

Abingdon Primary School

Abingdon Road, Middlesbrough, North Yorkshire, TS1 3JR

Inspection dates 25–26 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress from their starting points and standards have risen in the last two years.
- Teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. Teachers plan work that is stimulating and very well-matched to the learning needs of individual pupils.
- The curriculum offers pupils many exciting opportunities to develop their skills in writing and reading. Pupils enjoy science, history, music and art and a range of sports and extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils from diverse backgrounds care exceptionally well for one another; they say they feel extremely safe at school.
- The school offers excellent care and support and provides extremely well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher has been relentless in her drive to improve the school and raise the expectations of staff, pupils and parents.
- Her excellent leadership has inspired senior leaders, subject leaders and all teachers to put changes in place which have significantly improved teaching and speeded up pupils' progress.
- The headteacher and the governing body have an extremely clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have acted decisively to tackle weak teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The school does not yet make the most of opportunities to share the outstanding practice among staff.
- In some lessons, the pace of learning is inconsistent and the level of challenge drops for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in real-life situations.
- In some instances, when teachers mark work, they do not give clear advice about how pupils can improve their work or time to act upon that advice.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors had meetings with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair, vice-chair and another member of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the school's improvement plan; the school's data relating to pupils' progress; monitoring reports; the work pupils were doing in their books; and the school's documentation relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons taught by 16 teachers. They listened to groups of pupils in Years 1, 2 and 6 read. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to lessons.
- The inspectors conducted five joint lesson observations with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher. The inspectors also observed the headteacher and deputy headteacher reporting back to the teachers on their findings regarding the quality of learning and pupils' achievement in the lesson.
- The inspectors took into account the 12 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke informally to parents, including one phone call which was requested by a parent.
- Forty seven questionnaires completed by staff, and the responses were analysed.

Inspection team

Gordon Potter, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
James Hannah	Additional Inspector
Patrick Hargreaves	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils come from a diverse range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, largely of Pakistani origin. For around 70% of pupils, English is not believed to be their first language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after.)
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- There is a breakfast club and lunchtime and after-school clubs which are managed by the governing body.
- In 2012, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- More pupils than is the case across the country leave or join the school at other than the usual times. A large proportion of these pupils speak little or no English when they arrive.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding, to further raise standards and rates of pupils' progress, by:
 - sharing the outstanding practice that is already in school
 - ensuring teachers plan work that offers consistent and appropriate pace and challenge to all groups of learners
 - improving consistency in the quality of marking so that pupils know clearly how to make their work better and have time to act upon advice given to them by their teachers
 - offering more interesting opportunities in mathematics for pupils to apply their skills in solving problems related to everyday life.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children start school with skills that are well below those typically expected for their age, especially in speaking and listening. The school has introduced remarkably successful initiatives to improve the quality of teaching. Good and sometimes outstanding teaching helps pupils to make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and both key stages.
- As a result, standards have risen more quickly than standards nationally and many more pupils than in the recent past have the skills and abilities appropriate for their age at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2012, the attainment of those pupils who were known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals was two terms ahead of other pupils in the school in mathematics and in English.
- In 2013, the pupils who were known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, achieved standards which were in line with all groups of pupils. While those pupils achieved as well as they had done in 2012, the school's success at raising achievement for all groups of pupils meant that many more pupils than in the past made good progress and achieved the standards expected for their age.
- Likewise, those pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is not believed to be their first language make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants are very skilful at teaching and supporting these pupils in their learning so they can make similar good progress to other pupils in the school.
- Indeed, a group of last year's Year 6 pupils who entered during Year 5 and Year 6 with no English made exceptional progress. While, they did not reach the level expected for their age, the school had closed the gap between them and other pupils in the school extremely rapidly. Pupils who had been in the Year 6 class throughout Key Stage 2 made good progress and achieved standards which were average in English and mathematics.
- The school has had too few high achieving pupils in recent years. It is now identifying its most-able pupils and evidence seen during the inspection indicates that more pupils currently in school than has been the case in the past are working above the expectations for their age, indicating that more-able pupils are making good progress.
- These improvements in standards and the rates at which pupils make progress clearly show the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.
- Inspection evidence shows that progress in reading is good and more pupils are achieving the standards expected of them by the end of Year 6 than has been the case in the recent past. There is a consistent focus on reading across the school. Pupils have a very clear understanding of how letters are linked to sounds and this helps them to read words they are not used to. Pupils say that improvements to the teaching of reading and more exciting books have encouraged them to read more often and with greater enjoyment, in school and at home.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good, with some outstanding teaching which inspires pupils and helps them to rapidly catch-up from their starting points or make up for some slower progress in previous years. This is because all lessons have interesting topics and a range of exciting activities that engage pupils and allow them to see the links between subjects.
- Teachers are very skilful at explaining what pupils are to learn, allow them time to work independently or in groups and check effectively that they are learning well. They skilfully adapt work during lessons, either to offer greater challenge or to help pupils who have misunderstandings in their learning. On such occasions, teaching assistants are very well-used to support and teach all groups of pupils.
- All of these approaches were seen in a lesson for pupils in the Nursery class, where outstanding

teaching stimulated pupils to develop their imagination, their singing and movement, their understanding of the natural world and their listening and speaking skills. On their visit to the jungle, children made outstanding progress in all these areas of learning.

