

Abbots Farm Infant School

Abbots Way, Rugby, Warwickshire CV21 4AP

Inspection dates

6–7 December 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have made improvements to all aspects of the school's work since the last inspection. As a result, pupils now achieve well because teaching is good.
- Leaders have successfully ensured that the school provides a high level of care for pupils. Pupils are happy at school, feel very safe and behave well.
- Children in the early years make a strong start because of greatly improved provision. Leaders have significantly improved the teaching that the youngest children receive.
- The most able pupils achieve well. They make fast progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. As a result, a large proportion reach the higher standard in their work.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics due to the skilled teaching that helps them develop a secure understanding of this subject.
- Pupils read well. When reading, pupils make good use of their phonics skills to help them read fluently. Pupils enjoy their reading and show a good level of understanding of the books they read.
- Through effective plans and a high level of care, leaders have made sure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well and their progress has accelerated.
- Leaders have ensured that safeguarding is very effective. As a result, the school's work to keep pupils safe is a notable strength.
- Governors are highly committed to the school's success and have significantly improved the quality of their work. They now provide the right level of challenge and support to leaders to help the school to improve.
- Parents rate the school very highly. Parents have a great deal of confidence in the school and value its work. The school works closely with parents, particularly in the early years, to help children succeed.
- Although improving, the progress made by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not fast enough.
- Pupils make good progress overall in writing but it is not as strong as their progress in reading and mathematics.
- Some teaching does not set high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve in subjects such as history and geography.
- A few pupils complete work slowly or without sufficient care.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that pupils make the same strong progress in writing as they do in reading and mathematics
 - setting tasks and activities in subjects such as history, geography and science that are more engaging and challenging for pupils and provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to improve their writing
 - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the presentation of pupils' work in books
 - ensuring that time is used effectively in lessons to promote faster rates of progress.
- Build on recent improvements to develop more effective and consistent support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly boys, so that they make the same strong progress as other groups.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, has led significant improvements to the school's work since the last inspection. Showing skill, dedication and considerable hard work, they have won the support of the school community in a concerted effort for improvement. As a result of their effective leadership, the quality of provision in the early years has greatly improved. Teaching across the school has also been strengthened, leading to pupils making faster progress and reaching higher standards by the end of key stage 1.
- Leaders have also ensured that pupils are cared for very well. As a result, pupils feel very well supported at school. A parent accurately commented that the school has 'a lovely community feel'. This strong sense of community, well promoted by leaders, helps pupils to achieve well and grow in confidence.
- Leaders have formed a settled and committed team of staff. Leaders have promoted higher aspirations overall, especially in English and mathematics, and this plays a part in why pupils now make faster progress in their work. Staff show a high level of confidence in school leaders.
- An important factor in the school's recent improvement has been the monitoring of teaching. Leaders now select the right training to improve teaching. Leaders have carefully identified the specific things that individual teachers need to do to improve and provided individual support. In addition, the strong focus for pupils to talk about their reasoning in mathematical problem-solving has been successful.
- The management of teachers' performance is used effectively to raise the quality of teaching. Leaders set clear expectations of performance for teachers and check to see if they have met them.
- Leaders are mostly accurate in their understanding of the school's performance. They use their evaluations to target areas for improvement, and implement plans to strengthen the school's work. As a result, teaching has improved and pupils' progress has accelerated. Furthermore, the care provided to the pupils has also improved.
- Through well-considered plans and good use of funding, leaders have ensured that disadvantaged pupils now make better progress than they did at the time of the previous inspection. Leaders have taken account of the needs of disadvantaged pupils and ensured that both their attendance and achievement have improved.
- The headteacher and other leaders have built very good relationships with parents. The parents who spoke to inspectors, and those that expressed views on the online questionnaire, Parent View, have much confidence in leaders and the work of all staff. Parents welcome the changes introduced by the headteacher, with one commenting on 'the many positive changes'.
- In their work to improve the school, leaders have not shied away from seeking support and challenge. Leaders have received good support from the local authority which provided a thorough review to check on the school's performance, and termly meetings to monitor ongoing improvement. Such challenge and guidance has played an important role in helping leaders to improve the school.

