

Abbot Beyne School

Linnell Building, Osborne Street, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE15 0JL

Inspection dates

24–25 May 2017

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
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school has improved securely since the last inspection. Pupils now achieve better results in their GCSEs and make faster progress when compared to other pupils nationally.
- The headteacher has successfully led developments in the curriculum and improvements in teaching and learning. These changes have contributed to improved progress for pupils.
- Leaders and governors have a strong understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the school and work effectively to bring about further improvements.
- The curriculum is appropriately planned and implemented for pupils. It provides a range of suitable courses, as well as a varied extra-curricular programme.
- Safeguarding is effective and staff work collaboratively to ensure that pupils and students are safe.
- Pupil premium funding has been used successfully to diminish the differences between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally with the same starting points.
- Students in the sixth form make faster progress than other students nationally with the same starting points.
- Pupils are well behaved in lessons and also around the school site. The atmosphere is studious and orderly.
- Pupils' exercise books and files are well presented and these clearly demonstrate their good progress at school.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is too low. Persistent absence is also too high for these groups, although this has improved recently.
- Teachers do not routinely adjust their teaching to take into account the needs of different ability pupils.
- Mathematics teaching has improved, although this is not yet consistently good across all groups.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate the progress of all pupils by:
 - ensuring that leaders take decisive and effective action to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - addressing the remaining variability in mathematics teaching and ensuring that pupils in all classes and years make consistently good progress in this subject
 - training all teachers to consistently use strategies in lessons to enable them to tailor classwork to match the needs of different groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has led the school through a period of sustained improvement since the last inspection. She has demonstrated strong leadership and has successfully worked with her colleagues to refocus attention on improving teaching and learning across the school. There is an urgent and shared focus on improving outcomes for all pupils. She leads sensitively, but uncompromisingly, and is highly respected for her work. Staff, pupils and parents value the quality of education that the school provides and are proud to be part of a close-knit community.
- Leaders across the school have an accurate understanding of Abbot Beyne's strengths, as well as areas that still need further development. Accurate self-evaluation is shared with all staff and this helps ensure that everyone understands their role in bringing about school improvement.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have been tenacious in ensuring that the progress made by disadvantaged pupils improves and the differences diminish between them and other pupils nationally. Governors and school leaders have carefully evaluated how the pupil premium is used to support improvements in provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. The strategies employed are regularly reviewed and then adjusted where necessary. This ensures that they are as focused as possible in bringing about faster progress for pupils.
- Catch-up funding is effectively used to help those pupils who have not reached the expected standards at primary school. As a consequence, these pupils are supported to make more rapid progress during their time in Year 7. This means they can successfully meet the demands of the curriculum when they progress into later years at the school.
- There has been a renewed focus on improving teaching and learning since the previous inspection. Teachers have been formed into 'teaching and learning communities'; these small groups meet regularly to discuss ways to improve lessons. To complement this initiative there has been targeted training on areas such as teacher questioning and the most effective way to assess pupils' work. This has contributed to consistently good teaching across the school.
- The curriculum is well designed to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. For instance, there is a bespoke 'skills of success' programme for Year 7. This helps to ensure that new pupils at the school have the know-how required to achieve across the curriculum. Considered guidance is provided from staff to help advise pupils on their options. For example, personal interviews are provided for all pupils when they make GCSE choices in Year 9. Typically, the majority follow an academic route in key stage 4. Pupils are given the chance to follow the English Baccalaureate, although much lower numbers than is typical nationally achieve this due to a low take-up of modern foreign languages. Vocational qualifications are also offered to pupils, where appropriate, and these also provide useful learning opportunities. The curriculum is carefully reviewed and evaluated. For example, additional time has been given to mathematics in key stage 4 to allow for the increased demands of the new GCSE course. The extra-curricular programme is varied. Many pupils take the opportunity to participate in

various clubs, in sports activities, in music and drama ensembles and productions, as well as trips and visits in the UK and overseas. The various activities and events that make up the house competition are well regarded by pupils and these provide an opportunity for a large number to get involved.

