

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ABBOTS LANGLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Abbots Langley, Watford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117083

Headteacher: Mr S Springett

Reporting inspector: Mr N Sherman  
16493

Dates of inspection: 14 - 16 January 2002

Inspection number: 197638

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Parsonage Close Abbots Langley Hertfordshire
Postcode:	WD5 0BQ
Telephone number:	01923 263174
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Elliot
Date of previous inspection:	22 September 1997

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Abbots Langley Primary School is situated in the small village of Abbots Langley which lies four miles from the town of Watford. The school caters for pupils between the ages of three and 11. At present, there are 440 pupils on roll and there is a very even number of boys and girls. The school is larger than other primary schools. The school has no pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils who claim free schools meals is four per cent, a figure that is below the national average. The number of pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs is 11 per cent, which is below the national average as is the number of pupils at the school who have a statement of special educational need. Pupils enter the school with a broad spread of ability although overall attainment is above average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Abbots Langley is a good school and has many strong features. Pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment, they make good progress and by end of Year 6, reach standards that are well above the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Teaching overall is good and in the Nursery is often very good. As a result many pupils make good progress in most features of their learning. The leadership and management of the school are sound overall and a strong team spirit, that is focused on encouraging pupils to achieve to the best of their ability, is actively promoted by the headteacher. However, there are shortcomings in how the co-ordinators for subjects other than English and mathematics monitor teaching and learning and in how the governing body fulfils its function as a 'critical friend' to the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils make good gains in learning in literacy and numeracy and achieve very high standards by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- The quality of education in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to learning and relationships are often very good.

#### **What could be improved**

- Pupils' attainment in writing at the end of Year 2.
- Aspects of pupils' personal development.
- The use of investigation work in science.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected over four years ago in September 1997 when it was found to have many good features. Since then, it has made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues from the last report. Standards in art and design and design and technology, are much improved and pupils now reach standards in line with these expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, in Years 1 and 2, in writing, standards have dipped over the past two years and pupils with higher attainments in Years 1 and 2 are not challenged sufficiently in this aspect of their learning. The use of assessment information to plan pupils' learning is now satisfactory although greater use could still be made of this data to plan the learning of higher attaining pupils in aspects of their work. Satisfactory progress has been made on extending links with parents to develop their involvement in the day-to-day life of the school, although there are ways in which links with parents could be developed. The quality of development planning at the school is satisfactory. However, the school's measures to gauge the success of the plan's initiatives are not sufficiently linked to improvements in standards. The role of the senior management team in monitoring pupils' learning is now secure, although there is room for further development of the role of the co-ordinators in subjects other than English and mathematics as this is under-developed. There is a strong team spirit at the school and the school shows sufficient capacity to build on its strengths and address areas where further improvements could be made.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	B	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	B
Science	B	B	B	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The information shows that in the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, pupils reached standards that were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. When the results are compared with similar schools, based on the numbers of pupils who claim free school meals, pupils reached standards that were well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. The trend in attainment over three years has been consistent and the school has kept pace with the progress seen nationally in National Curriculum tests.

Pupils in the current Year 6 cohort are on line to reach well above average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science. This is reflected in attainment in the National Curriculum tests. Standards in literacy and numeracy are above expectations and good attention is paid by the school to carefully planning how pupils' skills in these areas can be developed through other subjects. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with national expectations and pupils make good gains in their learning, for example, finding out how the Internet can be explored and the information gathered used to support their studies. The school sets appropriately challenging targets for pupils in Years 3-6 in English and mathematics and these are accurately based on the knowledge and understanding of the pupils' academic abilities.

The 2001 national tests results at the end of Year 2 indicate that pupils' attainment in reading was well above the national average. Their attainment in writing is not as high and indicates average standards. In mathematics, pupils reached above average standards. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance was above average in reading, average in mathematics and below average in writing. In writing, standards have declined since 1999 when they were above average. Although standards in mathematics dipped over three years from 1998, the most recent results indicate that improvements have been made. The end of Year 2 national teacher assessments in science indicate that pupils' attainment is average although below average when compared with similar schools.