- Leaders' work to help prepare pupils for life in modern, multicultural Britain has been successful. Pupils now have a better knowledge of the range of faiths in British society. For example, pupils learned about the religious festival of Diwali through a visit to a school in Leicester, where they worked alongside pupils from a range of culturally diverse backgrounds. They spoke with enjoyment about making rangoli and mehndi patterns during the visit. Pupils have also compared a Hindu mandir to a church and visited a nearby mosque. Pupils also take part in plays concerning the Christian nativity story.
- Fundamental British values are promoted by the school's ethos. Pupils have had opportunities to vote for class representatives for the school council, which is very active. Members of the school council expanded their understanding of democracy through a visit to the Houses of Parliament. Pupils recognise the importance of rules and are respectful of other cultures. This is another important aspect of the school's successful work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Throughout the school, the curriculum is broad and balanced. For example, pupils enjoy learning about kings and queens in history, painting and drawing in art lessons and taking part in sport. They also have good opportunities to learn how to keep safe. Pupils also benefit from the many different extra-curricular activities and clubs which promote their skills and confidence. Reading supports learning in other subjects but there are missed opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills.
- Effective use is made of the sports funding to promote pupils' well-being and involvement in physical and sporting activities. Leaders have employed qualified dance coaches. This has resulted in increased teacher confidence in teaching this aspect of physical education and the introduction of an extra-curricular club for pupils.
- Leaders have brought about recent improvements to accelerate the progress made by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is paying off. However, practice is not fully consistent and, as a result, some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make better progress than others.

Governance of the school

- Governance has greatly improved. Governors have responded well to the external review recommended by the last inspection and have subsequently implemented many changes. Governance has become a strength of the school.
- Governors provide a strong and appropriate level of challenge to leaders, reflecting their strong commitment to school improvement. Their questioning of the leaders' work has become sharply focused on improving teaching and accelerating pupils' progress, including diminishing the difference in outcomes between different groups. Governors supplement this with frequent visits to the school to check on all aspects of the school's work. As a result, they have a good grasp of the school's strengths and those areas that need improving
- Governors ensure that all the policies that guide the school's work are in place and are reviewed regularly.
- Governors play a strong role in promoting the school's effective safeguarding work. They check that requirements are fully in place and consider carefully how well the school site ensures pupils' safety.

- Each year, governors check that they have the right skills for their role. Where there are any gaps, governors seek to fill them when recruiting new governors and search carefully for the right people. At the same time, they update their understanding and skills through regular training.
- Governors also keep an eye on how well the pupil premium and sports grants are spent. They also have all the correct checks in place to ensure that all resources available to the school are wisely managed and spent.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that all the necessary training is provided for staff to help them understand their responsibilities and, if necessary, act to ensure that pupils are kept safe. As a result, staff respond quickly when concerns are raised. Recent training has taken place on the government's 'Prevent' duty to combat the threat of radicalisation or extremism.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher keep accurate records of pupils whose well-being causes concern. They take prompt and effective action when necessary, working well with external partners. All of the necessary checks are made when staff are appointed. As a result, leaders have successfully created a school where pupils' well-being and safety is their paramount concern.
- Parents feel that pupils are kept safe and inspection evidence supports this view.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection so that it is now good.
- The teaching of mathematics is a strength and pupils are given frequent opportunities to discuss their learning. This helps to ensure that they gain a firm grasp of the subject. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is also good. This helps staff to clearly explain mathematical concepts and the methods pupils can use. Teachers pose well-chosen questions to help pupils think deeply. As a result, pupils are developing a secure knowledge of mathematics for their age.
- The teaching of reading is good. Pupils are taught to use their phonics knowledge well to help them read with fluency. Good questioning and discussion helps pupils to understand what they are reading. Consequently, pupils make good progress and read well for their age.
- Teachers have high expectations of the most able pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This, along with teachers' clear understanding of what pupils need to do and know in order to reach the higher standards, means that the most able pupils achieve well.
- Teachers pick up on pupils' misunderstandings or when pupils find the work hard. As a result, teachers are quick to provide pupils with guidance necessary to help them improve and to keep them feeling confident about their achievements.
- Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. Parents have been

provided with relevant information about recent changes to assessment. They value the homework that is set and believe the teaching at the school to be good.

