

Mead Road, Gloucester, GL4 5YS

**Inspection dates** 7–8 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Pupils' attainment and progress declined after the last inspection.
- Attainment by the end of Year 6 in 2013 was well below average in writing and mathematics and below in reading. These pupils made inadequate progress.
- While improving, pupils' progress is not consistently good in all year groups.
- Pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics trails behind that in reading.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage requires improvement because children are not achieving well in all areas of learning and girls do better than the boys.
- Teaching has not been strong enough over time to promote good progress for most pupils.
- Teachers do not always set work at the right level of difficulty for different groups of pupils and so it can be too easy or too difficult for them.
- Mathematics teaching does not develop pupils' problem solving skills sufficiently well.
- Some subject leaders are very new to their posts and have not had sufficient time to have had an impact on improving provision and raising pupils' achievement.

### The school has the following strengths:

- The headteacher, staff, governors and the local authority are taking positive action to raise pupils' achievement and to improve teaching.
- Attainment has recently risen to average levels in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Most pupils are now making good progress in reading.
- Pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils show consideration and respect for others.
- Procedures to ensure that pupils are safe are effective.
- Attendance is above average.
- Pupils feel safe and are well looked after by staff.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in most classes. A number of lessons were seen jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Time was spent analysing pupils' work and the information about pupils' attainment and progress.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other staff, a representative from the local authority, governors, parents, carers and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 91 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, correspondence from parents and carers and questionnaires completed by 44 members of staff.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents including school policies, safeguarding procedures and the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning.

## Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jenny Batelen	Additional Inspector
Felix Rayner	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Abbeymead is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most of the pupils are White British.
- The children in the Reception classes attend full time.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with 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.
- A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has experienced a considerable turnover of teachers in recent years.

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

- Strengthen teaching so that all groups of pupils make at least good progress by:
  - ensuring that all teachers set work that is at the right level for pupils so that it is not too hard for some or too easy for others
  - making sure that learning activities in the early years promote good progress in all areas of learning and for boys
  - improving pupils' handwriting and presentation so that they are consistently good in all classes
  - improving pupils' ability to apply their numeracy skills in solving mathematical problems.
- Fully implement plans to develop the skills of new subject leaders so they are fully effective in checking performance and improving the quality of provision and outcomes in their areas of responsibility.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not been effective enough in maintaining and building on the good achievement of pupils and the good teaching identified in the previous inspection report.
- Pupils' achievement declined after the last inspection to its lowest point in 2013 when attainment by the end of Year 6 was well below average and pupils made inadequate progress. A higher-than-usual turnover of teachers led to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching which contributed to this decline.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff have shown determination in raising pupils' achievement and in improving teaching. Pupils are now making faster progress and the underachievement of the past has been arrested.
- Some key subject leaders are new to their post and have not yet had time to have had a full impact in improving the quality of teaching and achievement in their areas of responsibility. There are clear plans to develop the skills of new leaders which need to be fully implemented.
- School leaders systematically review the school's performance and report the findings clearly to staff, governors and parents and carers. Leaders and staff have a clear overview of the school's strengths and areas in need of improvement. Leaders have taken effective action to bring about much needed improvement.
- The development of teaching is given good attention by school leaders. The quality of teaching is effectively checked by senior leaders and there is an good programme of support and training to improve teachers' skills. Arrangements for teachers' performance management are clear and fully incorporate the Teachers' Standards. The targets set to improve teachers' skills are closely linked to pupils' progress and to priorities in the school's plan for raising achievement. New teachers receive effective guidance and support.
- The school provides an appropriate range of subjects and topics. Pupils enjoy these and the additional activities, such as clubs, sport and educational visits. All pupils have full and equal access to the activities on offer. The school promotes equality of opportunity, fosters good relations and tackles discrimination well. The implementation of new assessment arrangements is at an early stage.
- The primary school sports funding is used successfully to promote pupils' physical development and to extend their opportunities for sport. Visiting specialist coaches provide good quality teaching for pupils and training for staff. The school has established productive partnerships with local rugby and football clubs. Opportunities have been provided for pupils to try new sports such as archery, fencing and climbing.
- Leaders and staff promote good behaviour and ensure pupils' safety. Safeguarding arrangements are robust. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength. Core values such as empowerment, friendship, honesty, respect for others and a sense of responsibility are fostered throughout the school. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Additional funding is used properly to provide eligible pupils with extra support, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The funding and support are having a positive impact on these pupils' progress.
- The local authority has an accurate overview of the school's performance. It has provided good advice and support in assisting the school's journey of improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body have a clear overview of the school's performance because of the accurate information provided by senior leaders and the local authority.
  - Governors are fully aware of the fall in pupils' achievement and have provided effective challenge and support in helping the school to improve.
  - The headteacher provides the governors with clear information about the quality of teaching and how it is improving. Governors understand requirements relating to the management of staff performance and the importance of promotion and salary increases being linked to pupils' progress.
  - Governors ensure that additional funding is used wisely and check the impact of spending on pupils' progress. They check that the school is promoting values and qualities that prepare pupils for life in a global and modern society.
  - Governors ensure that all safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Throughout the school, pupils take a keen interest in their learning. They focus well on their work and most show good levels concentration. Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- The school's records of incidents show that behaviour is usually good. Pupils show a clear understanding of bullying and the different forms it might take, such as name calling and cyber bullying. Pupils told an inspector that bullying was rare in the school. They felt sure that staff would deal swiftly with bullying should it occur.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils are courteous, friendly and show consideration for others. They demonstrate positive qualities such as fairness, honesty, responsibility and tolerance. Pupils show a good understanding of people's different beliefs, cultures and faiths.
- Pupils are keen to take on positions of responsibility. For example, lunch leaders in Years 5 and 6 support the younger pupils in the playground and sports leaders promote physical activities.
- Attendance fell to average levels in 2013. There are good systems to check, celebrate and promote good attendance. Attendance has risen to securely above average levels because of the school's positive action.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe at school, at home and in the community.
- The school successfully promotes equal opportunity and good relationships. As pupils commented, 'Everyone is welcome here.'
- Most parents and carers who completed the online survey stated that their child is happy at school, feels safe and is well looked after. These positive views reflect the findings of the inspection.

