

# Abbeymead Primary School

Mead Road, Abbeymead, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL4 5YS

## Inspection dates

28–29 September 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders, including governors, have improved teaching through rigorous monitoring, effective coaching and providing support for teachers. Leaders are meticulous in holding teachers to account for the progress of pupils in their classes.
- Governors are highly ambitious for the school and the pupils and know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. Their continual questioning and challenge to school leaders means they play an instrumental part in school improvement.
- Governors know that their next step in developing their role is to develop closer links with subject leaders. They are also aware that they need to have more involvement in monitoring the attendance of those pupils who have the highest absence rates.
- Pupils across the school, including those who are the most able, are making good progress. The detailed marking and feedback of their work means that pupils are clear about what they need to do next to improve.
- Pupils' achievement continues to improve. Across the school, pupils achieve close to, and often above, the nationally expected standards for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders and teachers make effective use of the school's assessment systems to quickly identify pupils at risk of falling behind in their learning. Pupils are monitored and actions adapted to help them catch up quickly.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong, sometimes exceptional, progress. This is because their needs are identified well and accurately supported to help them overcome particular challenges.
- Children make a good start to their education in the early years. Strong leadership and teaching mean that children make rapid progress across all the areas of learning.
- Pupils of different abilities, including the most able, receive work that is almost always well matched to their needs. Occasionally, when the work is too easy or too hard, a few pupils become distracted.
- Pupils, particularly in key stage 1, are not always given opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills across the wider range of the curriculum.
- Pupils enjoy learning, are keen to improve their work and behave very well. The calm and purposeful atmosphere centred on learning means that pupils feel safe in school.

## Full report

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

- Improve outcomes for pupils, by:
  - ensuring that teachers' expectations for all pupils are consistently clear and suitably pitched to meet the needs of all groups of pupils
  - ensuring that all middle leaders have the opportunity to monitor and report to governors on the quality of teaching and standards across the range of subjects in the curriculum
  - making better use of the opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to consolidate and build on their literacy and numeracy skills, especially in key stage 1.
- Improve the attendance of pupils by increasing the governing body's accountability and challenge of those pupils who have high rates of absence.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher and other school leaders form an effective team. Together, they have been successful in raising the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This has enabled pupils, including the most able, to achieve higher standards and make good progress from a wide range of starting points.
- Teachers and other staff value the opportunities they have to develop their practice through the professional training opportunities and support that the school offers. This includes coaching and mentoring from a range of leaders, which has encouraged a culture where teachers are reflective of their practice and open to change.
- All the staff who were at the school at the time of the previous inspection state that the school has improved a great deal since then. They explain that this is as a result of the higher expectations placed on them and their pupils, coupled with the development and support they receive from leaders to improve their own practice. Parents comment that, 'The standard of work and teaching has improved a lot over the last couple of years. The school is open and honest with parents.' Another parent said, 'We have seen so many positive changes across the school and all staff are enthusiastic. Impressive.'
- Leaders use the school's assessment systems to rigorously identify pupils who may be at risk of falling behind in their learning. Strategies put in place to support them are monitored carefully. Supported by governors, leaders make effective use of appraisal and performance management systems to hold teachers to account for the progress of pupils in their classes.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good, sometimes exceptional, progress from their starting points because their needs are identified well. The support given to them by the highly skilled leader for special educational needs is carefully monitored and adapted to help them learn.
- Leaders in the early years have ensured that standards have risen quickly by monitoring and adapting the curriculum. This ensures that it meets the needs of all children, particularly boys.
- The school has devised a curriculum which plays a valuable role in preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils are encouraged to be aspirational for themselves and others. The school's own 'pink curriculum' helps pupils to develop emotional and resilience skills and supports them to become active members of society. The many interesting activities on offer promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Although the overarching curriculum is broad and balanced, there are times when pupils do not get sufficient opportunities to apply their skills and understanding in reading, writing and mathematics to solve problems in other areas of the curriculum. This is more evident in key stage 1.
- A significant proportion of subject leaders are quite new to their posts but have a growing expertise in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the school's provision. Some are taking part in research projects with other schools and are devising ways to work more closely with governors to monitor the impact of teaching

and assessment in their subjects.