- The development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is well planned and effectively implemented across different subjects, as well as through the various extra-curricular activities and trips and visits offered. For example, the English curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to explore literature, traditions and beliefs from different cultures.
- Good use is made of additional funding to support the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils are given personalised support from specialist teachers and therefore make good progress as a result. Teaching assistants are well trained and this helps them to provide useful support in lessons.
- The leadership of attendance has not been strong enough. Attendance is too low for some pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have not taken effective steps to improve this situation. However, recent interventions have now begun to help reduce the amount of persistent absence for some of these pupils.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is effective:
 - The review of governance carried out following the previous inspection has proved useful in sharpening the focus on those aspects of leadership most needed to bring about further school improvement.
 - The governing body is well organised into different committees who take responsibility for certain aspects of school life. These groups report back to the full governing body to help ensure that all governors have a detailed understanding of school.
 - Committees carefully scrutinise all aspects of the school's work and hold leaders closely to account for their actions.
 - Different governors show a detailed understanding of the strategies being employed by school leaders to bring about improvement. As a result, leaders are frequently challenged on their actions and are held to account in ensuring that these approaches are the most effective ones.
 - Governors regularly visit the school and have an in-depth understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses of different aspects.
 - Governors understand data and information on school performance and use this to pinpoint areas of remaining weakness. They hold school leaders to account for these areas and then follow up to ensure that they have been effectively addressed.
 - Performance management processes for the headteacher, and other teachers and staff in the school, are well managed. For example, rigorous procedures are in

place to ensure that teachers' good performance is rewarded and underperformance addressed.

- Governors demonstrate a clear understanding of the use of pupil premium funding and how it is targeted to support the achievement of disadvantaged pupils in the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Governors, school leaders, teachers and support staff all understand the importance of working together to ensure that pupils are safe. Targeted training is provided to ensure that everyone knows what to do when difficulties emerge. Procedures and policies are clearly outlined and well implemented.
- The school has comprehensive systems in place to check the suitability of adults to work with children.
- Pupils are carefully taught how to keep themselves safe in school, as well as in their home lives. As a result, they show a well-rounded understanding of the risks they face and the best ways in which they can overcome these.
- The designated safeguarding lead is knowledgeable, well qualified and treats the role with the gravity required. Therefore members of the school community trust that any problems that might emerge will be dealt with swiftly.
- Parents, staff and pupils all reported overwhelmingly that school is a safe place.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have secure subject knowledge, plan effectively and have high expectations of pupils. Lessons are longer than is typical in secondary schools and teachers ensure that this time is used well. The extra length helps pupils to become engrossed in their work and consequently they make good progress in a range of subjects across key stages.
- Pupils are regularly encouraged during 'take up time' in lessons to reflect on their mistakes and consequently improve their work. This helps pupils to learn from their mistakes and make good progress. When quizzed by inspectors in lessons, pupils were able to explain what they were doing well and what needed to be better. The careful documentation of this process of improvement in exercise books and files helps pupils keep useful learning records of their work in each subject.
- Effective use is made of digital resources to support learning. All pupils in key stage 3 are given access to tablets, which they use very effectively across the curriculum. For example, in a design and technology lesson, pupils were observed accessing additional learning materials online. They then checked previous feedback from their teachers on an app, before using these to improve their work. Teachers have also become adept at using this technology to support their teaching. This technology serves to promote pupils' independence and contributes to a diligent work ethic in the classroom. This is

because pupils understand how using technology can support them to achieve the next steps in their learning.

