

Abbotskerswell Primary School

Slade lane, Abbotskerswell, Newton Abbott, TQ12 5NS

Inspection dates 10–11 July 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:

- In 2012, pupils in Year 6 did not achieve well enough from their starting points in Year 3 and in Year 2, and pupils' attainment fell sharply.
- Teaching requires improvement because pupils' progress over the past year remains inconsistent especially in mathematics and writing.
- The pace of pupils' learning in lessons slows, for example, when teachers do not cover sufficient work in the time available and when pupils have to wait for too long between activities.
- Sometimes work given is too easy and there are times when pupils are not given enough time and support to work independently.
- Pupils' use of targets in lessons, which involves setting their own learning targets and judging for themselves the progress they make, is inconsistent.
- Leadership and management require improvement because checks on the quality of teaching and professional development have not been sufficiently effective to rectify weaknesses in mathematics and writing.

The school has the following strengths:

- The school is now improving following a decline since the previous inspection. Recent results in Year 2 and Year 6 show improvement from those in 2012, particularly in reading.
- Pupils in Year 1 and Year 6 have made good progress over the past year. Young children learn about letters and the sounds they make well, and are becoming more confident readers.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school and free from bullying. Pupils say that any issues are quickly dealt with by staff.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their work, answer questions and work together well. Teachers manage classes very well and treat pupils as individuals. Relationships are harmonious and respectful.
- The way the school tracks the progress of pupils has been strengthened and this has helped additional support to be targeted to meet pupils' academic and personal needs.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, all of which were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils.
- A discussion was held with a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- The inspector took account of the 13 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Parents' and carers' views were also gathered from informal conversations.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documents, including the school improvement plans, the school's checks on teaching, records relating to attendance, and the school's data on pupils' progress. He also scrutinised samples of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Peter Clifton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average size primary school with pupils attending mainly from the local area.
- The pupils are taught in three classes: Reception and Years 1 and 2; Years 2, 3 and 4; and Years 4, 5 and 6.
- Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families, is below average. Currently, the school has no pupils who are in the care of the local authority or any children from service families.
- The acting headteacher started in the school in January 2013.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in mathematics and writing, improve further, by:
 - making sure that the pace of learning in lessons is brisk at all times and pupils are given better opportunities to learn independently
 - improving the match of activities to pupils' different needs, making sure that work is not too easy
 - using targets consistently across the school so that pupils can set their own learning goals and judge for themselves the progress they make.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - driving through improvements in teaching, for example, by closer checking on the learning of different groups so that pupils make good progress
 - giving teaching staff individual support according to their needs, for example, through facilitating their observation of high-quality practice so that they can implement improvements in their own classrooms.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement and progress over the past year in mathematics and writing, particularly in Years 4 and 5, are not yet good.
- In 2012, pupils' achievement and progress dipped in Year 6, from their different starting points in Year 3, and were below expectations in both English and mathematics. In Year 2, pupils' attainment fell, particularly in reading and writing.
- Children typically start school with the expected levels of knowledge, skills and understanding for their ages. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is broadly average.
- Results from the 2013 tests show improvement from those in 2012. In Year 2, these show a marked improvement in attainment in reading and writing; attainment in mathematics is similar to that in 2012. In Year 6, attainment is higher and progress stronger in both English and mathematics; reading results have improved the most.
- The school's records show that, for all groups, pupils' progress has strengthened over the past year, particularly in reading. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have made progress which is at least as good as that of other pupils and sometimes better. Pupils in Year 3 have made up some of the lost ground in writing and reading.
- Pupils' progress over the past year is strongest in Years 1 and 6. In Year 1, pupils' writing is at least in line with age-related expectations, with several pupils doing even better. In Year 6, work is well presented and shows for example, a broad range of writing styles and the use of different methods to multiply numbers and solve problems.
- Results in last year's Year 1 phonics screening check were above national expectations. This reflects good teaching for younger children; this year's results are even stronger and helping pupils make better progress in developing reading and writing skills.
- Children in the Reception work well together when using construction apparatus and are helped to extend their vocabulary for example, when discussing size, shape and position.
- Older pupils enjoy reading. They name their favourite authors and say why they like their style of writing. Pupils read regularly in school and are encouraged to widen their choices of different authors.
- In 2012, there were insufficient numbers of Year 6 pupils eligible for the pupil premium to make any valid comparison about attainment. Over the past year, this group of pupils have made progress similar to other pupils', and better progress than their classmates in reading and writing in Key Stage 2.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet sufficiently strong to promote good progress across the school. There are times in lessons when the pace of learning slows, for example when pupils have to wait their turn to be involved in learning. On a few other occasions pupils' independent learning is inhibited because introductions to lessons are too long.
- Activities planned to promote learning are not always matched well enough to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. This happens for example, when pupils finish sums very quickly and their learning is not extended and as a result, some pupils lose interest.
- Older pupils have targets on the front of their books, and marking provides useful information about what can be improved. These pupils comment that they regularly check their work to make improvements. However, the use of targets and feedback for other pupils is not as strong and they do not have enough opportunities to set goals for improvement, check on their own progress and improve their work.
- There are examples of teaching assistants working well with pupils for example, to help them improve their basic number skills or to keep them focused on their work.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good and pupils trust the adults who look after them. Teachers manage pupils sensitively yet firmly, including those pupils who find it difficult to

