

Abbey Hill Primary & Nursery

Abbey Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG17 7NZ

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
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

- Outcomes are not good enough. Standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2 are too low and are not improving quickly enough.
- The quality of teaching is too variable. Expectations of what pupils can and should achieve are not high enough.
- The most able and the middle-ability pupils are not enabled to reach the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not consistently use assessment information well enough to match work precisely to pupils' different needs and abilities.
- Teaching in a range of subjects lacks sufficient challenge to ensure that pupils can make the best progress across the curriculum.
- Too many pupils are regularly absent from school.
- Some leaders are new to their roles and have not yet been able to demonstrate the full impact of their work on pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Governors are not yet holding leaders precisely to account for standards in the school.
- Too few children attain a good level of development by the end of early years.

The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed acting headteacher has a clear vision for the school and the community it serves. She leads with a strong moral purpose.
- Leaders have created a vigilant safeguarding culture. Pupils feel safe and are safe at school.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make secure progress.
- Pupils make stronger progress in mathematics than in English.
- Pupils are proud of their school and show positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils conduct themselves well. They are welcoming, polite and respectful.
- Children in early years make a good start to their primary school life, given their starting point.
- Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management, by:
 - sharpening the knowledge and skills of members of the governing body to more effectively hold leaders to account for pupils' outcomes and the overall quality of their education
 - developing senior and middle leaders so they contribute more significantly to improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards
 - ensuring that the curriculum, especially in subjects beyond English and mathematics, enables pupils to develop greater knowledge and deepen their understanding across a wide range of subjects
 - strengthening the monitoring and evaluation processes across the school to be focused and improving the curriculum, teaching and learning as well as pupils' outcomes.
- Improve teaching so that all groups of pupils make consistently good progress, by:
 - ensuring that all staff have the highest expectations of what pupils can do and achieve
 - ensuring that teachers provide greater challenge for all, including the most able and the middle-ability pupils, so that they make stronger progress across all subjects
 - increasing pupils' attainment in reading and writing in particular so that more pupils reach the higher and expected standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2
 - ensuring that a greater proportion of children reach a good level of development by the end of Reception.
- Continue to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence by further raising the aspirations of parents and carers to see the relevance and value of education, so that their children attend regularly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because not enough pupils make the progress to meet the academic standards that are expected for their age.
- There has been much change in the school's leadership team this academic year. The newly appointed deputy headteacher is currently the acting headteacher. She ably leads and manages the school. She has a clear vision for this inclusive community-based school. She leads with a strong moral purpose that every pupil should receive the best education. She also has high expectations of staff and pupils.
- The acting headteacher has a realistic appreciation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has gained the respect and support of many pupils, parents and staff in the short period of time she has been at the school.
- Staff share leaders' vision, aims and passion. This has established an inclusive, welcoming and safe school for pupils, including those who are from disadvantaged and challenging backgrounds.
- Leaders ensure that staff morale is positive. Staff who spoke with inspectors are positive about the school and are proud to be associated with the school. Staff feel well supported through changes to the curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning. However, the impact of these recent changes is yet to be seen across the school.
- Senior leaders and governors ensure that a focus on pastoral care, coupled with meeting pupils' personal, social and emotional needs, are priorities for the school. The work of designated safeguarding leaders and of the children and family support worker places the welfare and well-being of each pupil at the heart of the school's work. This is a particular strength of the school.
- Leadership capacity to undertake monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment has been limited. Consequently, leaders have not been able to address inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, there is too much variability in teaching and pupils are not making good progress.
- Some senior and middle leaders do not have sufficient awareness of pupils' standards and progress in their areas of responsibility. This limits them in ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is effective enough to achieve improved outcomes for pupils.
- Leadership of, and provision for pupils with SEND are effective in meeting pupils' needs. As a result, these pupils are making steady progress from their varied starting points. However, there is scope for these pupils to make even greater progress.
- Leaders have not checked that the curriculum builds progressively on prior learning. Not all subjects across the curriculum are taught well. For example, science and geography are not taught well enough to develop the pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. There are many examples of pupils repeating the same work in different year groups with little challenge to extend and deepen learning. As a result, pupils do not make good progress.
- The full range of extra-curricular activities and provision, including trips, visits, and

music, drama and sports clubs, ensures that pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These opportunities are complemented by assemblies that enable pupils to think about themselves and different religious beliefs. For example, during the inspection, pupils had the opportunity to listen to the experiences of a practising Muslim and reflect upon the importance of Eid al-Fitr at the end of Ramadan.

- Parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, were overwhelmingly positive about the school. As one parent typically wrote, 'Abbey Hill is a warm and nurturing school and I feel confident that my children are well cared for, valued and supported. The staff are approachable, friendly and always happy to help ... Abbey Hill is a lovely school with a caring ethos.'
- Leaders' use of additional funds for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND supports pupils' social, emotional and learning needs. Effective use of additional funding supports these pupils to make secure progress over time.
- Leaders allocate and check the spending of the physical education (PE) and sport premium funding. They use this well to promote different sporting activities, events and clubs, as well as external coaching. Pupils enjoy sport and staff encourage them to participate as part of an approach to healthy lifestyles.
- Leaders are committed to working in partnership with other schools in a collaboration of local primary schools. This has helped leaders to develop their skills through school-to-school support.

Governance of the school

- Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. They regularly visit the school and have strong links with the local community.
- Members of the governing body support senior leaders by ensuring that this is an inclusive school. They are ambitious for pupils and the wider school community.
- Governors clearly understand their roles. Effective communication between governors and leaders means that all have a clear understanding of the priorities for improvement. However, governors do not consistently challenge and hold school leaders sharply to account. At times, they would benefit from a clearer understanding of the progress being made by different groups of pupils.
- Governors undertake regular training, which includes safeguarding training.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Senior leaders make sure that there is a strong and effective safeguarding culture across the school. Leaders ensure that statutory requirements are met. Effective systems and thorough records show that leaders respond quickly to concerns.
- Staff recognise pupils who need support and they share their concerns with safeguarding leaders. As part of her work, the children and family support worker,

along with members of the welfare team, help pupils in many positive ways. They have established strong relationships with families and members of the community. Staff make sure that children are safe.

- Staff receive regular training and are aware of the issues that affect pupils. Staff are regularly trained, are mindful of the needs of pupils and respond to any concerns swiftly.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, agree that this is a safe school. Pupils spoken with say their children feel safe and they value the care given by staff. Teachers teach pupils to be safe in different circumstances. Pupils are confident that they can talk to an adult if something is wrong and that it will be dealt with appropriately.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- There is too much variability in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teaching is not consistently effective enough for pupils to make good progress.
- Not all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and achieve. Consequently, pupils are not being given suitable tasks that help them to make the progress of which they are capable. This prevents the most able pupils from achieving the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers' questioning is not always sufficiently probing. This means that teachers are not able to accurately assess how pupils understand what they are learning, nor to encourage pupils to think more deeply. This hinders learning, especially for pupils of middle ability and the most able.
- At times, teachers do not address errors and misconceptions. Missed opportunities are not made the most of and as a result, incorrect knowledge and skills are reinforced. Some teachers also accept pupils' work that is clearly below the standard that they are capable of achieving.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have established very positive relationships with pupils. A focus on developing pupils' character and resilience helps promote positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are comfortable to share their thoughts and ideas and enjoy working together.
- The teaching of phonics is well organised to meet the needs of different pupils. Teachers assess pupils and use this information to provide support when needed. As a result, pupils' early reading skills are developed well in early years and key stage 1.
- Teachers enjoy working at the school. They are keen to improve their practice and engage in a range of training activities. The impact of training in new approaches to the teaching of mathematics, reading comprehension and handwriting is yet to have significant impact on pupils' learning.
- There is some effective teaching. When this is having the most impact, teachers are checking pupils' knowledge and quickly dealing with pupils' errors or misunderstandings. Teachers also challenge pupils to think more deeply and make connections in their learning. For example, pupils were seen and heard debating the impact of Darwin's theory of evolution within the context of Victorian society and

