

Abbotswood Primary School

Kelston Close, Yate, Bristol, Gloucestershire BS37 8SZ

Inspection dates

13–14 June 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Standards in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 were below national figures in 2016. Recent initiatives to improve teaching have not had sufficient time to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- Teachers do not consistently set work with the right level of challenge, or plan to extend pupils’ thinking effectively. As a result, the work is sometimes too easy or too difficult for the different groups of pupils, particularly the most able in mathematics.
- Pupils do not demonstrate consistently good skills in speaking and in their understanding of grammar. This hampers their ability to become accomplished writers.
- Some pupils are not attentive enough in lessons. On occasions, when their work is not suitably challenging, they lose concentration and do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- In the past, leaders have not checked on the impact of teaching on pupils’ achievements accurately enough. As a result, they have not been precise in identifying any weaknesses in teaching and resolving them.
- Middle leaders, some relatively new to their roles, have had limited impact on improving the quality of teaching.
- Until recently, governors have not checked the school’s work systematically. As a result, they are not able to hold leaders fully to account for pupils’ achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching is effective in the early years foundation stage provision and children make a positive start to school.
- Most pupils in key stage 1 are making good progress and achieving in line with national figures.
- The support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils is well led and managed. This is resulting in better progress for these pupils.
- The school’s work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that all groups of pupils make at least good progress by ensuring that teachers:
 - develop the ability to provide the right level of challenge for the different groups of pupils, especially the most able in mathematics
 - raise the expectations of what pupils can achieve and their productivity in lessons so that they are fully engaged in their learning
 - encourage pupils to speak in full sentences when talking about their work and explaining their ideas
 - reinforce the skills of grammar and sentence construction in pupils' writing at all times.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by making sure that:
 - leaders evaluate the quality of teaching in terms of its impact on the achievement of different groups of pupils
 - the skills of middle leaders are further developed in order to increase their impact on the quality of teaching
 - governors check systematically the work of the school for themselves so that they are better able to hold leaders to account.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have not secured enough effective teaching to enable all groups of pupils to make consistently good progress.
- Over the past year, there have been considerable changes to the leadership and staffing of the school. Following the appointment of the acting headteacher and the establishment of a new leadership team, the pace of improvement has increased considerably.
- When they check teaching, leaders have not measured its impact accurately enough in terms of pupils' achievement. Consequently, they have not identified any weaknesses in teaching precisely enough and resolved them quickly.
- Middle leaders, some relatively new to their roles, have introduced some effective strategies to improve teaching in their areas of responsibility. However, they have had insufficient time to work alongside colleagues to improve their practice to be able to evaluate the impact of their work.
- The acting headteacher has won the confidence of staff, pupils and their parents. She has wasted no time in creating a culture where effective teaching and good behaviour are the expectation. She has established a well-targeted programme for improvement which is being carried out systematically.
- Recent changes to improve the quality of teaching in English and mathematics are making a difference. Progress is increasing and a greater number of pupils are now on track to achieve at least the expected standard by the end of key stage 2. This strengthening picture, together with a rising trend in children's achievement in the early years, indicates that the school has the capacity for further improvement.
- The leadership of special educational needs is effective and additional funding is used to provide precisely targeted teaching. This has led to better rates of progress for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity at all times and tackle any discrimination effectively. The pupil premium is used to provide effective support for disadvantaged pupils and increasingly their differing needs are well met. This has resulted in these pupils achieving as well as others in school.
- Checks on the use of the physical education and school sport funding show that pupils are taking part in a wider range of sporting activities such as tag rugby and gymnastics. Staff work alongside specialist coaches to increase their skills in order to sustain these developments.
- The curriculum, together with residential visits and after-school clubs, enriches pupils' learning experiences. British values, such as respect for others, are reinforced positively through topic work and assemblies. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through special events such as the recent performance of the 'Wizard of Oz' by a visiting theatre company.

- Leaders have worked hard to maintain the confidence of parents during the period of change. Most parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate what the new leadership team is trying to achieve.
- Support from local authority advisers and the national leader for education has helped leaders, including governors, to increase their effectiveness. It has helped them gain an accurate view of the school's work and plan the next steps for improvement.