Year 1 and 2 pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics and achieve well although they could do better in writing. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in English and mathematics, where teaching is often good, although in science, pupils could achieve more in the investigation work they undertake.

The attainment of children when they join the school in the Nursery is often above the expected level for children of this age. Children make good progress in their first few terms at the school and are on course to achieve above the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. As they move through into the Reception classes, they continue to make good strides in many aspects of their learning and are well prepared for the National Curriculum by the time they enter Year 1.

Although the school has a fewer than average number of pupils with special educational needs, those that have such needs are identified early by the school and are given appropriate, well-targeted support. As a result, they often make good progress towards the targets identified for them in their individual education plans. Pupils with a high level of need are very supported both academically and socially.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy their learning and are keen to succeed in all they do. They work with concentration and perseverance and show a willingness to respond to questions and requests.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are mindful of the needs of others and behaviour in and around the school is good.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships in the school are very good and pupils treat one another with a high level of respect. While pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall, there are missed opportunities to promote pupils' initiative and independent learning skills.
Attendance	Attendance rates are very good and well above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

The quality of teaching across the school is good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the course of the inspection and this represents a good improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching at the Foundation Stage is good and all teachers have a good understanding of the learning needs of young children and plan learning that is appropriate to the pupils' ages and abilities. The literacy and numeracy hour have been introduced effectively in all classes and in most cases, teachers plan work that takes into account the abilities of pupils. However, in writing, in Years 1 and 2 too much work that is planned for pupils with higher-attainments is similar to that for other pupils in the class. The teaching of English and mathematics is good and while teaching of science across the school is satisfactory, insufficient emphasis is placed by teachers on open-ended investigation work to build on pupils' good capacity for independent learning. In many classrooms, there is good use of ICT to support pupils' learning and a key feature of this is the varied and frequent opportunities in many subjects for pupils to explore the Internet to support their work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality of learning planned for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and well planned to meet their individual needs. For all other pupils the curriculum is broad and relevant to the pupils' needs and meets statutory requirements. Visits to places of educational interest further extend pupils' learning experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs have their needs well catered for. Those with a high level of special educational need are very well cared for both in terms of their pastoral and academic needs.



Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted through the different subjects of the curriculum. However, there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' initiative and personal development through the subjects of the curriculum.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has effective procedures for the welfare and guidance of its pupils. Assessment of pupils' academic progress is regular, ensuring that the pupils are known as individuals, and in most subjects the information used well to support the next stages of their development.

Links with parents are satisfactory overall. A thriving parent and teachers' association provides good support and makes a valuable contribution to the life of the school. The school is aware of the need to ensure that links are further developed with parents so that they can be more involved in supporting the school in their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides sound leadership of the school and is ably supported by the senior management team. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics are monitored well. However, there is potential to enhance the effectiveness of other co-ordinators by allowing them similar opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body effectively fulfils its statutory responsibilities. However, their role in holding the school to account for the standards that it reaches is at an early stage of development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory, although teaching and learning are checked this has not been effective in addressing the shortcomings in the teaching of writing in Years 1 and 2. The school is making increased use of National Curriculum and other test data to plan improvements and set targets.
The strategic use of resources	The school is careful to ensure that the school budget is spent effectively. While having a much larger than average contingency fund, this is earmarked to replace mobile classrooms and provide more permanent accommodation.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The progress that their children make.</li> <li>The approachability of staff.</li> <li>The good care pupils receive on a day-to-day basis.</li> <li>The standards that pupils reach in end of key stage tests.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The range of extra-curricular activities for all pupils.</li> <li>How they are kept informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>Communication links generally.</li> </ul>

