

Aberford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

School Lane, Aberford, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS25 3BU

Inspection dates 30 April 2014–1 May 2014

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.

- Aberford is a small school that has high expectations of staff and pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well. Most children begin school with skills that are generally typical for their age, but leave Year 6 with standards that are above the national average.
- The quality of the teaching is good. This enables pupils to make good progress from their starting points. Pupils are taught to use different types of thinking skills which sharpen their learning well. Writing skills are taught well throughout the school.
- Pupils' progress is checked regularly and good feedback given to pupils through marking in their workbooks.
- The headteacher has a significant impact in improving the quality of teaching throughout the school. Her relentless drive is the main reason for the recently significantly improved standards that pupils reach.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safeguarding procedures are robust and children say they feel very safe.
- The behaviour of pupils is also good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. The positive atmosphere between staff and parents at the start of the school day continues into school with pupils.
- Governors actively check and measure the performance of the school and provide excellent support as well as challenge to school leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Some pupils lose valuable learning time when they are kept waiting for others to catch up.
- Teachers do not always have enough opportunities to observe each other's practice in order to improve their own teaching further.
- Pupils' understanding of what they need to aim for in their work is still at an early stage.
- The progress of pupils in Key Stage 1 is not as rapid as that in Key Stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by one inspector.
- He observed 8 lessons or parts of lessons, 4 of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- He listened to pupils read and looked at their work in their books.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and different groups of people involved in the school. These included pupils, parents, members of the governing body, members of the teaching staff and a representative from the local authority.
- He took into account the results of the school's recent parental surveys, the 46 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 20 staff questionnaires.
- A range of documents was scrutinised, including plans for improvement, records of the school's checks on pupils' and teachers' performance, safeguarding and attendance documents, minutes of meetings of the governing body and school policies.

Inspection team

Faheem Chishti, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Aberford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a much smaller than average primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is well below average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is much lower than that found nationally. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There is a before- and after-school club on the premises which is managed and run by an external provider.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding, and thereby increase the progress that all pupils make, especially in Key Stage 1, by:
 - ensuring that the best use of time is made in lessons so that pupils are kept involved with their learning at all times
 - ensuring that more opportunities are available for staff to observe and learn from the best practice to improve their own teaching
 - ensuring that pupils are aware of their long-term learning aims and what they need to do to achieve these.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start in the Reception class with the skills and knowledge broadly expected for their age. They make good progress so that by the time they join Year 1, they are well prepared for their future learning and achieve standards which are above those typical for their age.
- Although progress is not as fast in Key Stage 1, it still continues at a good pace with pupils attaining standards above the national average, particularly in reading and writing.
- This pattern of improvement accelerates in Key Stage 2 where rapid improvements show large pockets of outstanding progress. Current inspection evidence shows that pupils are likely to do much better in national tests this year than in previous years and are, therefore, set to have a three-year trend in improvements.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. Reading skills are taught effectively using phonics (learning letters and the sounds they make). The Year 1 screening check shows pupils' reading is comparable with the national average. Older pupils enjoy reading and read with confidence. Standards at the end of Year 6 are now above the national average.
- Writing is a strength of the school. The majority of pupils currently make progress better than that expected of them. Although standards fluctuate from year to year, most pupils reach standards that are above the national average.
- The progress of pupils in mathematics is also good. Most pupils achieve above average standards and many make progress better than that expected of them.
- The standards reached by pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are behind those of their peers in school by about a term in reading and in writing, and broadly similar in mathematics. However, the gap between the standards they reach and those of others in the school is closing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive effective support so that they make good progress. Their progress is very similar to that of other pupils in the school because planning and teaching are closely matched to pupils' prior attainment and because of the extra teaching provided by support staff who check their progress acutely. This reflects the school's commitment to ensuring that every pupil is given an equal opportunity and that discrimination of any sort is not tolerated.

The quality of teaching is good

- Evidence gathered from a range of sources shows that the quality of teaching over time is good. There is an excellent rapport with pupils and their learning needs are understood very well.
- Pupils are usually taught in classrooms with a range of abilities and ages. However, work is well matched to pupils' needs. As a result, tasks are usually hard enough to present pupils with a good degree of challenge.
- The teaching of writing is particularly good with a strong emphasis on the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling. For example, pupils' workbooks show that pupils are asked to practise specific spellings again and to re-check their own work and improve their sentences. This is done in a skilful and purposeful manner.
- The teaching of reading and mathematics is also similarly good, often using techniques to improve pupils' thinking skills. For example, good use was made of logic, facts and information - in a Key Stage 2 classroom to work out the perimeter of shapes.
- Good use is made of role play, often with staff setting the scene and taking part. For example during a Key Stage 2 activity, pupils' attention was gripped by the teacher skilfully acting in role as an 8-year-old girl fleeing from the slums of a favela in Brazil. This resulted in all pupils making outstanding progress, with deep thought and empathy for the child.
- Pupils' workbooks show that pupils' work is marked regularly and extensively. This is the case in

both writing books as well as mathematics books. Pupils are given good guidance on how to improve their work and usually are given ample time to do so. The most-able pupils in particular thrive on comments, often engaging with a written dialogue with their teacher about their work.