Governance of the school

- Until recently, governors did not check the school's work systematically for themselves. As a result, their ability to hold leaders to account for the school's performance was limited.
- In the past, governors were unclear about the quality of teaching. Now they receive accurate information about how the performance of staff is managed to address any underperformance and reward effective practice. This enables them to ask challenging questions about why teaching and pupils' achievement are not better.
- Following an external review of their practice, governors have restructured their work to become more effective. They have undertaken relevant training provided by the local authority, in order to gain an accurate understanding of how well pupils are achieving compared to national figures. They strongly support the developments made by the acting headteacher and leadership team which have led to improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. They are now more involved in evaluating the work of the school alongside senior leaders.
- Governors manage the school's finances well. They know how additional funds are used to support disadvantaged pupils and develop sporting activities. They know about the impact the funding is having on pupils' achievement and levels of participation in sport.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders put a high priority on the safety and well-being of pupils. Safeguarding procedures are well managed and procedures are reviewed regularly. Leaders are diligent in making sure that staff training is up to date and covers recognising the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. They have built up close relationships with external agencies and make good use of specialist help and advice. Staff know their pupils and their families very well and look out vigilantly for any potential safeguarding concerns. Most parents agree that their children are well looked after in school and kept safe.
- Leaders have taken firm steps to improve attendance and punctuality. They have provided effective support for families to encourage regular attendance. As a consequence, attendance rates have risen quickly in recent months and are close to the national average.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- In the past there has not been enough consistently good teaching to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve well, especially in key stage 2. Teaching in key stage 1 is well targeted and pupils achieved in line with national figures in 2016 for each subject.
- Although teaching has improved recently, not all teachers have consistently high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve and do not plan suitably challenging work. As a result, the most able pupils complete tasks too easily, while others find it too difficult. This slows the pace of learning and pupils lose concentration when they are not fully engaged by the work.
- Some teachers do not develop pupils' skills in speaking extensively enough. They do not insist that pupils speak in full sentences when explaining their ideas. This limits the development of their understanding of grammar and sentence construction. As a result, teachers do not enable pupils to achieve high standards in their writing.
- In mathematics, there are too few challenging tasks that require pupils to extend their thinking to the full and make connections about numbers in other areas of mathematics. This limits the depth of their understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Following a review of the way reading is taught, teachers now develop pupils' comprehension skills effectively through well-focused teaching in small groups. This approach, together with a stronger emphasis on developing phonics skills, ensures that standards in reading are rising across the school.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work together to support learning, especially where pupils need extra support and guidance. Precisely targeted teaching helps pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils benefit from carefully tailored support that ensures both their academic and emotional needs are met, enabling them to become confident learners.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There are effective relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves. These contribute greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school. 'Teachers are very understanding here' was a typical comment from a pupil, and others agreed with her.
- Pupils are encouraged to help around the school and undertake a variety of responsibilities such as school councillors or lunchtime helpers with the younger pupils.
- Pupils are positive that they feel safe in school. They are clear that bullying and derogatory language are not tolerated here. They have a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying and the forms it can take, such as racist name-calling.

- Pupils receive good training to keep themselves safe both in and out of school, for example in road safety and internet safety.
- Pupils trust the adults to sort out any problems should they occur. They say that any minor falling out between pupils or unkind behaviour is sorted out promptly by staff.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning but some are inattentive when the learning is not matched well enough to their ability. Then, they lose concentration and do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Typically, pupils conduct themselves well in and around the school. They are polite and friendly; always eager to talk to visitors about their school, of which they are proud.
- Pupils say they are listened to and that staff take their views seriously. They trust teachers to sort out any minor fallings-out among pupils should they occur.
- The school's behaviour logs show that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour. The very few pupils who show poor behaviour are benefiting from carefully planned support. This is helping to promote acceptable behaviour and reduce the need for exclusion.
- Most pupils attend regularly and are seldom late for school. Leaders work effectively with the local authority attendance officer to promote regular attendance and to discourage any unnecessary absences. As result, current attendance is just below national rates.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because, until recently, not all groups of pupils made enough progress to ensure that they achieve well. While there is still some unevenness between classes, better progress is leading to rising standards, particularly in key stage 2. However, too many of the most able pupils are not fully extended in their work and not making the progress they could.
- When writing, pupils do not demonstrate consistently the necessary skills of grammar and sentence construction to become good writers. Pupils' spoken language is not always developed as well as it should be and this limits their ability to write effectively for different purposes.
- Achievement in mathematics shows improvement this year and pupils are proficient in their arithmetic skills. However, their thinking is sometimes limited by the lack of challenging tasks that encourage pupils to apply their number skills across other aspects of mathematics, such as geometry and statistics.
- Pupils are acquiring better skills in phonics than previously. A greater number of Year 1 pupils are on track to meet the expected standard in the phonics screening check this year, helping them to become fluent readers.