- Teachers use information about pupils' skills and abilities effectively to plan work which is challenging for all groups of pupils and stretches the most-able pupils. For example, outstanding teaching of mathematics for pupils in Year 5 offered all pupils an exciting challenge to create a visual display to show their understanding of ratio. As a result, their behaviour was exemplary and they made outstanding progress.
- Occasionally, teachers misjudge the pace of learning, allow some activities to go on too long or introduce activities which add little to pupils' learning. As a result, the level of challenge drops and pupils' progress slows.
- While teaching of mathematics is good across school and pupils make good progress, there remain too few examples of outstanding practice. There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in mathematics in solving challenging problems related to everyday life.
- Teachers use pupils' reading and the many exciting topics they cover in a range of subjects as the starting point for writing activities and progress in writing is good. This good approach was seen in lessons for pupils in Years 6 where their interest in the lives of Queen Victoria and Florence Nightingale was used to encourage their own writing and reading.
- Teachers make sure pupils know the level of their work and have clear targets which help them to reach the next level. This has had a strong impact on helping pupils make increasingly rapid progress. However, there is some inconsistency in the quality of marking. Some teachers do not always make it clear to pupils how they can improve their work or give pupils time to act upon any advice that is given.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say that behaviour is good in their lessons and around the school. Indeed, good and much excellent behaviour was evident during the inspection. Pupils from a wide range of cultural backgrounds play and work extremely well together and show great respect and care for one another. This is also as a result of the excellent, sensitive care they receive from adults in the school.
- Pupils say that any minor misbehaviour is quickly dealt with by their teachers. They are very eager to do their best in their work, although there can be some distractions when the pace of learning drops in their lessons.
- There are clear expectations and a consistent system of rules and rewards which help pupils have a very clear understanding of how to behave well. Accordingly, there have been no permanent exclusions in recent years.
- Pupils feel very safe and are aware of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying or name-calling. They are extremely clear that there is no racist bullying. Indeed, they say there is no bullying of any sort although friends occasionally fall out and there are some hard tackles on the football court.
- Older pupils look after younger children and help pupils play safely and enjoyably together. They develop social skills well through involvement in the breakfast, sports and after-school clubs. The school council offers ideas to improve the playground. Individual pupils have taken initiatives to introduce awards for good behaviour in the dining hall. As a result, pupils behave extremely well at lunchtime and eat sociably together.
- As a result of clear initiatives introduced by the school to minimise the impact of term-time holidays and to encourage pupils to attend regularly and on time, attendance has improved and is average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has had a remarkable impact on the school in the two years she has been in post. She has a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses and demands the highest standards. While she has created strong teamwork and high morale through sensitive and encouraging leadership that involves all staff in school improvement, she has also been relentless in tackling and eradicating weaker teaching.
- The headteacher regularly assesses the quality of teaching and looks at pupils' work so that a consistent approach to learning is evident across school and pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress. She has an exceptionally clear view of what constitutes effective teaching and is extremely rigorous in her feedback to teachers about the quality of their teaching. As a result, teaching has improved and standards have risen. However, the sharing of outstanding teaching practices is still needed to ensure that teaching is outstanding overall.
- She has helped other senior leaders and subject leaders to develop similar clear understanding through clear training opportunities. Indeed, training for all teachers is very well-planned and clearly based on this monitoring and on the school development plan. It includes teachers' own research into ways to improve teaching which are shared with all staff. As a result, all teachers thrive on the responsibility and accountability for the progress of the pupils in their classes and for initiatives across the school.
- Performance management is focused well on increasing the rates at which pupils make progress, improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. Teachers are very clear that they will only be rewarded when their pupils have done as well as, or better than, they should have done. The headteacher has set demanding targets for teachers which have contributed to pupils' more rapid progress and improved attainment.
- There is rigorous analysis of data about the attainment and progress of pupils. Such analysis informs the very clear and detailed plans for the school's future development which are regularly monitored by school leaders, including the governing body.
- The curriculum is very engaging and contributes strongly to pupils' well-developed spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. While it is focused on developing pupils' basic skills in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics, it also provides very many opportunities for pupils to develop their love of history, art, science and music.
- There is also a strong focus on developing pupils' physical and sporting skills. The Sports Premium funding has been planned for and current school funding is used highly effectively to develop competitive sports, as well as encouraging physical activity in lunchtime and after-school activities. Allied to some outstanding teaching of physical education such as was observed with a Year 5 class, these are contributing significantly to pupils' physical development.
- The local authority works very effectively with the school. It has offered high-quality training and helpful advice that has led to improvements in the quality of leadership and teaching across school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body offers sympathetic support and rigorous challenge to the school which have ensured that standards have risen. The Chair of the Governing Body is very well-informed about the school and uses governors' expertise to full effect, for example in budget management or analysing the quality of teaching. Governors have made excellent appointments to the senior leadership team. They have tackled weaker teaching and developed a highly effective team of good and excellent teachers. They know about the attainment and progress of all pupils based on analysis of school data. This includes knowledge about those pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium and how the funding has been spent to provide targeted teaching and improved resources to support their learning. They are also clear about the impact of the sports premium funding. Governors have a clear programme to visit classes to see how well pupils are learning and well-thought-out plans for their own improvement. Their findings are fed back to other governors. The governing body skilfully manages the budget and has successfully improved the school building. Governors monitor the performance of all staff and ensure that they have received appropriate training, for example, to ensure that pupils are kept safe from harm through safeguarding systems which meet current guidelines.

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	131519
Local authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	425851

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	444
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bob Brady
Headteacher	Andrea Williams
Date of previous school inspection	22 November 2011
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