and individual pupils who need extra support are effectively helped by well-trained staff. The books pupils are reading and the activities they are given to check their understanding of books are occasionally not demanding enough, but the frequent opportunities for pupils to read mean that this is usually quickly rectified.
- Learning support assistants contribute well to pupils' progress and confidence. They work closely with teachers and support a range of pupils with differing abilities and needs.
- Home learning journals give pupils challenges to be creative, and they enjoy investigating their learning independently. Pupils are enthusiastic about their journals. The work carried out at home is often referred to by pupils and teachers in lessons, reinforcing learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and they typically show interest and enthusiasm in subjects across the curriculum. They enjoy the visits, projects and practical activities that are linked to their class themes. For example, in a Year 5 drama lesson pupils relished acting the part of characters from *Treasure Island*.
- Pupils' behaviour is good across the school. They are polite, well mannered and enthusiastic about discussing their work. They are happy and say they are proud of their school. As one stated, 'You feel like part of a family.' Almost all parents who responded to the online questionnaire said their child is happy and safe, and that behaviour is managed well.
- The school's positive promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key factor in pupils' good behaviour. Pupils' moral awareness and social skills are developed well so they work and play together and show support for one another regardless of age, gender or heritage. The trained 'pupil mediators' who support good behaviour in the playground illustrate the effectiveness of the school's approach.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying means and all the forms it can take. Pupils spoken to said that incidents of bullying or bad behaviour are rare and successfully dealt with by adults.
- Pupils have a good understanding of risk and how to keep safe. They say the school helps them to be aware of different risks, so they know 'what to look out for and how to deal with it'. Pupils say they feel well cared for in school and can turn to any adult for help.
- Pupils' attendance is above average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has fallen because of clear policy and procedures.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because although teaching and pupils' achievement are improving, they are not yet good and inconsistencies remain.
- Middle leaders new to their role have not yet had sufficient time to focus on what needs to be done in their areas, and so have a full impact on improving teaching and learning across the school.
- The headteacher's effective leadership has been instrumental in driving the school's recent improvements. Good support from senior leaders has helped to ensure that all staff and governors have a clear understanding of what the school is trying to achieve.
- The school's evaluation of its work is accurate, and its improvement plans are focused on the right priorities. Parents have also contributed their views and are extremely positive.
- All staff are aware of their responsibilities and what is expected of them. The systems for monitoring and improving staff performance are rigorous, and hold staff clearly to account for their work as well as giving appropriate support to improve their practice.
- The way subjects are taught is now clearly structured to improve pupils' progress and engage their interest. Lessons are enriched through regular practical learning experiences provided through trips linked to the class topics and visitors to the school. Pupils appreciate the good range of activities and clubs. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through good music, sport and personal, social and health education.
- Good tracking systems that record pupils' progress are used effectively to quickly identify any underachievement and judge the impact of initiatives to help pupils achieve better. This, together with the improving support of vulnerable groups of pupils to close any gaps in attainment, ensures that all are given an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The local authority has appropriately steered the school to use effective support from, amongst others, a local leader in education and an external adviser.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has greatly improved since the last inspection. Governors have a clear understanding of the need to continue to raise the school's performance. The governing body actively supports and checks the work of the school and its leaders.
 - The governing body is well informed about the quality of teaching and learning, and this has led to the rigorous management of staff performance. As a result, staff are only financially rewarded when targets have been met.
 - Governors know how the pupil premium funding is spent, and the impact on this group's progress. They use and understand performance data increasingly well to develop an accurate overview of pupils' achievement. They use this knowledge in regular monitoring visits to the school.
 - Governors manage the school's budget well, and use a local authority finance officer to support this. The governing body carries out its statutory duties and makes sure that national safeguarding requirements are met and regularly reviewed.

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	125580
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	412990

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dean Judge
Headteacher	Sharon Farrell
Date of previous school inspection	7 October 2009
Telephone number	01788 576074
Fax number	01788 543628
Email address	admin2421@welearn365.com

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