Inspection findings support parents' positive views of the school. Evidence suggests that the school does provide an interesting range of activities to support pupils' learning through educational trips and visits and a range of activities after school. However, these are more geared towards Years 3 – 6 pupils and there is scope by the school to extend these to younger pupils. Inspection findings indicate that information to parents about their children's progress is regular and the quality of pupils' reports is good. Inspectors do not support parents on this issue. While the school has improved links with parents since

the previous inspection, it is aware of how further links could be established with parents so that they can support their children in their learning and the school in general.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

#### **Pupils make good gains in learning in literacy and numeracy and achieve very high standards by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics.**

1. Pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment. Because of good teaching in many parts of the school, pupils of all abilities make good progress in most aspects of their learning. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach very high standards that are well above the average in reading and above average in mathematics. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain well above average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science. When the Year 6 results are compared with similar schools they show that pupils' performance is well above average and indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
2. In Years 1 and 2, pupils reach high standards in reading and mathematics. Many pupils are confident readers and read with high levels of enthusiasm. They have a good knowledge and understanding of authors who write with children in mind. By Year 2, pupils read fluently and with a high level of accuracy. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make good progress in their reading development. By the age of 11, pupils read widely and many have an avid appetite to read literature in its many forms. Teachers make good use of the abridged versions of classical children's authors to stimulate literacy and this gives the pupils a good insight into the range of books that Dickens, CS Lewis and Tolkien wrote for children. Pupils are strongly encouraged to derive pleasure from their reading and good opportunities are provided for them to use non-fiction materials to support their understanding and learning in other subjects. The school library is well stocked, attractive and provides a highly valuable resource to support pupils' reading and information research skills.
3. Speaking and listening skills are well developed across the school. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are taught to appreciate and listen to others' points of view and 'Big Books' in literacy sessions are used well by teachers to encourage pupils to discuss and consider how a story may develop or end or why a character behaves as he does. By Year 6, pupils have developed further their speaking and listening skills. They are given good encouragement to take part in class discussions and debates and express their opinions about issues they are exploring in class topics and themes. This ensures pupils make good gains in their learning of how to speak and participate as a member of a wider social group. As a result they are aware of the importance of taking turns and of the need to listen effectively to the views of others.
4. By Year 2, pupils have a good awareness of the need to punctuate their everyday writing with full stops and capital letters. Standards in spelling are good and pupils are confident enough to make an informed guess at any words they may be unfamiliar with. The good emphasis by teachers on developing pupils' handwriting skills ensures that many pupils make good gains in learning how to join their letters by the age of seven. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand how writing can be produced for different purposes and for a range of different readers. They know that drafting ideas and planning out work is an important part of the writing process and pupils make good gains in their understanding of how ICT can be a useful tool in assisting in this. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to produce work that is clear, and contains a rich use of interesting vocabulary.
5. In mathematics, by Year 6 pupils are confident in using number in solving problems and their mental arithmetic skills are often above average. Their understanding of shape and space is good and pupils are able to use these skills to solve a range of everyday mathematical problems. By Year 6, pupils have further developed their confidence in using and applying their mathematical knowledge and understanding in the course of their studies in other subjects. They know how to use the computer language of Logo, for example, to devise simple procedures in exploring work on shape. In number, pupils have learned different strategies to solve multiplication and division problems and their understanding of how to estimate answers as a first step to getting the correct answer is very secure.

