

# Abbey Hill Primary & Nursery

Abbey Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Nottingham, NG17 7NZ

## Inspection dates

25–26 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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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 achieve well throughout the school.
- They reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6, which represents good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because the staff give them very helpful, regular support.
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership.
- Senior and subject leaders check the school's work thoroughly and are driving improvements in achievement and teaching quickly.
- The governors' own checks of the school's work enable them to both challenge its actions and help it to become even more effective.
- Teaching is consistently good and a small proportion is outstanding.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and try hard in their learning. They get on well with each other so that learning takes place in a happy environment.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school and trust the staff to help them with any concerns they have.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Work for most-able pupils does not consistently enable them to develop the necessary skills to reach the higher levels of attainment.
- Pupils do not have regular enough chances to develop their understanding of what they read.
- Pupils do not all have a secure knowledge of times tables. They do not have regular chances to practise their numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Marking does not regularly tell pupils how to improve their work, or check that the advice given has been taken.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons of which three were observed jointly with the headteacher or the acting deputy headteacher.
- They attended an assembly, listened to pupils reading and watched pupils being supported in small groups.
- The inspectors spoke with many pupils during lessons and break times. One inspector met formally with a group of pupils to find out their views about their school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other senior and subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including information about the standards and progress of pupils, the school's improvement planning, pupils' work, and policies to safeguard pupils.
- In carrying out the inspection, the inspectors took into account the 28 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 16 responses made by staff to the questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Catherine Garrett

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller in size compared to other primary schools of its type. The number on roll is increasing.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for looked-after children, those from armed service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is well-above average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been several changes to staffing over recent years.
- The school works in partnership with the Kirkby College Family of Schools, which is made up of the College, five primary schools and a school for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs.
- Abbey Hill School provides a range of support to local schools to help them improve the quality of teaching and, for example, to help them to develop the role and effectiveness of teaching assistants. The literacy leader trains teachers from other schools in the teaching of reading.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently outstanding and raises the standards that pupils reach by making sure that:
  - most-able pupils are always given sufficiently difficult work that enables them to develop the necessary thinking to reach the higher levels of attainment
  - marking in all lessons tells pupils how to improve their work and teachers check that the advice they give has been taken
  - pupils get very regular opportunities to develop their understanding of what they read and to practise their numeracy skills in other learning
  - pupils have a secure knowledge of times tables.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school because teaching is good and pupils want to learn. The standards they reach by the end of Year 6 are broadly average.
- The children join the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are well below those typically found. They are particularly low in speaking and listening and in reading and writing. By the end of Reception, although a below average proportion reach a good level of development, the children make good progress from their starting points because teaching is consistently good. In and out doors, there are many opportunities for them to develop lots of different skills. Every day, resources and activities encourage them to be curious, develop confidence in working with other children and to practise speaking and listening.
- In the Year 1 national check on phonics (the sounds that letters make), the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard is in line with that found nationally. Pupils sound out letters and groups of letters accurately and most use this method when they are reading alone or to a teacher. Many pupils in Year 1 are able to write short, simple sentences and use capital letters and full stops.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics and this continues to Year 6. Although standards dipped last year, pupils of all levels achieved well compared to similar pupils nationally. Standards in reading, which are lower than in writing and mathematics, are improving at a good rate because of very regular and effective support from teaching assistants for pupils who are working below the expected levels for their age. However, some pupils do not have sufficient understanding of what they read to achieve as well as they could.
- Pupils learn well in mathematics and are increasingly using the skills they have to solve problems and to build on their learning. Learning does sometimes slow down when pupils struggle to remember or work out their times tables and they do not get the same regular chances as in literacy to practise their numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Different groups of pupils make good progress through the school. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported specifically and well so that they learn quickly.
- Although the standards achieved by pupils supported by the pupil premium were below average last year in reading and writing by two terms, they were above in mathematics by a term. Both then and now, the progress of these pupils is good. The school uses the funding very appropriately to help this very large group of pupils to develop more secure literacy and numeracy skills and, for example, to provide activities at break and lunchtime for them. There were too few pupils last year not supported by the pupil premium to make a comparison with those who were.
- More-able pupils achieve very well when teaching really makes them think. However, books and evidence from lesson observations show that the tasks provided for them do not consistently enable them to develop the skills that they need to reach higher levels of attainment.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- Pupils like learning and respond to the teachers' high expectations of their work and attitudes. In

every lesson they write neatly and present their work well. Starter activities enable pupils to recall and practise what they have recently learnt and consolidate their learning.

