

Abingdon Primary School

Abingdon Road, Reddish, Stockport, Cheshire, SK5 7ET

Inspection dates 3–4 December 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils of all abilities, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage prepares children well for their future learning. As a result, they are happy, keen to learn and inquisitive about the world around them.
- The quality of teaching is good. It is sometimes outstanding. Teachers motivate and engage pupils' interest through the good use of drama, role play and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to many aspects of pupils' learning.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe. Their health and emotional well-being are strongly developed through many opportunities to take responsibilities and to participate in sporting, artistic and musical activities.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide clear and rigorous leadership which is driving the school forwards. They are supported well by effective subject leaders and a knowledgeable governing body.
- As a result, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have improved well since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers sometimes miss the opportunity to deepen pupils' learning further, especially their comprehension skills in reading.
- Occasionally, teachers do not ensure pupils are working hard enough throughout the lesson.
- Sometimes, pupils have to listen for too long and receive too many instructions before they are actively engaged in learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons including two joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. The inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to classrooms.
- Discussions were held with a group of pupils, the vice-chair and other members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and members of staff including senior leaders and other leaders with particular responsibilities. Inspectors also heard pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of 19 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the outcomes from the school's consultations and several discussions with parents.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including information on pupils' current progress, the school's plans for improvement, the management of teachers' performance, the use of pupil premium funding, and documentation and records relating to pupils' behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Andrew Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maureen Coleman

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and receive the pupil premium has increased since the last inspection and is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, for children who are looked after by the local authority, and pupils whose parents are serving in the armed forces.
- The majority of pupils are from White British families. There is a small, but increasing, proportion of pupils from minority ethnic families and from Eastern Europe.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- 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 to further improve pupils' achievement, especially in reading, by :
 - deepening pupils' learning and improving their skills in comprehension and inference
 - ensuring pupils work as hard as they can during every lesson
 - making sure pupils are often actively involved in their own learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding which are generally well below those typical for their age, particularly in communication skills. They make good and better progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage in all areas of learning, especially their personal, social and communication skills. They are eager to learn and consequently well prepared for their future learning.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics throughout school. Standards are slightly below average and improving by the end of Year 2. They are average by the time they leave school in Year 6.
- The results of national tests for reading and grammar, spelling and punctuation were below average in 2013 for Year 6 and lower than the school's expectations. This was largely due to specific issues concerning one or two pupils in a small cohort. This had a significant impact on the overall results. The evidence from inspection shows that teacher assessment is accurate and the current Year 6 pupils are working at expected levels and higher in these subjects.
- Throughout school, pupils read with fluency and enjoyment. Pupils in Key Stage 1 tackle new and unfamiliar words well because they have an increasingly good understanding of letters and their sounds to help them. This is reflected in average results in national assessments for these skills.
- By Year 6, pupils' love of reading is evident in their knowledge of the work of different authors and the expression they put into their reading. However, a small number of pupils do not always fully comprehend what they are reading and understand the deeper meaning of the text.
- Pupils eligible for free school meals and supported by pupil premium funding make at least good progress. The school is narrowing the gap between the levels they reach and that of others. In many classes these pupils are working at levels similar to the expected levels for their age. This reflects the continually improving quality of teaching seen since the last inspection and the well-targeted use of specific funding for these pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those supported at school action and school action plus who have special educational needs progress well. They acquire effective reading, writing and number skills which enable them to tackle a wide range of subjects. They are supported well to become increasingly independent in their learning.
- The few pupils with English as an additional language also make similar progress to their peers. The focus on basic skills and the opportunities to apply them contribute to their successful achievement.
- Most-able pupils make good progress. They are often independent in their learning and generally use the skills they have learned well. This has contributed to good improvements in mathematics in the short time since the last inspection.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is now good. They are increasingly logical and systematic in their approach to problem-solving and retain number facts well.
- The effective promotion of equality of opportunity is reflected in the good progress made by the many different groups of pupils represented through school.
- Pupils write at length for many reasons throughout school. They are often very productive and take a pride in their written work. They make good use of dictionaries and thesaurus to increase their vocabulary and word power. Pupils' grammar, spelling and punctuation are accurate and at expected levels in most classes.
- Although pupils' achievement is good overall, they sometimes do not make the very best progress they could because the quality of teaching is not yet outstanding.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers' expectations are high. They expect at least good progress from all pupils and are quick to intervene if achievement looks like it might fall below this standard. In the best lessons, teachers share challenging targets and succinct pathways to success with pupils and encourage them to reach them with minimal support.
- Reading and writing skills are taught well through direct and sharply focused lessons with a strong concentration on basic skills. For example, Key Stage 1 teachers skilfully model how letters are written and how sounds blend together to make new words using a wide range of resources. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils of all ages to read aloud to adults and older pupils. They make good use of systematic reading schemes and a well-stocked library to promote good progress.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved well since the last inspection. Pupils are fully engaged in acting as investigators solving, for example, complex problems on producing algebraic equations for calculating the areas of complex shapes in Year 6. Lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to plan and organise their investigations which has a positive impact on learning, especially for the most able.
- Teachers place a strong emphasis on clear and accurate speech and provide many opportunities for pupils to engage in role play, talk partners, hot seating and drama. This helps all pupils improve their reading and writing skills and has a significant impact on several children who start school with speech and language difficulties.
- Teachers make good use of attractive displays of key information and pupils' work as points of reference for further learning in literacy and numeracy. They also use ICT well to motivate and inform pupils.
- Teaching assistants and other adults, including students and volunteers, are deployed well to support all pupils. All teaching assistants are well trained in a wide range of specific teaching programmes and make a valuable contribution to the progress made by all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Staff make good use of a wide range of homework activities to both improve pupils' basic skills such as reading and to give them exciting opportunities to apply them through topic research and investigations. There is an increasingly good involvement of parents in their children's learning.
- Teachers use marking and feedback for pupils constructively. They guide pupils to the next steps in their learning and efficiently address misconceptions and wrong answers.
- Some opportunities are missed, particularly through the questions teachers ask, to help pupils think more deeply about what they are reading or learning and further develop their critical and comprehension skills.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not maintain a strong pace of learning throughout the lesson. When pupils start individual or group work teachers do not always ensure that they make a crisp start to their work and work within tight time limits.
- On a few occasions, teachers introduce work first to the whole class and then explain tasks to each group in turn, rather than let some of them follow written instructions and start work for themselves. As a result, some pupils are not actively enough involved in their own learning throughout the lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well and take good care of each other. They make a good contribution to the positive and friendly learning environment through their roles as school councillors by listening and acting on the views of their friends.
- The large majority of pupils are punctual and their attendance is now average. The school has taken strong and successful action since the last inspection, in close partnership with parents, to significantly reduce the number of pupils who are regularly absent.