- There are cordial relationships between teachers and pupils. This helps lessons to proceed in an orderly fashion and without disruption. Teachers actively circulate around their classrooms, systematically checking on pupils' understanding and progress. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers' instructions and act on advice given.
- As a result of useful training provided by school leaders, teachers are able to use questioning well to stimulate interest from pupils. Also, this helps to ensure that a range of different pupils are involved in every lesson.
- Pupils' exercise books and files are well maintained; work is carefully presented, in line with school policy. There is an impressive good standard and volume of work being covered across the curriculum.
- Pupils in key stage 4 preparing for examinations at the time of the inspection were seen to be motivated to achieve well. Many take full advantage of the opportunities for additional revision sessions provided before school, at weekends, and during holidays. This helps them to fine-tune their exam technique.
- In some lessons, teachers do not adjust their teaching to take into account the learning needs of pupils from different ability groups. As a result, some lower-ability pupils can struggle to access the set task and subsequently their progress slows. Higher-ability pupils can also lack significant stretch and challenge in a minority of lessons.
- Although the teaching of mathematics has improved since the last inspection, there remains some variability across different groups. This is because in some lessons, teachers do not adjust their teaching to meet the needs of different abilities to ensure that all pupils have a firm understanding of fundamental mathematical concepts before moving on. Additionally, sometimes the work set does not fully challenge the most able pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils and students demonstrate a strong work ethic and this contributes to a studious and diligent working atmosphere around school. Their self-discipline helps them to be successful learners, as well as providing an excellent foundation for future employment, education or training. Pupils are well prepared to lead productive and fulfilling lives in modern Britain.
- The school has planned opportunities to ensure that pupils are educated about the way in which they can stay physically and emotionally healthy. 'Deep learning days' educate pupils about, for example, e-safety, sex and relationships, and the prevention of radicalisation. It is testament to the success of these days that pupils reflect warmly on their experiences and show a well-founded understanding of both the potential risks they face, and how to overcome them.
- When asked by inspectors, pupils stated there was very little bullying and that the

school is a happy, friendly and tolerant community. When problems do arise, pupils trust in the ability of school staff to intervene and resolve the problems.

- Pupils reported to inspectors that they enjoyed school and that their teachers are kind and supportive. All spoken to stated that there was someone they could speak to if they were concerned about their own, or someone else's, welfare. They expressed confidence that their teachers could resolve any problem that might arise.
- The programme of assemblies is carefully planned and these provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on key issues facing society and also to learn from inspirational figures in history. Pupils shared with inspectors that they value these opportunities.
- A strong careers programme is provided for pupils across all year groups. This provides targeted advice on potential careers, as well as further and higher education opportunities. Pupils are also given the opportunity to visit universities to help raise their aspirations about what they can achieve in their future lives.
- The well-being and progress of the very small number of pupils who attend alternative provision is carefully monitored.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Lessons are orderly and pupils swiftly follow the directions of their teachers. There is little disruption to learning and when this does occur, teachers deal it with effectively.
- Because they are proud to be part of the school, pupils wear their smart uniform correctly and act respectfully towards school staff.
- Staff supervision helps to ensure that pupils travelling the short distance between the two sites are well supervised and that pupils are protected from any risk.
- The school community gathers productively and socially during break and lunchtimes and different groups of pupils are able to follow a range of activities. The spacious and attractive school campus helps pupils to find safe places where they can explore their interests.
- The attendance of most pupils is in line with, or above, national averages. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below national averages.
- The level of persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has fallen recently due to carefully targeted support and intervention from school staff. However, this still remains too high.
- Not all pupils are well behaved at all times. Teachers act decisively when lessons are disrupted. They ensure that the learning of the majority is not negatively affected by the indiscipline of a small minority.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The levels of attainment at GCSE have consistently improved in recent years. More pupils have successfully gained GCSEs at grades A to C, including in English and mathematics.
- Pupils have made faster progress since the last inspection. In 2015 they made progress significantly better than other pupils nationally with the same starting points. In 2016 the progress made across the curriculum was in line with national averages. Current pupils are making consistently above average progress in all years.
- Carefully targeted pupil premium funding has helped to ensure that the differences are diminishing between the attainment and progress made by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally with the same starting points. This group of pupils make progress, which, although not as rapid as other pupils in the school, is in line with national averages. School records, supported by inspection evidence, suggest that disadvantaged pupils in key stage 3 are now making faster progress in line with other pupils nationally with the same starting points.
- Pupils make particularly strong progress over time in humanities, English and modern foreign languages. The work produced by pupils in creative subjects such as art and design and technology is also strong and take-up of these subjects by pupils is rising.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress over time in line with, or above, other pupils nationally with the same starting points. This is because teachers, in most lessons, are able to stretch the most able and help them to achieve the highest grades.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress over time. Current pupils continue this trend due to the effective support they receive from school leaders and their teachers.
- The school's approach to developing reading across the school has proved successful in promoting pupils' enjoyment in reading. Pupils respond positively to reading sessions during registration periods. The introduction of an interactive online programme has supported successful development of reading for pupils in key stage 3.
- As a result of consistently effective teaching in this phase of the school, pupils in key stage 3 are now making good progress. Improving teaching for these pupils has been a focus of training for teachers since the last inspection. This helps to ensure that pupils are well prepared for when they start GCSE courses in Year 10.
- Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education or training. The vast majority go on to either sustained employment, or sixth-form provision, when they leave school.
- The progress made by pupils in mathematics was below national averages in 2016. This was particularly true for those with lower ability. However, due to additional curriculum time and improved teaching, current pupils, including those with lower ability, are now making faster progress in this subject. Nevertheless, progress in mathematics still lags behind that of the most successful subjects in the school.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Students make rapid progress during their time in the sixth form. In recent years they made faster progress than other students nationally with the same starting points and this remains true for current students. The vast majority undertake academic qualifications, but those who follow vocational courses also make good progress.
- Effective leadership of the sixth form helps to ensure that students' individual needs are successfully met and this supports their academic progress, as well as their general well-being. Leaders know students extremely well and their current progress is carefully monitored. Supportive interventions are put in place when academic difficulties emerge. The school's learning support mentor provides strong and effective support for students. This contributes strongly to students' good progress across the range of academic and vocational subjects. Those students who need to retake GCSE mathematics and English are successfully supported in doing so.
- Strong support is provided to help students to make successful university applications, or to apply for apprenticeships or other employment. Students undertake relevant work experience alongside other non-qualification activity. They are supported in doing so by personalised support and guidance about their career and higher education options.
- As they get older and their needs change, specific information is provided to help ensure that sixth-form students are supported in staying safe. For example, recent sessions have allowed students to reflect on healthy relationships and how to protect themselves online. This support is well regarded by students and promotes their well-being.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Students benefit from being taught in small groups and receive personalised support from their teachers. This means that any academic difficulties can be overcome more quickly. Students also report that their teachers are always available to help them outside of lessons when this is required.
- The behaviour of sixth-form students is impeccable in lessons and also in their sixth-form centre. They are mature and independent learners and value the opportunities that are provided by the school.
- Students speak warmly about their time in the sixth form and the high quality of teaching and support that they receive. As a result of their positive experiences, many willingly contribute their time to support younger pupils, for example by participating in mentoring schemes to help those who are encountering difficulties.