## **The quality of teaching is good overall.**

6. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in many parts of the school and makes a positive contribution to the high levels of attainment pupils reach. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was good or better in two thirds of the thirty six lessons observed. The remainder was satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when just over one in ten lessons were found to be unsatisfactory.
7. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is frequently good. Although pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment, teachers effectively ensure that the planned learning for the children is well matched to their needs. The very good relationships many of the adults have with the children ensure that they settle easily into school and children quickly become aware of the school's routines and expectations of day-to-day routines in classrooms and in and around the school. As a result of the frequently good teaching at the Foundation Stage pupils reach above the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1 and start to follow the National Curriculum.
8. The teaching of English and mathematics is good in both. At both key stages, good emphasis is placed by teachers on extending the basic skills in literacy and numeracy that pupils have acquired at the Foundation Stage. The teaching of the basic skills in reading is good and teachers are effective in helping to promote strong attitudes in pupils towards reading for both pleasure and to develop their learning in other subjects. In many classrooms, for example, books are displayed prominently and are used effectively to support pupils' learning in geography or history. The school, rightly, places high status on reading and provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to help them develop their reading skills across many areas of their learning. Teachers acknowledge the good skills pupils demonstrate and use assessment information to build carefully on pupils' previous knowledge and understanding of the reading process.
9. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and the principles that underpin effectively support their teaching. Teachers have high expectations of how pupils are to present their work and this has a positive impact on pupils appreciating the need to produce careful work as this has a strong impact on the reader. Teachers often plan the learning of English in interesting ways and pupils respond with high levels of curiosity. In one Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils undertook work that involved them in exploring the history and cultural heritage of certain words. The pupils had to explore the modern day equivalence of words used by Chaucer in the 13<sup>th</sup> century or words used in the Tudor period. Following this, pupils explored the impact that the French, Greek or Russian languages have had on the pupils' own language. This was followed by pupils discussing how the inception and embracing of new technology brings new vocabulary into the English language. The teacher made good use of questions to stir pupils' curiosity thinking about the history of words and equally good use was made of etymological dictionaries to support their learning. As a result of the highly effective teaching, pupils freely volunteered their own ideas such as one pupil who explained how the word 'tweenager' has gained increased legitimacy in recent times. As a result of the good teaching in English, many pupils develop a strong interest and natural curiosity in how language works, its history and how it continues to develop naturally with some words becoming redundant while new ones become fashionable.
10. In mathematics, many teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and plan work for the pupils that they find challenging and stimulating. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. They make good use of time in lessons to explain clearly what they expect of pupils in the time they are given to complete their work. Good links are made with other subject areas to promote pupils' numeracy skills and apply their mathematical skills in new and interesting situations. ICT is used well in this respect. In many classes, teachers effectively plan to ensure that the Internet is used well to support pupils' mathematical learning. Year 6 pupils, for example, use the computer to locate particular web pages that set pupils mathematical problems that involve them in developing their mental arithmetic skills. Other positive features of the teaching of mathematics include the quality of lesson planning which is good and highlights a good sequence of activities that helps to move pupils' learning forward.

11. There are other effective features of teaching that are positive. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and teaching staff plan work and devise effective individual education plans that are closely matched the needs of pupils. Those with a high level of need are very well cared for and they too are supported ably in order for them to reach the targets that are outlined for them in their individual education plans.
12. Across the school, and without exception, pupils are managed very well. All staff have a warm and visible rapport with the pupils that is based on mutual trust and respect. Pupils are not fazed about seeking the additional support and guidance in order to complete their work from the teacher and this is duly given. Teachers use a sprinkling of humour that adds further to the quality of relationships and the rate of pupils' learning. Classroom organisation is effective and in many classrooms the use of interactive displays effectively support pupils' learning and extends their curiosity in the themes and topics they explore. In many classes, homework is used well to extend pupils' learning.