- Teaching assistants play a strong role in supporting pupils' learning by working sensitively with a range of pupils and groups. They offer helpful guidance and explanations to assist pupils to achieve well. The support that teaching assistants provide is helping to accelerate the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils mostly respond well to the teaching. They are interested in the activities and keen to do well. This is particularly the case in the early years, where the tasks capture the children's attention very well.
- Pupils who have special needs and/or disabilities are taught with increasing effectiveness, but there is still room for improvement. Although improved teaching and support have been put in place, at times tasks are not always at the correct level to ensure best progress.
- Occasionally, however, teachers do not get the very best from pupils. For example, some pupils do not start their work as promptly as they might or complete enough work in the time available. When this happens, the pace of learning slows. Furthermore, some teachers do not yet have high enough expectations of the presentation of pupils' work.
- Although the teaching of writing is good and teachers provide pupils with opportunities to talk about and plan their writing, pupils have limited opportunities to write in subjects other than English. This means that pupils do not apply their writing skills as often as they might. In addition, while pupils enjoy learning in a range of worthwhile subjects, some of the tasks set in subjects other than English or mathematics could offer greater interest and challenge.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good
- Leaders have improved the way the school promotes pupils' personal development and welfare since the last inspection so that it is now good.
- The caring and safe atmosphere that staff promote ensures that pupils are happy at school and engage with activities in a settled manner. This atmosphere was summed up by a parent who said her child 'loves going to school and always comes home with a smile'.
- Pupils are confident and friendly. They interact well with one another and form positive relationships.
- Pupils learn about how to keep safe and are developing a good knowledge of how to use the internet safely.
- Pupils say that there is virtually no bullying at school. From lessons, they understand why bullying is unacceptable and feel confident in reporting any very rare instances to the staff, who pupils believe will quickly take action.

- Within lessons, pupils have opportunities to learn about how to keep safe, to grow in confidence and think positively on their achievements.
- Pupils have the opportunity to attend a breakfast club each morning and enjoy a good range of activities. Some pupils who need extra support are also encouraged by staff to attend, which helps them to make a good start to the day.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Children behave very well in the early years. This is because of the strong relationships established by staff and the interesting tasks that they are given. In the rest of the school, behaviour is good. However, occasionally, interest wanes when tasks lack imagination or challenge.
- Pupils behave well at playtimes and during lunchtimes. They enjoy playing games with one another and no one is left out. At lunchtimes, they calmly talk to others as they enjoy their meals.
- Pupils' attendance was broadly average at the end of the last school year. This term, attendance has risen further and all groups attend well. The proportion of pupils who are frequently absent was also broadly average at the end of last year and has since improved further. Leaders have successfully reduced the number of disadvantaged pupils who are frequently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Inspection evidence from pupils' work, results of national assessments and the school's current data indicate that pupils now make good progress.
- By the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard is in line with the national average and the proportion achieving a higher standard of greater depth is above average.
- From their different starting points, pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics because teaching is strongest in these subjects. Teachers' secure subject knowledge and the challenging activities that they set help pupils to achieve well. Progress in writing is also good but not as fast as in reading and mathematics.
- The most able pupils achieve particularly well because teachers plan successfully to meet their needs. For example, in mathematics, the most able pupils have plenty of opportunities to think deeply and talk about their learning. Similarly, the most able pupils achieve well in reading and enjoy reading texts that are challenging for their age.
- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are below those of other pupils nationally. However, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are now making faster progress than before. This small group of pupils are also reaching higher standards by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils make good use of their phonics skills to help them read and write. Pupils' achievement in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been above the national figures in 2015 and 2016.