- Older pupils read confidently and with obvious enjoyment. They are encouraged to read more widely through their studies, such as the diary of Anne Frank when learning about the Second World War, and special events such as the recent visit of a published author.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to the precisely planned help they receive this year. Their work is matched well to meet individuals' needs.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as, and sometimes better than, others in school from similar starting points. The pupil premium funding provides extra help to improve their self-confidence as learners and is successful in accelerating academic progress.

Early years provision

Good

- Children settle into the Reception class quickly and happily because their transition into school is managed well. Routines and expectations are quickly established so that children soon become self-assured and ready to learn.
- Often from starting points that are below those typically seen for their age, children make good progress. They catch up quickly, especially in their personal development, due to well-planned activities such as the visit to a restaurant to make pizzas. An increasing number of children start Year 1 as confident learners, demonstrating the skills and understanding expected for their age.
- Teaching is effective because the learning activities are carefully designed to promote good progress for all groups of children. They have ready access to a good range of imaginative resources both indoors and out.
- Children are able to follow their own interests and make up their own activities. For example, during the inspection a group of boys were observed planning a pretend 'party', and were fully engaged in carefully writing their invitations and shopping list. Children also benefit from good-quality adult-led sessions, including in phonics, which underpin early reading skills successfully.
- Children's achievement is tracked very closely across the year. Teachers adjust the provision frequently to ensure that the most able children are suitably challenged. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in their learning.
- Disadvantaged children develop their personal and emotional skills well through additional activities provided by additional funding, such as 'forest schools' activities where they learn about cooperation and making relationships.
- Good attention is paid to safeguarding and children's welfare. Children behave well because there are clear expectations of what is acceptable behaviour.
- The early years leader has created a focused staff team. She has ensured that they are well trained, for example in teaching phonics. She monitors their work very closely, making the necessary improvements to maximise the impact of teaching on children's achievement.

- Leaders have identified that children’s speaking skills are frequently low when they start school. Children receive extra help in small groups that enables them to converse more confidently. However, children are not routinely encouraged to speak in full sentences, hampering the development of good grammar.

School details

Unique reference number	132199
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10033234

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	288
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Debbie Freeman
Acting headteacher	Sarah Willoughby
Telephone number	01454 867777
Website	http://www.abbotswoodprimary.org.uk
Email address	admin@abbotswoodprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 November 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is an average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised in 11 classes, some of which are mixed-age classes. Children in the early years foundation stage are taught in two Reception classes.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is just above the national average.
- There is an above-average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school provides care for pupils through a breakfast club.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- A national leader for education (NLE) from another local primary school has been advising the school's leadership over the past year.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place over two days. Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school, much of this in conjunction with the headteacher. In addition, they made visits to classrooms, the dining hall and the playground.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors and school leaders. The lead inspector also spoke with an adviser from the local authority that provides support to the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 35 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and written comments, as well as informal consultations with parents before the school day. They also took account of the 13 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire. There were no responses to Ofsted’s questionnaire for pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents, including the school’s improvement plans. They examined information on current pupils’ progress, minutes of the governing body meetings, safeguarding procedures and the plans for the use of the sport premium.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, talked to them in classrooms and evaluated samples of their work.

Inspection team

Sandra Woodman, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Jenkins	Ofsted Inspector
Bradley Murray	Ofsted Inspector
Wendy Hanrahan	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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