- Leaders and governors have ensured that the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has been well spent. For example, additional books have been purchased to support disadvantaged pupils in upper key stage 2, including those who are the most able, to prepare them better for the start of new topics. This has resulted in disadvantaged pupils, including those who are the most able, making similar, and sometimes better, progress than their peers, especially in writing and mathematics. Leaders for disadvantaged pupils have clearly identified the barriers to learning for the pupils in their school and have a clear rationale for the allocation of funds. However, this information is not clearly available yet on the school's website.
- The additional funds for primary school physical education and sports are well spent. Pupils' participation rates have increased because activities are designed to attract them to a wider range of activities such as Zumba, archery, cheerleading and lacrosse. A recent play leader course has increased activity on the playground at lunchtimes. More pupils now represent the school in competitive events. However, the evaluation of the impact of the funding is not as yet shared with parents and other stakeholders on the school's website.

### **Governance of the school**

- The work of the governors of the school is of a very high quality. They are intensely ambitious for the school and its pupils. They have a comprehensive programme of monitoring and evaluation which enables them to robustly challenge the school's leaders and hold them to account for pupils' achievements. Their continual and probing questioning of the school's leaders is one of the fundamental reasons why standards at the school have improved.
- The governing body has a very accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Detailed action plans for the school's improvement provide a solid framework for governors to monitor the school's work. They know their next step is to work more closely with the leaders of different subjects across the curriculum. Governors also know they need to evaluate and support further the school's work in raising the attendance of those pupils who are absent most frequently.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are appropriately trained and have a clear understanding about what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. The school works well with outside agencies to support pupils and their families. Parents speak warmly about the help they receive for themselves as well as for their children from school staff. The school's procedures for the safer recruitment of all staff are particularly stringent. All staff receive a thorough induction process which places emphasis on the culture of safeguarding and equality that the school promotes. Parents, pupils and staff are all in agreement that pupils feel safe and are kept safe at this school.
- All school staff, and some governors, have taken part in training to help them protect pupils from extremism. Staff are quick to challenge any extremist views.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has improved because leaders, and governors, have been uncompromising in their drive to improve. Through regular monitoring, support and coaching of teachers, they have built a culture where teaching staff are keen to reflect on and develop their practice.
- Teachers plan work that interests pupils and extends their learning. They monitor and assess the progress that pupils make in lessons and adapt their teaching in the light of their findings. In the very best examples, teachers regularly reorganise groups of pupils to reflect the assessments they make on a daily basis, particularly in their English and mathematics work. Teachers also make effective use of assessment so that pupils at risk of falling behind are identified quickly and strategies are put in place which help them to catch up quickly.
- Teachers use assessment well to track the progress of disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils. They talk specifically with these pupils about their work and learning and provide additional support, sometimes out of lesson time, to help them. As a result, these pupils are making good progress, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers make good use of the school's additional adults to support the progress of pupils. For example, in a Year 4 science session, additional adults were observed extending pupils' thinking about teeth and the digestive system by using thought-provoking questioning. The school's additional adults are also skilled in promoting the independence of pupils. As pupils say, 'adults give us help but they won't do it for us', but also that, 'they are there to help us when we need them'.
- The effective feedback that teachers give to pupils provides them with points that accurately identify their actions for improvement. Importantly, pupils get time to reflect on and implement the feedback they are given – a practice that is stronger at key stage 2 than at key stage 1.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge well to develop lessons that challenge pupils' thinking. In the best practice, there is a thirst for learning which includes both adults and pupils in a joint exploration and enterprise. Teachers skilfully adapt their questioning skills to help pupils develop as resilient, reflective and inquisitive learners, especially at key stage 2.
- In just a few classes, there can be some occasions where pupils are slightly distracted from their learning. This is where teachers' expectations are less clear and they have set work less suited to pupils' needs. This is particularly the case in the transition point into key stage 2.
- Pupils, particularly in later key stage 2, are taught to reason well and to talk and write about their learning in some depth. These pupils make links between the skills they learn in different subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 realise that reading a wide range of different types of fiction and non-fiction books will help them become better writers in the future.
- The secure grounding that pupils receive in phonics means that most pupils spell well. Where spelling is weaker, it is often among older pupils who did not benefit from such a strong start. They are given extra help to support the gaps in their learning.

- Most pupils and parents enjoy the range of independent learning opportunities that the school provides for home learning. However, some parents and pupils can find this a challenge and the school regularly seeks the views of parents to help them with any concerns.
- Parents are very strongly of the view that their children make good progress and are well taught at the school. As a parent said, 'My child is supported in his learning and is respected by staff due to the effort he puts into work and the compassion he shows others. This acknowledgement by staff is valuable feedback for my child and encourages him to keep doing his best.'