### **The quality of education in the Foundation Stage is good.**

13. The quality of education in the Foundation Stage is good ensuring that children make good gains in their learning. The Nursery, created at the school four years ago, is now fully established and seen as an integral part of the school. Although housed in a building that is set aside from the main school, in practice this does not deter from good links being established with the Reception class to ensure that children from the Nursery are able to settle quickly and comfortably when they enter the Reception year.
14. A key feature of the education at the Foundation Stage is the good knowledge and understanding that teachers have of the learning needs of young children. There is an effective balance in all classes between the need to provide children with well-devised, structured play and a more formal type approach to teaching where children develop their learning of, for example, basic literacy and numeracy skills. Work is often chosen around certain themes such as 'Winter' and classroom organisation and display reflects this. Interactive displays that encourage children to pick up and browse books, for example, successfully reinforce the children's learning of the theme being explored. In the Reception and the Nursery classes, work is planned carefully to meet the requirements of the Early Learning Goals and in many lessons, children are given frequent opportunities to work as a member of a smaller group and this is successful in developing their personal, social and emotional development.
15. In all classes, good use is made of assessment information to plan the next steps in the children's learning. In the Reception classes, teachers assess the children against the criteria advocated by the local education authority and this information is used effectively to build on what the children already know and where appropriate, give additional support to those with special educational needs. In the Nursery class, all adults keep a watchful brief on the progress that children are making in their first few terms at the school and use this information appropriately to guide subsequent learning.
16. Further features of the good provision in the Foundation Stage are the strong sense of teamwork amongst the adults who support the children. Learning support assistants are an integral part of the teaching team and assist greatly in planning and guiding children's learning and in the day-to-day organisation of classrooms. Relationships between adults and the children are very good and this has a strong impact on the positive way that many children settle into school and quickly learn the school's day-to-day routines and expectations. Resources in all classrooms are of good quality and fully reflect the ages and abilities of the children.
17. Children often make good gains in many areas of their learning because of the good quality of education they receive. By the end of the Foundation Stage, and by the time they are due to enter Year 1, children are often well prepared to undertake the programmes of work outlined in the National Curriculum.

### **Pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to learning and relationships are often very good.**

18. In all classes, pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to learning, and show an enthusiasm for many aspects of their work. In many lessons, pupils listen thoughtfully and carefully to what their teachers or their classmates may be saying. The 'Big Book' sessions in literacy hours are often thoroughly enjoyed by pupils and it is not uncommon during these sessions for pupils to break into quiet but spontaneous laughter as they follow the actions of the characters and the plot of the story they are exploring. Their enthusiasm for learning as well as their positive attitudes in how they approach their work adds significantly to the overall quality of life in the school. Pupils are polite and courteous and are mindful of the needs of others.
19. Relationships amongst pupils of all ages and abilities are very good and there is very rarely any sign of aggressive behaviour among pupils. Pupils understand the need for common rules to guide behaviour and many pupils are aware of the school's expectations and routines in this regard – to which they live up to. They are sensitive to the needs of others and during the inspection, pupils were often seen giving good assistance and talking freely and very amicably to those pupils with a high level of special educational needs. All teachers and learning support assistants frequently acknowledge the achievements of all pupils and this helps to ensure they develop a strong sense of personal esteem.
20. Pupils of all ages demonstrate a healthy enthusiasm for learning. They ask questions sensibly, listen effectively in class and are mindful of the views and opinions of others. They work hard to complete the work they are set, and are mindful of the need to present their work neatly so that the reader can follow the line of their thinking. Levels of concentration are good as is the manner by which pupils persevere in completing work that is a little challenging. When given the chance to do so, pupils work well in groups and share resources and equipment sensibly and ably and this contributes well to the development of the pupils' understanding of what it means to be a member of a wider social group.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Pupils' attainment in writing at the end of Year 2.**

21. Evaluation of recent end of Year 2 National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments indicate that standards have dipped since 1999. At that time, standards were well above average although the most recent results indicated that when compared to the national picture, standards were average and when compared to those of similar schools, standards were below average. The school has detected the falling trend in this area of the pupils' learning and has started to address the issue.
22. Inspection findings indicate that the main reason for the fall in standards is the insufficient time given to pupils to develop their imaginative writing skills. While a few opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills in this aspect, in many instances these opportunities consist of the completion of commercially produced worksheets and does little to promote pupils' ability to use language in a more creative and imaginative way. In addition, teachers' planning of pupils' learning does not clearly identify learning objectives for pupils of different ages and abilities. In many cases, pupils with higher attainments are often asked to complete work that is the same as that planned for other pupils and expectations of what the pupils can achieve are not high enough.

### **The use of investigation work to support pupils' science learning.**

23. Evaluation of the most recent end of key stage National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at Year 6 indicated that the number of pupils who reached the expected levels in science were above the national average and average when compared with similar schools. Evaluation of the tests over three years from 1999, indicate that standards in English and mathematics have been consistently at a higher level than those in science. By the end of Year 2, based on teacher assessments, standards were average when compared to the national picture but below average when the results are compared to those of similar schools.

