

# Abbotsbury Primary School

Abbotsbury Road, Morden, SM4 5JS

**Inspection dates** 19–20 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Children make a strong start in Nursery and Reception so that they are well prepared for Year 1. Children who do not speak English make excellent progress in developing their language skills.
- Pupils make good progress and standards are rising across the school. Pupils' attainment is similar to the national average by the time they leave the school.
- Good quality teaching inspires pupils so that they enjoy learning. Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively together to ensure that pupils have the help they need to address individual difficulties and any gaps they have when they join the school.
- Pupils behave well and are considerate of others around the school, which strengthens the school as a caring community. Pupils are well known by adults and say that they feel safe and happy.
- The curriculum effectively meets pupils' academic needs. It promotes their personal development well and celebrates the diversity within the school so that all feel valued.
- The good leadership of the headteacher and leadership team is seen in strong staff teamwork and improved pupils' achievement in the last two years. The governing body is thorough in its challenge of the school's performance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes, weaknesses in pupils' spelling, punctuation and calculation skills reduce the quality of their writing or slow them down when solving problems.
- A few pupils are absent from school too often.
- Occasionally, time is wasted in lessons because teachers do not change pupils' tasks quickly enough when work is too easy or too difficult.
- Teachers are not consistent in requiring pupils to respond to the written advice given in marking.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons, including one jointly with the headteacher, involving all teachers who were teaching during the inspection. They scrutinised a sample of pupils' work and they attended two assemblies. Inspectors observed how pupils read and talked to some about how the school helps them to develop their reading skills.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, representatives of the governing body and of the local authority, school staff and a group of pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including those that show how the school evaluates itself and plans for future development, and data about pupils' progress. Information about how the school cares for and protects pupils, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and minutes of recent governing body meetings were scrutinised.
- The inspection took account of 17 responses to the online Parent View survey, and questionnaires completed by 21 staff.

## Inspection team

Helen Hutchings, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ken Bryan

Additional Inspector

Veronica Young

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Abbotsbury is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children of service families) for almost a third of its pupils, which is above average when compared with schools nationally. There are currently no children of service families in the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- At around seven in ten, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is high. The majority are of Pakistani and other Asian backgrounds, with other heritages represented in smaller numbers.
- Around three in five pupils has a first language other than English, which is much higher than found nationally.
- A high number of pupils leave and join the school at different times of the year. Of these, around a half speak little or no English when they join the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by sharing the most effective practice so that pupils make faster progress, by:
  - giving a greater focus to consolidating pupils' spelling, punctuation and calculation skills
  - ensuring that teachers adjust lesson activities quickly when some pupils find the work either too easy or too hard
  - making sure that pupils consistently reflect on the good guidance given in marking and that teachers check how pupils' learning has improved as a result.
- Find additional ways to support families to improve the attendance of those pupils who are persistently absent.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Nursery with a very wide range of skills and experiences, which, taken together, are below those typical for their age. The wide range of stimulating activities, indoors and outdoors, means that children develop well through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children who do not speak English make excellent progress so that they speak fluently and are confident to engage with Year 1 work. The joint outdoor activities for Nursery and Reception children help to develop the school ethos of care and consideration for one another.
- Pupils continue to make good progress through the school. Although attainment in reading is higher than in writing and mathematics, the emphasis on ensuring that pupils learn to read quickly ensures effective learning in other subjects. Largely as a result of the improvements made to the teaching of phonics (letters and their sounds), attainment in Key Stage 1, although below average, has risen steadily. The Year 1 phonics screening check shows that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard is average, and that those who did not reach the standard last year have made accelerated progress to make up the difference in Year 2.
- Pupils across the school enjoy reading. They understand what they are reading and accurately sound out unfamiliar words.
- After the last inspection, attainment in Key Stage 2 fell a little, but has risen again over the last two years as a result of a key focus on improving mathematics, which was weaker than English. Although still broadly similar to national averages, inspection evidence supports the school's assessment that pupils in Year 6 are on course to achieve slightly higher results in the Key Stage 2 tests than previously.
- Pupils' progress is monitored closely throughout the year against challenging targets, and prompt action is taken if a pupil is not making the progress expected. Consequently, more pupils make better than expected progress than is the case nationally.
- As pupils gain confidence in their basic skills, their achievement accelerates. However, some remaining weaknesses in pupils' spelling and punctuation lower the quality of their writing. When specific calculation skills are not consolidated immediately prior to applying them in new situations, pupils' calculation skills, such as multiplication and division, sometimes slow them down when trying to solve mathematics problems.
- Pupils use their computer skills effectively when needed. For example in a Year 5 lesson, pupils developed new programming skills very quickly and effectively as they worked cooperatively to share their understanding and find things out for themselves.
- All groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, achieve well, although pupils who speak English as an additional language make faster progress than their peers overall. Pupils who join the school part-way through their primary education make similar progress to their peers as a result of the early identification of their attainment and the action taken to close any gaps in their learning. Consequently, pupils are settled and happy in the school.
- Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs make good progress in line with the rest of the school. Their difficulties and needs are identified early and the action taken at that stage means that they require less individual support as they move through the school. Staff use the close links with a neighbouring special school for advice and training which are boosting expertise to meet the needs of a wide range of learning difficulties.
- The school ensures equality of opportunity and tackles any possible discrimination by keeping a close eye on the achievement of every pupil, and taking action to remove barriers to learning. Interventions such as counselling, access to a breakfast club and daily fruit, and ready access to computers, have ensured that pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium funding have made accelerated progress this year. These pupils in Year 6 are reaching marginally higher standards in English and mathematics than their peers, closing the one third of a level gap in mathematics evident last year. There was no gap in English last year. A similar