**The quality of teaching requires improvement**

- Teaching has not been strong enough over time to promote good progress for all groups of pupils. Weaknesses in teaching have had an adverse impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Staff changes have led to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in recent years.
- There are times when teachers do not set work at the right level of difficulty for pupils. When this happens, pupils do not make the progress they should because tasks are either too easy for some or too difficult for others. Teaching is improving because of the decisive action taken by leaders but a few weaknesses remain.
- Mathematics teaching does not develop pupils' skills in numeracy sufficiently well. As a result their ability to solve mathematical problems is diminished.
- Improvements to teaching over the last year are improving pupils' learning in lessons and their progress over time.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment has been refined and is now more accurate. Most teachers use this information well to plan their lessons and to set suitably challenging work for different groups of pupils. Pupils' interest is sustained and they make good progress in acquiring new knowledge and deepening their understanding of ideas.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and to check how well they have understood the work.
- Teachers provide clear guidance and instructions to help pupils learn. Constructive feedback by teachers helps move them on to the next steps of their learning.
- The marking of pupils' work is effective. Teachers provide praise for good work and helpful comments to guide improvement. Pupils know how well they are doing and know what they need to do to improve.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has been strengthened and pupils are making good progress in developing early reading skills. Teachers use interesting novels to inspire pupils to read and to promote discussion. Novels and stories are often used successfully to promote pupils' writing skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 wrote vivid character descriptions of Charlie from Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.
- Teaching assistants are usually well deployed and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those who need extra help with language, literacy and numeracy.

**The achievement of pupils**

requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment and progress declined after the previous inspection. By the end of Year 6 in 2013, attainment was well below average in writing and mathematics and below average in reading. The proportions of Year 6 pupils attaining the higher levels were well below average in reading and mathematics but closer to average in writing. This year group made inadequate progress.
- Senior leaders and staff have taken positive action to raise pupils' achievement. Pupils are now making faster progress but it is not yet consistently good in all classes, particularly in mathematics and writing. Nevertheless, the underachievement of the past has been arrested.
- The Year 6 results in 2014 were much better than in 2013 with better results in reading and mathematics than in writing. Effective steps are being taken to tackle writing and attainment is rising so that it is closer to that in reading and mathematics.
- With improved teaching, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher levels by the end of Year 6 increased in 2014. However, there are some occasions in lessons when work is not sufficiently demanding to extend the most able.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is improving because of better teaching and some well-focused support.
- The Year 6 pupils supported by additional funding in 2013 attained less well than the other pupils in writing. They were about four months behind their peers. These pupils attained similar standards to the others in mathematics and higher standards in reading. More recent data supplied by the school show that pupils supported by the funding are doing well and are attaining as well as other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Most pupils are now making good progress in reading. The results of the Year 1 phonics check improved in 2014 and were securely above average. Older pupils apply reading skills well to find useful information for their topic work. Pupils clearly enjoy the range of books available for them to choose.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is improving because of the school's actions. They write for a range of purposes. Their punctuation, grammar and spelling are more accurate. However, handwriting and presentation are not consistently good in all classes. Pupils use their writing skills well in other subjects and topics. For example, in history, Year 6 pupils made good progress writing a discussion text, 'Who was responsible for the sinking of the Titanic?' This contained well-argued points and interesting facts.
- Pupils are making fast progress in mathematics. They show clear knowledge and understanding of how to make calculations and carry out mathematical operations. However their practical numeracy skills are not well developed.

**The early years provision**

requires improvement

- Children enter the Reception classes with levels of knowledge, understanding and skills below those typical for their age.
- The early years provision requires improvement because children are not making consistently good progress in all the areas of learning. In the main, boys do not achieve as well as the girls.
- Teachers do not always ensure that the learning activities are at the right level of difficulty for different groups. Some activities are not challenging enough to fully engage the children and to help ensure that they make good progress.
- Adults establish positive relationships with the children. The children feel safe, grow in confidence and relate well to adults and to other children. Children share resources, take turns and show consideration for others. Children's behaviour is good in the Reception classes.
- There is a new leader of early years. She has quickly gained an accurate understanding of the strengths of the early years provision and which areas need improvement. Action to raise achievement has begun but it is too soon to see the impact.

## 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>	115601
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	448674

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	417
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Edd Parry
<b>Headteacher</b>	Julian Pass
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6–7 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01452 371710
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