

Abbotskerswell Primary School

Abbotskerswell, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 5NS

Inspection dates 13–14 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Standards have risen substantially since the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is above average, and well above average in English and mathematics.
- All groups of pupils achieve well, including the most able pupils, the very few disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Children in the early years are taught well and make good progress, so that they are prepared very well for Year 1.
- Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection and is now good. Teachers mark pupils' work well and show them clearly what they need to do to improve.
- Teaching assistants work very closely with teachers and provide very effective support for pupils in danger of underachieving.
- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher is fully supported by staff and striking improvements have been achieved during the last two years. The school is very innovative in some of its practices, for example in assessment.
- Governors do outstanding work both supporting the school and holding it to account. They have been most effective in assisting the school's improvement.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils love all aspects of the school and are very supportive of each other. They feel very safe and well cared for.
- The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and strongly contributes to their understanding of British values.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in writing is not as rapid as in reading and mathematics. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' ability to write without their direct support, particularly when working on topics outside of English lessons.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting and how they should present their work are not always high enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning in five lessons, taught by four teachers. Three of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. The inspector also visited sessions in which teaching assistants were teaching small groups of pupils. The inspector heard pupils read and looked in detail at pupils' work.
- The inspector held meetings with pupils and staff. He also met four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local education authority.
- The inspector took account of 28 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils' current attainment and progress, the minutes of governing body meetings and the school's account of its own effectiveness and its improvement plans. The inspector also scrutinised information relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

John Laver, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Abbotskerswell Primary is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- All pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is close to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is half the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority. There are very few of these pupils and none in some year groups.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There are three mixed-age classes. Children in Reception attend full time in a class alongside Year 1 and some Year 2 pupils.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress in writing by ensuring that:
 - teachers expect more writing of greater complexity from pupils in lessons other than English
 - teachers always expect pupils' work to be well written and presented to a high standard.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, very well supported by staff and governors, has brought about rapid and impressive change in the school since the previous inspection. There is now a culture in which all staff are committed to making the school good. Pupils' attainment, progress and standards of behaviour have all improved significantly, as has the quality of teaching.
- Subject leaders welcome the responsibility they now have for supporting colleagues, checking the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas and speeding up pupils' progress.
- Staff benefit from the excellent professional development provided by the local authority and through the school's close working relationship with other local schools. Teachers' improved expertise and confidence have been major reasons, for example, for pupils' higher achievement in mathematics.
- The headteacher checks the quality of teaching and learning systematically. This monitoring is always linked to the school's priorities for improvement, which are regularly reviewed. The school has limited funds for rewarding effective teaching, but all teachers and support staff know that they are accountable for the progress of pupils in their classes.
- The primary sports funding is used very effectively. For example, the school has bought specialist sports coaching for both pupils and staff; the inspector saw the positive impact of this in a dance lesson. The funding has also helped to support a good range of sports clubs and activities which have increased pupils' participation and enjoyment. There have been sporting successes in competitions against larger schools.
- A culture of equal opportunity for all pupils means that variations between the performance of different groups remain very small. There is no discrimination and the school confirms that there have been no incidents of homophobic or racist abuse or any serious bullying incidents for years.
- The high-quality curriculum links subjects together very effectively in a series of topics. These give pupils the opportunity to develop core skills such as literacy and numeracy in a variety of imaginative ways. For example, pupils' study of Egypt was enhanced by creating poetry about the River Nile. There is a very good range of out-of-school activities to enrich the curriculum.
- Together with other local schools, the headteacher and middle leaders have developed a system of assessment to complement the new National Curriculum which reveals high expectations of what all pupils should achieve. Pupils benefit directly from these inter-school links. For example, they use the computer expertise of the local secondary school.
- The school prepares pupils thoroughly for life in modern Britain and makes them very aware of British values. For example, older pupils discussed the concept of democracy during the recent general election. In addition, pupils have studied the different countries of the United Kingdom and some have visited the Houses of Parliament. Pupils also explore different faiths, such as Hinduism, as part of the school's strong emphasis on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Abbotskerswell is an outgoing school, which is further developing its links with a French school.
- For some time after the previous inspection, the local authority gave good support to the school to help it to improve standards. When that had proved successful, the local authority stepped back. However, the school has since bought in further support from the local authority on its own initiative in order to continue developing staff and governor expertise.
- The school fulfils all safeguarding requirements. All staff are fully acquainted with child protection procedures, and their training is regularly updated. The school involves parents closely in its attempts to raise awareness of possible safeguarding issues, for example through disseminating information about e-safety.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. This is evident from the school's surveys of their views, in their responses to the Parent View online survey and from conversations during the inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is highly effective and has made an outstanding contribution to school improvement since the previous inspection. Governors have undergone extensive training and are fully aware of their responsibilities both in supporting the school and holding its leaders to account. Governors come into school regularly. They visit lessons, talk to pupils, check the quality of pupils' work and regularly discuss progress and further plans for improvement with the headteacher, middle leaders and other staff. Governors, therefore, have an excellent understanding of the progress made by all groups of pupils in the school, and how this compares with pupils elsewhere. They also know how good the teaching is.
 - Governors have audited the impact of pupil premium funding on the progress of eligible pupils, and are aware of the positive impact of additional sports funding. They are fully trained in safeguarding