24. Inspection findings indicate that teaching takes too little heed of the need to provide opportunities for pupils to undertake open-ended investigation work where pupils themselves present the findings of their work in different ways. While pupils are given the scope to explore aspects of science through investigations, in practice teachers overuse worksheets that largely pre-determine the steps that pupils have to follow in order to complete their work. Not all teachers have sufficient knowledge and confidence in using open-ended investigation work as a means to support pupils' learning and skills and this restricts pupils' progress in this aspect of their work. Not enough pupils have acquired the skills of handling equipment and materials or in making the choices about the steps they should take when undertaking such work. Too few of the older pupils use scientific diagrams to illustrate their work or to determine the most effective way to communicate the results of their work. ICT is insufficiently used in this regard. In addition, pupils' understanding of what is meant by a fair test, or how the control of variables may determine the outcome of an investigation is impeded as a result.

### **Aspects of pupils' personal development.**

25. It is clear that the pupils of Abbots Langley Primary School have very good attitudes to learning and the provision made for pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Given that pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment, further opportunities to allow the pupils to take on more responsibility in other areas of school life would offer them the chance to develop these skills even further. Pupils are given opportunities to take a degree of responsibility both in the day-to-day aspects of the school and in aspects of their learning. However, many of the pupils enter full time education at Abbots Langley School with very well developed personal and social skills and are very keen to learn. The school does not always build sufficiently on these skills as pupils move through the school. There is no means of enabling the pupils to share their views and perspective of the school with the staff. In addition, while a few opportunities are given for pupils to develop the course of their own learning, in practice these are limited. Largely the teacher directs much of the work that they are given to undertake. In art and design, for example, too few occasions are provided for pupils to choose the medium or materials in producing works of art.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

26. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, governing body and staff should:-

#### **Raise standards in writing in Years 1 and 2 by ensuring that:**

- Work planned for pupils matches their ability;
- Teachers' expectations of pupils are raised.

(paragraphs → 21 and 22)

#### **Raise standards in science investigation work by ensuring that:**

- Teachers' knowledge and understanding of how to use investigation work as part of their science teaching is raised;
- Greater use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning;
- Extend pupils' awareness of how they can plan and carry out their own investigations.

(paragraph → 24)

#### **Ensure that pupils are given greater scope to extend their personal development.**

(paragraph → 25)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	36
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	-	8	16	12	-	-	-
Percentage	-	22	44	34	-	-	-

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. When the total number is substantially less than 100, care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	376
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	48

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	-

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5



*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	26	33	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	25	24
	Girls	32	33	32
	Total	54	58	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (87)	98 (95)	95 (94)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	23	24
	Girls	32	32	32
	Total	55	55	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (87)	93 (84)	95 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	33	31	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	32	30	32
	Girls	30	27	29
	Total	62	57	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (83)	89 (89)	95 (98)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	30	31
	Girls	31	29	30
	Total	51	59	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (85)	92 (85)	95 (91)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	-
Black – other	-
Indian	3
Pakistani	-
Bangladeshi	-
Chinese	3
White	342
Any other minority ethnic group	-

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	-	-
Black – African heritage	-	-
Black – other	-	-
Indian	-	-
Pakistani	-	-
Bangladeshi	-	-
Chinese	-	-
White	-	-
Other minority ethnic groups	-	-

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	29

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	236

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	826 590
Total expenditure	788 839
Expenditure per pupil	1 809
Balance brought forward from previous year	79 165
Balance carried forward to next year	116 916*

(\*The high carry forward figure is to be used to support further re-development of the school building)

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	440
Number of questionnaires returned	151

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	42	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	38	3	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	51	2	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	52	14	2	3
The teaching is good.	50	45	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	45	22	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	32	11	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	38	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	19	47	24	9	1
The school is well led and managed.	50	39	1	2	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	46	6	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	26	35	17	10

### Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by parents.