pattern is found across the school.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Consistently good teaching supports pupils' good progress and enjoyment of their learning. Teachers have strong relationships with their classes and plan activities which engage and excite pupils so that learning is fun.
- Teachers create a strong atmosphere for learning and expect pupils to work hard. They plan lessons which effectively meet the differing needs and abilities in their classes, and teaching assistants are knowledgeable and deployed well to support learning. Occasionally, when a few pupils find the work easy or too difficult, the teacher does not find more challenging or easier work quickly enough during the lesson to ensure that no time is wasted for individuals in the class.
- Teachers use good quality resources, such as interactive whiteboards which make learning visual. They use projectors effectively to display work for everyone to see models of good writing or ways of recording investigations used around the class. This encourages individuals to reflect effectively on their own achievement.
- Learning is made relevant to pupils' earlier knowledge and, where possible, it is practically based. For example in a mathematics lesson, Year 1 pupils collected information about shapes in the playground, setting up their own tally charts outside. They then recorded the information graphically which reinforced their understanding of different types of charts and pictograms.
- Pupils know the quality of their work because this is explained carefully to them. They have clear targets to aim for in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers use the school's marking policy consistently to show pupils what has been successful in their work and how it can be improved. There are many good examples of pupils following this up, showing that they have understood. However, sometimes teachers do not give pupils opportunities to do so or check that pupils have understood. Consequently, some minor misconceptions are not addressed quickly enough.
- Homework is used well to consolidate and develop independent learning. Teachers and other adults encourage pupils to think things through for themselves and plan their own work. This was seen during the inspection when Year 6 pupils used their numeracy skills and extended their understanding of economics by setting up business plans to equip, run and maintain a theme park against a set of financial constraints.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons, around the school and on the playground are good. Relationships across the school are strong, and pupils show courtesy to one another and to adults. Pupils support each other, reflecting adult role models, as they work and play together. Learning is not disrupted by poor behaviour and very few parents raised any concerns about behaviour at the school.
- Pupils feel safe because they are known well and there is always someone on hand to help. They know how to keep themselves safe, such as when cycling or using the internet. Pupils understand what is meant by bullying and unacceptable behaviour. Bullying and inappropriate behaviour, including the use of racist language, are extremely rare. Pupils are confident that if they occur, staff will sort things out quickly. This diverse community is highly cohesive and inclusive.
- Attendance has been below the national average for some time, but is improving rapidly and the gap is closing. This is the result of focused work between school and local authority staff with families where pupils have been persistently absent. For example, attendance at breakfast club has had a positive impact. Although there are pupils who have been absent for health reasons and observance of religious festivals, there are still a few pupils who do not attend regularly.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher's drive is effectively raising standards, particularly in mathematics in Key Stage 2 and reading in Key Stage 1. She is supported well by the leadership and staff teams. They work together as a cohesive team and have strongly shared views about how to improve the school further.
  - School evaluation and planning are detailed and accurate because they are based on an in-depth analysis of a wide range of evidence of the school's performance. The school's documentation and planning cycles meet staff needs well so that they are clear about the school's direction and their role within it. Staff are creative and open to new ideas and ways of doing things, but monitor the impact of their work closely to ensure that it is effective so that they are ready to change an approach if necessary.
  - Staff performance management is done well. Teachers indicate that leadership expectations are high but realistic, and that they are supported in achieving the school's ambitions.
  - The local authority has provided effective support, particularly to help leaders to develop systems to monitor pupils' progress and to improve the quality of teaching where it was found to be less than good. School staff have engaged fully with the professional development offered so that the school is now in a position where it only requires 'light-touch' support.
  - The curriculum continues to be a strength of the school, leading to good achievement and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's 'creative' curriculum includes many opportunities for enrichment, including music and drama performance. Themed weeks, such as mathematics and multicultural weeks, help pupils to share learning and diversity across the school. Attention is given to activities to boost the performance of groups, for example in helping girls to do as well as boys in a recent unit of work promoting mathematics through literature.
  - **The governance of the school**
    - Governance is well organised and informed. Governors are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses and about the quality of teaching. They know how well pupils are achieving in relation to pupils nationally and schools in similar circumstances, for example through the recently published 'School Data Dashboard'. They keep a close eye on how performance management is working and make sure that salary progression is dependent on effective performance. Similarly, they ensure that finances and resources are managed effectively. Governors hold leaders to account, for example about the impact of pupil premium funding. Safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory requirements.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102649
<b>Local authority</b>	Merton
<b>Inspection number</b>	402896

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

<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>	460
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Short
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ro Maybury
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21–22 May 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8640 1010
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