procedures, effectively supervise the performance management of staff and manage the headteacher's appraisal. They know how good teaching is rewarded and any underperformance tackled. Governors maintain active links with parents and the local community.

- As well as supporting all aspects of school life, governors have fully embraced the concept of challenging the leadership. For example, they ask the headteacher to explain and justify the many changes taking place in the school in areas such as the curriculum and assessment. Governors play an important part in the school's continuing success and ensuring that it has the capacity to improve further. The local authority is so impressed with the effectiveness of the governing body that it advertises Abbotskerswell as a model of excellent practice in governance to other schools in the area.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils, and almost all parents, agree that the school is a very calm and harmonious community in which adults and pupils get on very well together and act for the common good. School records confirm this very positive picture of behaviour.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent. Pupils want to learn, and several told the inspector that working in lessons was one of the best things about the school. They love coming to school, and attendance is above average. Older pupils said that although there are occasional examples of 'silliness' in class, these are few and far between, and are promptly dealt with.
- Pupils' behaviour is also excellent around the school. The school has different marked zones outside for lunchtime activities. These enable pupils to do a range of different things without interruption, whether they are boisterous sports, reading, chatting or creative activities.
- Older pupils enjoy responsibilities such as being on the school council or acting as play leaders for younger children.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about the range of activities outside lessons, and particularly the trips, including the biennial residential trip.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- The school has a reputation for being a very safe and caring environment in which staff know all pupils well and help them to flourish as individuals as well as teaching them. From talking to pupils, the inspector confirmed that this reputation is very well deserved. Parents commented on how their children feel very safe and well looked after.
- Pupils are very articulate when talking about what bullying means, and insisted that bullying is not a problem in the school. They also have an excellent understanding of the importance of the safe use of the internet. The school has given this a high priority, by providing a lot of information about the safe use of computers for parents as well as pupils.
- The school has recently employed a school counsellor who gives effective, additional support to those pupils who find some aspects of their school experience challenging.
- The breakfast club has a good take-up and provides a healthy and popular start to the school day for a significant number of pupils. The pupils concerned feel much safer in school and as a result have shown improved attendance and particularly strong improvements in their progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. This is confirmed by the headteacher's records, assessment data which show pupils' improved progress and pupils' work over time. Parents also believe that teaching is now good and leads to pupils' good progress.
- One of the strengths of the teaching is the good assessment of pupils' work, especially in English. Teachers mark work accurately and show pupils clearly where it can be improved. They usually make sure that pupils respond to their feedback.
- Pupils know and value their targets, and the inspector saw targets being used in lessons as well as in pupils' books. These help to motivate pupils and show them what they have to do next.
- The support staff are highly effective. They work very closely with teachers and continue to have a major impact on improving the progress of underachieving pupils. Teaching assistants told the inspector that they feel valued and that they are treated as full and equal partners in the process of ensuring good

teaching and learning. Teaching assistants plan closely with teachers, willingly take on responsibility and accept their share in the general accountability for pupils' progress. The carefully planned interventions to support the learning and well-being of pupils such as those in receipt of pupil premium funding have been much more systematic and successful since the previous inspection.