- Recent assessment information and pupils' work show that pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities, almost all of whom are boys, are making increasingly faster progress. Leaders have taken actions to accelerate the progress of these pupils. There are signs that improvements are starting to have an impact, mostly in the early years.
- The progress that pupils make in writing is good overall but has slowed a little this term because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length or practise their skills in different subjects.
- Pupils make generally good progress in other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education. However, sometimes progress is limited by the tasks teachers set, which do not always sustain pupils' interest and, at times, are too easy.

Early years provision

Good

- Early years provision has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The early years provision is well led by the deputy headteacher, who has successfully guided and challenged staff. In her teaching, she has provided a good example for her team to follow. Her leadership has been instrumental in securing the improvements in the early years.
- From typical starting points, children make good progress. In both 2015 and 2016, the proportions of pupils who reached a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year were above the national average. This level of achievement was consistent across nearly all areas of learning, with physical development being the strongest. Such outcomes mean that children are well prepared for Year 1.
- The regular and thorough assessments that teachers and other staff make help them plan activities that are well matched to children's interests and abilities. Parents and carers also contribute regularly to these assessments. As a result, in most cases teaching and learning is well planned to meet children's needs.
- The progress made by disadvantaged pupils has improved and, by the end of the Reception Year, more of these children now reach higher standards than was previously the case.
- The progress made by children with special educational needs and/or disabilities has also improved.
- Teaching is good. Staff ask effective questions that make the children think deeply. Importantly, staff give children enough time to think and respond and then, if necessary, develop children's responses further.
- The early years curriculum is well planned and stimulating. It plays an important role in promoting good progress. For example, during the inspection children were seen carefully cutting out pictures of Christmas presents, showing good hand-eye coordination, and writing messages on the labels. Children were fascinated by a book about dinosaurs, which helped them to think and talk about the sizes of different objects.
- Children are keen to learn to read using their phonics and talk with growing understanding and enjoyment about books to staff and other children. During the

inspection, children in the pre-school nursery were observed gaining enjoyment from listening to the 'Stick man' story and had a go at making sound effects, using musical instruments, to accompany its retelling.

- Children achieve particularly well in the area of physical development. A well-planned and varied range of activities promote good progress. The only area of development that was below the national average in 2016 was expressive arts and design. This had also been the case in the previous two years.
- The early years is a happy place for the children to be. Clear routines and interesting activities ensure that children feel very settled and get straight into their learning and behave well. Staff provide a high level of care for the children.
- Staff have formed a close partnership with parents, who strongly value this relationship. Parents are helped to understand how best to support their children's learning and development through weekly opportunities to come into lessons and watch what is being taught.
- The environment for learning has greatly improved. It is well organised to help the children to learn. They know where resources are located and the areas where they can play. The environment also helps children to feel safe so that they have a successful start to school life. Children benefit from opportunities to play outside, as well as indoors.

School details

Unique reference number	125573
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10020032

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Debby Short
Headteacher	Jeanette Lovejoy
Telephone number	01788 543093
Website	www.abbotsfarm-inf.org
Email address	head2410@welearn365.com
Date of previous inspection	9–10 October 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Abbots Farm Infant School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is not their first language is below the national average.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 26 lessons or parts of lessons. Almost all of these observations were undertaken with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work in books and listened to pupils read. They met with groups of pupils, including the school council, and had conversations with pupils at many different times during the inspection. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtimes, and at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records concerning safeguarding, child protection and attendance. Inspectors also looked at records relating to how the quality of teaching is checked by leaders. The learning improvement plan that outlines how the leaders aim to improve the school was also considered. Inspectors also looked at documentation relating to the work of governors.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher and one middle leader. The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body, including its chair and vice-chair. In addition, the lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority and talked to an adviser who has supported the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 64 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered the 56 free-text responses from parents. They also talked to parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Jonathan Moore, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Hughes	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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