- The staff's consistent and thorough promotion of the school's 'Values', which are displayed in the entrance way, also contributes to pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour. They are a key focus in motivating and thought-provoking assemblies.
- Pupils say they feel safe because they are well cared for by teachers and other adults. They say that bullying seldom happens and school records confirm this. They have a good understanding of different types of bullying including internet safety. If bullying takes place, pupils are confident it will be quickly dealt with by staff.
- Adults establish good relationships with a number of pupils who find managing their own behaviour difficult. The teachers and support staff provide effective strategies for helping them to improve their own behaviour and emotional well-being. As a result, incidents of poor behaviour, including racial incidents, are rare.
- Pupils enjoy school. They have positive attitudes to work and want to do well. They are keen to answer questions and offer their opinions. Parents and staff express very positive views on their children's behaviour and the good relationships throughout the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is not outstanding because, very occasionally, they do not show enthusiasm and passion for their learning, especially when the teaching is not challenging enough.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's clear vision and ambition for the school are fully shared by all staff, governing body and parents. There is a continuous pursuit of high standards in all aspects of the school's work. This is evident in the constantly improving environment for learning and good quality policies, procedures and communication to parents and pupils.
- Rigorous assessment systems underpin the good and improving quality of teaching and learning and support the systematic role of senior leaders and the governing body in all aspects of school improvement. As a result, self-evaluation is accurate and the school is aware that the few inconsistencies in the quality of teaching are yet to be fully addressed to improve achievement further.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior staff provide good role models to their colleagues and are skilled in assessing the quality of teaching and setting challenging targets for teachers to aspire to. Subject leaders, some of whom are quite new to their roles, are passionate and thorough in their work. This has contributed to improvements in achievement in mathematics and pupils' attendance since the last inspection.
- The school receives good support from the local authority. The school has, for example, been involved in, and taken a lead role, in work with other schools to identify and promote features of outstanding teaching.
- Staff are held accountable for the progress their pupils make and have to meet stringent criteria in order to achieve the next salary level.
- The management of the performance of teaching assistants and provision of good quality training have a significant impact on the learning of all groups of pupils, particularly those in receipt of pupil premium funding.
- A key factor in improving learning is the development of the curriculum. Initiatives to provide intensive support for pupils whose reading or mathematics work falls below expected levels are helping drive up standards. Pupils' reading, writing and mathematics work is skilfully interwoven through different subjects. For example, pupils applied their measuring skills and knowledge of area and capacity in their historical and design and technology work on air raid shelters.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted. There is a good range of sporting, artistic and musical events and clubs for all pupils to participate in and these enrich their health and well-being. A clear policy for effective use of new sports development funding to broaden these experiences and develop teachers' skills is in place although it is too soon to measure its impact.
- The school tackles any very rare issues of discrimination well and promotes equality of opportunity.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is led and managed well. It is well informed through detailed headteacher's reports and detailed analysis of pupils' progress. Governors are committed to continually enhancing of their own skills and becoming even more rigorous in the checks they make when visiting the school. They ask challenging questions of the senior leadership to ensure all decisions are based on firm foundations. They ensure that financial resources are efficiently managed and know how this impacts on children's achievement. Governors see that targets to improve the performance of staff are reviewed carefully and that teachers' pay is linked to how well children are doing. They ensure that safeguarding meets statutory requirements and are built on accurate record keeping.

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	106074
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	430525

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	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Revill
Headteacher	Alison Naismith
Date of previous school inspection	25 September 2012
Telephone number	0161 4804531
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Email address	headteacher@abingdon.stockport.sch.uk

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