- Teachers teach different groups of pupils effectively. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs get very good support. Staff give the most able pupils suitably challenging tasks so that they make very good progress.
- The school teaches reading very effectively, so that attainment is high.
- Mathematics is now taught effectively with staff more confident in getting pupils to use mathematics to solve everyday problems. The result has been a significant rise in pupils' achievement.
- Teachers teach writing well most of the time. Pupils' work shows them attempting different styles of writing, from the factual to the imaginative and poetic, and it is often of good quality. However, when writing about topics outside of English lessons, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not as high as they should be. Sometimes they give too much support to pupils, constraining their opportunities to write more freely. Also, although most pupils take pride in their work, standards of presentation and handwriting are sometimes allowed to slip.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children joining the school make a good start in Reception and then make good progress as they move up through the school. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, having made good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- Pupils' attainment has improved significantly since the previous inspection. In 2014, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was well above the national average. It was also well above average at the end of Key Stage 2 in reading, and above average in writing and mathematics.
- Data on overall attainment and progress have to be treated with caution. There are so few pupils in each year group that the performance of a single pupil can have a disproportionate effect on the figures. Nevertheless, the evidence of pupils' achievement in lessons, the school's data, and a scrutiny of pupils' work show that both attainment and progress have continued to improve since the last set of results in 2014. More and more pupils are on track either to meet or exceed the school's challenging targets.
- Pupils' attainment in reading is particularly strong and their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) has significantly improved. Pupils enjoy reading, and they read with accuracy and fluency. Their reading records and the certificates awarded in assemblies show how keenly and extensively many of the pupils read. Parents are encouraged to support reading, for example by adding comments to their children's reading records. Pupils' attainment in mathematics and writing has also improved.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. The school carefully considers their needs and supports them very well, so that some of these pupils cease to need this support as they move up through the school.
- There are far too few pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding to evaluate their progress meaningfully as a group against other pupils, but individually they make good and sometimes outstanding progress in all subjects.
- The most-able pupils achieve well, and often outstandingly so. They benefit from the high expectations of staff and the challenging work they are set so that their progress has improved considerably over the previous two years. Many more pupils now achieve the higher Level 3 in Key Stage 1 and Levels 5 or 6 in Key Stage 2.
- There is relatively little underachievement in the school. Although there are some differences in the achievement of groups of pupils in some year groups, for example occasionally between boys and girls, these gaps have narrowed and there is no consistent pattern. Almost all pupils make at least the expected levels of progress in all subjects, and more and more are making progress which is better, or much better, than expected.
- Parents believe that their children make good progress overall and the inspector agreed with them.

The early years provision**is good**

- There are occasional variations, but children usually join the school with skills and knowledge typical for their age. They then make good progress in Reception, with more ending the school year with higher levels of development than would normally be expected.
- This good achievement in all areas means that children are well prepared for their move into Year 1. For part of the day they are already taught alongside Year 1 and some Year 2 pupils, which helps the smooth transition.
- Teaching is good. Children quickly learn what is expected of them in terms of how they should listen to staff and to each other, how they should move between activities, and how they should take their turn. As well as behaving well and learning these conventions, they develop as confident individuals, who enjoy talking about their activities.
- Children develop good writing and counting skills. The inspector saw children being taught phonics effectively, with children responding eagerly to the high expectations of staff.
- The early years provision is led and managed well. In the mixed class, staff effectively manage the needs of the early years children alongside those of the slightly older pupils. The learning journals give a good picture of children's development and show, from the extensive comments, how thoroughly staff assess children's progress and plan appropriately for their next steps. Staff encourage parents to come into school to take part in their children's learning and also to support their children at home, for example when practising their sounds and letters. As in the rest of the school, children in the early years are kept very safe.
- The early years leader acknowledges that the school's outdoor resources are not used as well as they might be to benefit children's learning and enjoyment. This is recognised by the school in its planning.

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	113183
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	462497

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	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Catherine Denning
Headteacher	Tim Hughes
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 July 2013
Telephone number	01626 353605
Fax number	01626 353605
Email address	admin@abbotkserswell-primary.devon.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