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and self-assured. They speak enthusiastically about their learning. They take pride in themselves, their work and their school.
- Many pupils of differing ages talk about their learning, reasoning and skills in some depth. This is particularly the case by the time pupils reach Year 5 and Year 6 where a great many pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning and a love of mathematics and writing in particular.
- The school seeks to expand the aspirations of pupils and organises special weeks to promote this. For example, recently over 20 visitors from different backgrounds and careers spoke about their work and offered encouragement to the pupils to pursue their dreams.
- Pupils, parents and staff all feel strongly that pupils are safe at school. The strong relationships seen between pupils and adults enables pupils to feel very confident in sharing worries or concerns. They value the 'green card' system whereby they can confidently let adults know if they have a worry. They are clear about what bullying is and they say that it is not at all common. They are confident that adults will deal with it.
- Pupils are well aware how to stay safe online and there is also useful information for parents available on the school's website. Pupils are also reminded of their own responsibility to behave well online, for example, in the induction to Year 6 slides which are also available on the school website. Through the curriculum they are alerted to the wide range of views and information on the internet and encouraged to think about issues of equality and tolerance.
- Parents appreciate the support they receive from school, both for themselves and their children. Those parents of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and parents of pupils who have arrived from another school speak warmly of the time and care afforded to them.
- Pupils value the opportunities they have; for example, through their 'learning forum', to have a say in the life of their school.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils live up to the high expectations placed on them by teachers and adults of both their learning and behaviour. They behave very well

when moving around the school, at lunchtimes and breaktimes. This extends through the purposeful and focused behaviour of the oldest pupils during a drama workshop day to the orderly and engaged behaviour of the very youngest children who have recently begun school.

- During lessons, pupils respond quickly to the instructions of their teachers. Incidents of disruption or distraction are uncommon. On the few occasions where this does happen, it is because teachers have not been clear enough about their instructions and have not matched work well enough to the needs of a small minority of pupils.
- Pupils understand and appreciate the many reward systems that the school has to help them behave well. They are especially motivated by the school's 'champion child' system and many are very proud when they become a 'purple learner'. These systems, and careful adult support, help those pupils whose behaviour can be challenging to behave well so that they join in fully with their peers.
- The attendance of pupils at the school is above that of pupils nationally. Although the attendance of pupils who have the highest rate of absence is improving, leaders know there is further work to do.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Across year groups and from a wide range of starting points, pupils currently at the school are making good progress. Many, including those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, are exceeding the progress expected of them.
- Scrutiny of workbooks, observations in lessons and discussions with pupils about their work show that progress has accelerated, particularly in English and mathematics. Where progress is strongest, such as in Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils are learning to reason well and talk about their learning in some depth, including their learning in other areas of the curriculum such as science and history.
- Pupils who are among the most able, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are now challenged well to extend their learning. They say that they enjoy the greater challenge to do better. Most of them, including boys, relish opportunities to write in depth and to explore and deepen their thinking in mathematics. This is reflected in the proportion of pupils who are now achieving at a higher level in national tests at the end of key stage 2, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- The teaching of phonics is good. A very large majority of pupils consistently reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check from year to year, and by the end of Year 2 almost every pupil has done so. Broadly similar proportions of boys and girls reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check.
- In the early years, standards have risen rapidly over time. The proportion of children who now reach a good level of development across the different areas of learning is broadly average.
- By the end of key stage 1, standards have risen over time and the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard for their age is firmly above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2016, at the end of key stage 2, the number of pupils who have reached the expected standard for their age in reading, writing and mathematics together is above the national figure. The number of pupils who have reached the expected standard for

their age is above the national figure in writing and mathematics and close to it in reading.