Christian religious beliefs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. This is a strength of the school and reflects leaders' vision and aspirations for all pupils.
- The pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to school and their learning. They are proud of their school and those who spoke with inspectors say they enjoy school.
- Pupils are supported to be confident and self-assured individuals. They show respect for each other, their teachers and visitors. Pupils convey a strong sense of belonging and are happy to be at school. Pupils are polite and courteous.
- Staff have developed an open culture of respect which promotes pupils' welfare and well-being. Pupils have opportunities to learn about themselves and others as well as how to keep themselves healthy.
- Pupils are safe and those who met with the inspectors say they feel safe. They are taught how to understand different risks and how to keep themselves safe in different situations.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Overwhelmingly, parents and staff who responded to the online surveys say that pupils behave themselves well at school. Pupils conduct themselves well both in lessons and during break- and lunchtimes. They value the opportunity to 'take 5' to help them prepare for their learning after break- and lunchtimes.
- The school has an orderly and calm environment. Pupils respond quickly to requests and instructions and are encouraged to reflect upon their choices. They are considerate and respectful of each other.
- The incidence of bullying is rare and when it does occur, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils are confident that they can speak to an adult and their worries and concerns will be listened to and dealt with well.
- Overall attendance has improved slightly this academic year, but is still likely to be below the national average.
- Leaders' actions to reduce persistent absence are effective in improving the attendance of a few pupils. However, too many pupils continue to be regularly absent from school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils do not consistently make the progress of which they are capable. Overall

progress at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics in 2018 was average. Progress in 2017 was much stronger.

- Pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2018 was higher than the national average at the expected standard. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 has improved year on year in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard is still below the national average. In 2018, proportionally more pupils attained the higher standard in writing and mathematics than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the Year 1 national phonics screening check requirements has improved to almost the national average. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils meet the expected screening check standard.
- Some unevenness in achievement between year groups remains. Progress is not yet good enough for the most able and the middle-ability pupils in particular. They do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Scrutiny of pupils' workbooks shows a lack of challenge and inconsistent progress across different year groups in a range of subjects.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress, given their starting points. Likewise, effective use of the pupil premium funding supports disadvantaged pupils and as a result they make stronger progress than their peers.

Early years provision

Good

- Children settle into the Nursery and Reception classes quickly and happily because their transition into school is well managed. Staff establish routines and children quickly become self-assured and ready to learn. They demonstrate good behaviour.
- Leaders ensure that children, including two-year-olds, are assessed when they start early years. Staff gather information quickly, especially in relation to early communication, language, reading, writing and mathematical development. This shows that most children join the school with levels of development that are markedly lower than typical for their age.
- Despite this thorough assessment information, this is not used consistently to plan next steps in learning. As a result, outcomes for children when they leave Reception are still too variable. The proportion of children attaining a good level of development is below the national average.
- The early years leader has created a cohesive staff team. Relationships between adults and children are positive. Staff are trained and pay good attention to the children's welfare and well-being needs. Statutory welfare requirements for early years are met.
- The indoor classrooms and outdoor areas are equipped well to support learning. These environments are safe, uncluttered and stimulating. The children are encouraged to investigate and work things out for themselves. As a result, children are often focused on their learning. However, inconsistencies in expectations mean that some children

are not challenged sufficiently to make even stronger progress.

- Teachers and other adults such as key workers successfully engage parents in their children's learning. Many parents contribute towards the assessment of what their children can do. This approach ensures that positive home–school relationships are established and further support each child's learning.
- Parents are very positive about their children's start to their education. Parents are particularly complimentary about how quickly and well their children settle in at the beginning of their school careers.
- Safeguarding is a high priority. This is effective and in line with the rest of the school's processes, systems and procedures.

School details

Unique reference number	136006
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10087290

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

Type of school	Nursery and primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karl Simpson
Acting Headteacher	Sarah Robinson
Telephone number	01623 484512
Website	www.abbeyhillprimaryandnurseryschool.co.uk
Email address	office@abbeyhill.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 June 2018

Information about this school

- This school is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than the national average and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is well below the national figure.
- The school has experienced significant staff and leadership changes this academic year. The substantive headteacher is currently on long-term leave. The current acting headteacher took up her position as deputy headteacher at the beginning of the summer term.

- Leaders work with a collaboration of other local primary schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 34 lessons or parts of lessons. Senior leaders carried out some observations jointly with inspectors. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books and looked at samples of pupils' books in classes.
- Inspectors heard pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the acting headteacher, other leaders, members of staff and spoke to groups of pupils.
- The lead inspector met three governors, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke to the local authority education improvement adviser.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the school gate and pupils around the school. In addition, they evaluated the 48 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as 17 free-text responses. Inspectors also took account of the 24 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including those relating to the school's self-evaluation, the governing body's meeting minutes, improvement plans, and school information on pupils' recent attainment and progress.
- Inspectors also considered behaviour and attendance information as well as policies and procedures relating to special educational needs, pupil premium funding, PE and sport premium funding, safeguarding and child protection.

Inspection team

Chris Davies, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Heidi Malliff	Ofsted Inspector
Aileen King	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Moore	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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