- Pupils have many opportunities to write at length, not just in literacy, but in topic work. Their books show that these opportunities are broadening their skills and making them think more about spelling, and writing powerful sentences.
- Pupils know what they have to learn and staff check their progress and understanding regularly as they work alone and in small groups. In a good numeracy lesson, a teaching assistant quickly realised that some pupils did not understand learning about balancing numbers and adapted her teaching to make sure they could learn quickly.
- Teachers use lots of different ways to make learning interesting. They choose resources carefully and, as a result, pupils concentrate hard on what they are doing and show pride in producing the best work they can. In a Year 2 geography lesson, pupils used model bricks to build a city and in a Year 3 topic about the Victorians, they were fascinated by artefacts from that time.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs get helpful support from teaching assistants who know exactly what they need to learn and explain very clearly and in small steps.
- Pupils read very often – books are everywhere – and are increasingly excited by the good choice of books which interest boys and girls. The teacher's excellent reading of a story to the children in Reception and her questioning gave them every opportunity to practise phonics and their speaking and listening skills, to offer their thoughts, think of alternatives for particular words and empathise with the characters. Further up the school, pupils do not have sufficiently regular opportunities to develop their understanding of what they read.
- Although marking always tells pupils what they have learnt well, it is only occasionally that teachers tell them what they need to do to improve their work and check that their advice has been taken.

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

- The pupils like their school which is full of their work and achievements and is bright, colourful and beautifully maintained. They keep the areas in which they learn clean and tidy because it is the right thing to do and they like learning in the very pleasant environment.
- The behaviour of pupils is good, both in lessons and around the school. They get on well together, both at work and play. Pupils, staff and parents agree. Behaviour has improved since the previous inspection and has been supported by the behaviour management policy which pupils can see is sensible and which they follow.
- The school gives pupils a range of opportunities to develop their confidence and personal skills. They carry out conscientiously the responsibilities they are given. Pupils enjoy helping to serve lunch, acting as playground monitors, reading buddies or representing other pupils as school council representatives.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe because the building is secure and also because they are confident that the school will look after them. They say that they do have disagreements and there is a small amount of 'falling out' and bullying, which the school does not tolerate and which is dealt with quickly.
- From Nursery onwards, the children learn well to share and care for others. Pupils know it is

important to treat others fairly and equally. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is promoted well because in assemblies and in lessons they learn how others live and their beliefs. Learning becomes even more relevant through their link with children in The Gambia.

- Attendance is average and increasing. The staff work determinedly to raise pupils' attendance rates, for example through displaying them in corridors and classrooms to show the importance that they give them.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The school's improvement continues, led by the strong and purposeful leadership of the headteacher, in this close-knit school. She leads the school very effectively because she knows its strengths and how it needs to improve. She has taken hard decisions, including about staffing, to strengthen the school. As a result, achievement, teaching, behaviour and safety, and leadership and management are all good and parents support what the school does.
- The key to the school's improvement is primarily because everything is planned and checked carefully and the staff do things in the same way. The proof of this is seen in pupils' work, which is presented and laid out in exactly the same way across the school. The staff also use the behaviour policy consistently so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them. Leadership and management at all levels are driving improvement well because leaders, both at senior and subject leader level, have clear responsibilities and accountability for their areas and a good knowledge of the school's performance.
- The leadership of teaching is good. Teaching is observed formally and informally, and regularly. Leaders make accurate judgements about how well teaching promotes pupils' progress. Teachers' performance targets, two out of three of which are whole-school targets, and which can be measured, have contributed significantly to the good quality of teaching, because they focus on the areas the school most needs to improve. Subject leaders' plans also reflect the areas which the school needs to improve.
- Most learning is planned to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy standards. It includes phonics and guided reading which run through the school. Additional reading, writing and number support, three times a week, is given to those pupils whose skills are not secure.
- Most pupils have equal chances of success because work gives them the right level of challenge, although the most able pupils are not served as consistently well. Increasingly, pupils are able to practise these skills in other subjects and pupils see their relevance to life and other learning.
- Learning is broad and supports the development of pupils' personal and social skills as well as their academic knowledge and understanding and their enjoyment. After-school clubs and visits strengthen the quality and diversity of learning, including cookery and martial arts.
- The new sports funding is widening the choice of sporting activities and equipping staff with the skills to teach them well. More pupils are participating in the new activities, which the school is also using to reinforce the importance of having a healthy lifestyle.
- The school has worked hard to win the trust of the parents and values their involvement in the school and in their children's education. It offers workshops for parents to help them support their children's learning and family-learning activities such as craft workshops. The senior leadership team stand at the school entrance every morning before school starts to make sure that parents have the chance to speak to them.
- The local authority has provided support for teaching and leadership to the school, which has

helped to improve staff's skills. Increasingly it is Abbey Hill Primary School which offers help to other schools.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is well organised and has good systems to check the school's work. It receives a lot of information from the headteacher about the school's performance, and asks probing questions, such as about the rate of progress and staffing needs. Along with the headteacher, the governors have very high expectations of the school's work. Their strength is that they check the school's work for themselves, through a programme of monitoring, including meeting regularly with subject leaders. Their meetings are held in a different classroom each time, where they look at the displays and assess the work in pupils' exercise books. Governors have undertaken very regular training and their audit of their skills shows that they are well able to help the school become even better.
- The governors show good understanding of performance management procedures. They reward staff who achieve their targets and make sure support is given to any who do not meet them all.
- The school's finances are sound. The governors make sure that safeguarding procedures meet national requirements.

## 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>	136006
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	441396

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>	212
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Ball
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Chambers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 October 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01623 484512
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