- The progress that pupils make in this school by the end of key stage 2 is in line with that of pupils in schools nationally. Their progress in writing and mathematics is slightly faster than that of pupils in schools nationally.
- The progress made by pupils who are disadvantaged, including those currently at the school, has been improving over time across both key stages and in the early years. The most able pupils make better than expected progress in mathematics and writing by the end of key stage 2.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well to enable them to make good, and sometimes very good, progress from their relative starting points. This is because of the close monitoring of their progress and the effective support they receive from the school's leaders, teachers and other adults.
- Pupils read fluently and well, relative to their age and development. Many speak with passion about their reading. However, in a few classes some pupils were not reading from a text which stretched them, particularly in lower key stage 2.
- The large majority of parents responding to Parent View and spoken with during the inspection are of the view that their child is making good progress and is well taught at the school.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- In the early years, standards have risen rapidly over time and an average proportion of children now reach a good level of development across the different areas of learning. Children now make much better progress, which means that they are well prepared for the learning they will meet when they go into Year 1. This is because leaders and teachers have clearly identified the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and have improved the quality of teaching and the range of experiences offered to children.
- The leader of the early years is highly ambitious for all children in the early years. Through her drive and enthusiasm, the school is moving to a 'learning in the moment' approach where teachers plan in response to the interests of children while covering the areas of learning in the early years. This change is because leaders firmly believe that children who are highly involved with their learning will grasp new skills more quickly and with greater understanding. The impact of this will be closely monitored by governors and senior leaders.
- Observation of children in the Reception classes shows positive attitudes to learning because children are deeply engrossed in the well-planned activities provided for them. For example, children engaged in storytelling and role play centred on a story about arctic animals were taking turns listening to each other and talking about the animals. They knew the difference between a walrus and a seal and they knew that penguins ate fish and polar bears ate penguins. The same activity also included opportunities for them to extend their ability to sort and to count the collections of different animals.
- Historically, children have entered the early years with skills below those typical for their age. Children now enter the Reception classes with a wide range of skills and previous experiences. Teachers use assessment accurately to quickly identify both



those who may need additional help and those who have skills at a higher level. The support they put in place means that these children make good progress.

- Boys reach a good level of development in slightly fewer numbers than girls but in increasing proportions. The improvements are because leaders and teachers have adapted their teaching and the curriculum they offer to particularly attract the interest of boys. For example, boys are enjoying learning about stories and exploring their early writing skills, choosing to write on the story map they had created on 'The gingerbread man'.
- Children who are disadvantaged, including those among them who are entering Reception at a higher level than those typical for their age, make good progress from their different starting points. Sometimes, their progress is better than other children in Reception.
- Phonics is taught well in the early years. Even at the start of the school year, children were already confidently saying and recognising the sounds they had been learning and were able to use them in their early writing, for example on their story maps. Teachers and other adults consistently model good practice for children to hear and see. The solid grounding children receive in phonics in the early years contributes to the very high achievement of pupils in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- The good behaviour of children and their strong relationships with the adults around them show the confidence and safety they already feel at school. Their parents agree, feeling strongly that their children are safe, happy and well looked after at school. Parents say, 'Communication with parents is fantastic.' Another parent said, 'They couldn't have done any more to make the transition into school any easier. She is happy and settled there.' Safeguarding is effective.

## School details

Unique reference number	115601
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10019958

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	446
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Edd Parry
Headteacher	Julian Pass
Telephone number	01452 371710
Website	<a href="http://www.abbeymead.gloucs.sch.uk">www.abbeymead.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:secretary@abbeymead.gloucs.sch.uk">secretary@abbeymead.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	7–8 October 2014

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about pupil premium and the funding for physical education and sports on its website.
- Abbeymead is much larger than the average-sized primary school. It is a two-form entry primary school with class sizes of around 30. There are three classes in the Reception Year this year.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also well below the national average.
- The number of pupils supported by the pupil premium is about half the national average.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support for their special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above the national average. The proportion with an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs is slightly above the national average.

## Information about this inspection

- Pupils' learning was observed, jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher, in 31 lessons or part lessons. A learning walk with middle leaders took place. The inspectors scrutinised the work of pupils in all year groups and spoke with many pupils during lessons about their work. The inspectors listened to pupils from different year groups read and gathered views about their experiences at school.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, other leaders, governors and members of the teaching and support staff. The views of staff were gathered also from Ofsted's online staff survey. A meeting was held with the representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors met formally with three different groups of pupils to gather their views on their learning and about school. The inspectors spoke informally with many pupils from all year groups during lessons, at breaktimes and around the school. An inspector undertook a curriculum walk with a group of pupils.
- The views of parents were taken into consideration, including the responses of 91 parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and to 24 comments made as a part of the Parent View survey. Discussions were also held with parents as they dropped off their children and collected them from the school.
- The inspectors considered documentation, including information on pupils' attainment and progress, the school's improvement planning, minutes of governing body meetings, records of the monitoring of teaching and information on the management of teachers' performance. Procedures for the safeguarding of pupils, including information relating to attendance, behaviour and the exclusion of pupils, were examined.

## Inspection team

Sarah O'Donnell, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gina Cooke	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Mower	Ofsted Inspector

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