- Although pupils know how to improve their work in the short term through discussions with their teachers, they do not always know their long-term aim and targets, or the steps they need to complete to achieve these. The school, however, is aware of this and work in this area has begun.
- Activities provided for the most-able pupils are well planned and usually challenge these pupils well. Pupils often work in groups or pairs to investigate problems or work on shared writing activities. For example, during a Key Stage 1 activity, the most-able pupils tried to identify insects and mini-beasts from a description written by their peers. This challenged their deduction skills, but also improved their descriptive language well.
- The quality and range of activities in the Reception class have improved with the appointment of new staff. Children have access to activities pitched at the right level for them. Their progress is checked carefully. Children are taught in very small groups which ensures that there is always an adult on hand to prompt and question children about their learning. The outdoor area is shared with the rest of the school as a playground, but it provides sufficient stimulus for learning and often replicates the interesting experiences children enjoy indoors.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good because all adults, and particularly skilled teaching assistants, ensure that pupils receive support at just the right level to help them succeed in the tasks set. The progress of these pupils is checked regularly by all staff to ensure that activities set for these pupils are having a positive effect.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to questionnaires or met with the inspector are very happy with the quality of teaching experienced by their children. They feel that their children enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school. "The best thing about this school is its teachers" was the first comment that pupils disclosed when asked about the school. This is a typical comment and is supported by observations between adults and children throughout the inspection. Adults care about each child, ensure that learning is purposeful and fun and listen carefully to all their concerns and questions. Attendance is consistently above the national average.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is also good.
- Pupils have a sound understanding of different types of bullying, including those posed by using the Internet. They say that they feel safe and well cared for.
- Pupils often take leadership roles in school such as helping at lunchtimes, in assemblies, in the school office, school library and at playtimes. The role of 'playground pals' though is in its infancy, as is the number of other opportunities for older pupils to help younger pupils in school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. Paired and group work is used well in allowing good opportunities for pupils to learn from each other effectively in lessons.
- The views expressed by parents confirm that they feel the school is a happy, safe place and that it ensures that pupils are well behaved. Parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire and those that met with the inspector expressed positive views about pupils' behaviour and safety.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has had a significantly positive impact on the school's work in recent months and years. This has resulted in above-average standards in reading, writing and in mathematics.
- The rigorous monitoring of teaching as well as pupil progress and measures put in place to

tackle any underperformance, have resulted this year with all year groups making at least good progress.

- Middle leaders have a good understanding of teaching throughout the school and monitor their subjects well. They are involved with observing lessons alongside other senior leaders. This, coupled with the school's excellent use of information about pupils, enables leaders to quickly identify weaknesses and put measures in place to tackle them swiftly.
- Teachers' performance is carefully and rigorously checked and clear guidance is given on how to improve further. Teachers' individual targets are closely linked to accelerating pupils' progress.
- The rich curriculum allows pupils lots of opportunities for writing across different subjects. It places a high emphasis on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly with music and the creative arts. For example, whole-school singing assemblies not only promote high quality breathing and singing techniques, but also bring fun and enjoyment to the school.
- The school uses its sport funding allocation well to pay for the services of sports coaches who deliver lessons in physical education (PE) and provide extra after-school clubs. This has given pupils a greater awareness of healthier lifestyles as well as quality professional development for teachers who take this opportunity to learn from sports coaches to improve their own teaching of PE. Lessons are quite lengthy, usually well over an hour, but of a high quality. One Year 6 boy commented "last week's dance lesson of around seventy minutes, felt like ten minutes!"
- The local authority provides good support for this good and rapidly improving school. The school also takes the opportunity for extra support, such as work to further improve the effectiveness of the governing body.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- A very knowledgeable governing body has the relevant skills to provide sufficient support and challenge to school leaders. Members have up-to-date knowledge of pupils' achievements and have a good understanding of the key areas for improvement. They are aware of the progress made by different groups of pupils in school. They make good use of school data including the current progress of all pupils. They use performance management well to reward good teaching and to tackle aspects of weaker teaching.
- Governors hold the headteacher to account and continually challenge the school to do even better. All aspects of school improvement plans are closely linked to named governors who monitor actions in a systematic and rigorous manner.
- The extra training provided by the local authority has allowed governors to challenge school leaders to check on individual children's performance more acutely.
- Additional funding is used effectively by leaders to improve results for pupils. Governors measure the impact of initiatives well. For example, they have checked closely the effect on pupils' learning of additional funding such as for primary sport and the pupil premium.
- The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures meet current 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

Unique reference number	107985
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	442221

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Suzanne Phillips
Headteacher	Philippa Boulding
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2012
Telephone number	0113 281 3302
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