concentrate. Learning typically takes place in a positive environment and pupils are encouraged to do their best.

- Pupils work together well in classes and learn from each other. This is a strong feature of learning in the class with older pupils. For example, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 worked together to investigate the different 'nets' which could be used to make different three-dimensional shapes, and explored different patterns when shapes are rotated. Children in Reception work confidently alongside other pupils in Years 1 and 2 when writing simple sentences.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well and play harmoniously together at break and lunchtimes; they know that discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils in Year 6 take on the responsibility to organise a broad range of activities at lunchtimes and this means that pupils are active and always have plenty of things to do.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. Pupils say they feel safe in school and comment that the school is 'homely'. Discussion with the pupils and school records show very little evidence of any bullying or upsetting behaviour. Pupils know about e-safety including the potential dangers of giving out personal information when using the internet.
- Pupils typically have positive attitudes to their work and are keen to contribute in lessons. Mostly, they quickly get on with tasks when asked by teachers and other adults but a few pupils need to be asked more than once and this wastes learning time.
- Parents, carers and staff are supportive of the school. All parents and carers spoken to, and their responses in questionnaires, confirm that they would recommend it to others, and nearly all indicate that their child feels happy. The school has provided additional support and counselling for individual pupils who have emotional needs and this is helping these pupils to work successfully alongside their classmates.
- There is occasionally some silly behaviour in lessons, which is why behaviour and safety are not better than good. However, pupils comment that this does not unduly interrupt their learning.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management have not ensured that teaching has improved enough to enable pupils to make good progress and achieve well. The school's records of observations of teaching, carried out recently, provide staff with information about strengths and weaknesses. However, this support has not yet ensured that learning activities meet the needs of different groups of pupils equally well. Professional development for individual staff, including opportunities for them to observe best practice, has not yet been fully exploited.
- The school development plans to promote improvement are well matched to key areas of weakness. Improvements have arrested and reversed the decline seen in the 2012 results, and strengthened the support for individual pupils. Staff are positive about the recent changes that have been made.
- The school has detailed information about the progress of individual and different groups of pupils and this reflects improvements in the arrangements to monitor the progress of pupils. This information is being used, for example, to target and provide additional support for those groups of pupils whose progress is not yet good.
- The school helps pupils to develop a strong social awareness and understanding about the need to help each other and treat others with consideration. The pupils understand the codes of behaviour. Assemblies are used well to celebrate success and recognise the efforts made by individual pupils with their work or their contribution to school life.
- The local authority has provided enhanced support, for example in mathematics, following the decline in the school's results. This is helping the school to improve pupils' achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a broad range of skills and expertise which is supporting leadership and management well. Recent training has strengthened governors' role in the school to ask critical

questions and hold the leadership of the school to account. Governors know about the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils in the school, including those pupils eligible for the pupil premium, through the reports they receive. They have a clear understanding about how pupils' achievement compares with national averages. Their arrangements to hold teachers fully to account have only recently been developed, as have decisions about whether or not teachers should move up the salary scale. Governors monitor the budget well and the school has a modest amount of money held in reserve. Governors make sure that they know and follow the required procedures about safeguarding children.

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	113183
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	411773

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	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Catherine Denning
Acting Headteacher	Tim Hughes
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2010
Telephone number	01626 353695
Fax number	01626 353695
Email address	admin@abbotskerswell-primary.devon.sch.uk

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