School details

Unique reference number	124449
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10032607

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	694
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	87
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Mohammad Haroon
Headteacher	Annabel Stoddart
Telephone number	01283 759 007
Website	http://abbotbeyne.staffs.sch.uk/
Email address	office@abbotbeyne.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 May 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current national floor standards.
- Abbot Beyne School is a smaller than average comprehensive school with a sixth form. The number of pupils on roll has been stable in the last few years.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is above average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that typically seen in secondary schools nationally.
- Pupils enter the school with prior attainment below the national average.
- The school uses Burton Pupil Referral Unit as alternative provision for a very small number of pupils.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is higher than typical nationally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching across 41 lessons in order to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Ten of these lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Pupils' work was sampled in many of these lessons and inspectors also talked to pupils about their work and progress in different subjects.
- A range of documents were carefully examined including: the school's own self-evaluation and school improvement plan; information on the current progress made by pupils and students; minutes of governing body meetings; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to how pupils are supported in keeping safe.
- Meetings were held with pupils in different year groups and their views were also sought during break and lunchtime.
- A meeting was held with five members of the governing body. Discussions also took place with senior leaders, subject leaders and those members of staff responsible for the pastoral care and guidance of pupils.
- The lead inspector had a telephone meeting with a representative from Staffordshire local authority.
- Inspectors evaluated the responses of 178 parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. They also took account of the views of 66 members of staff received through questionnaires that they returned, as well as 55 pupil survey responses.

Inspection team

Thomas Walton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Julie Griffiths	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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