



# Abbey CofE Infant School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 125654  
**LEA** Warwickshire  
**Inspection number** 281975  
**Inspection dates** 17 November 2005 to 18 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Paul Sadler RISP

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Aston Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Nuneaton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7		Warwickshire CV11 5EL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02476 386101
<b>Number on roll</b>	176	<b>Fax number</b>	02476 386101
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Father Andrew Welsby
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 September 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Gwyn Evans

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 17 November 2005 - 18 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 281975
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Abbey Church of England Infants School is situated in the centre of Nuneaton and serves a mixture of housing in the area. Indicators, such as the proportions of children who receive free school meals, have learning difficulties and disabilities, or who are from the various ethnic groups, are all close to the national average.

There is a neighbourhood nursery on the school site and the school has its own Nursery class. Children also enter the school from other early-years settings. The skills and abilities of the children when they start school are below average

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Inspectors agree with the school that a number of important aspects of its performance are inadequate. These include the standard of children's work and achievement. The good start they are given in the Nursery is not continued as they get older. The children in Years 1 and 2 do not make enough progress in reading and writing. Teaching and learning are inadequate because children's work is not assessed accurately, so teachers do not fully understand what children need to learn next. Appropriate steps have been taken to rectify this. Leadership and management are weak because there has been recent decline in the school's performance and senior posts are not held by permanent staff. Some parents lack confidence in the school. The school has some strengths. Children behave well because of clear routines. Provision for those with learning difficulties and disabilities is good, as is provision in the Nursery, although the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Children are strongly encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle. Early improvement after the last inspection was not maintained. Weaknesses in the school were identified by the local authority in the spring of 2005. An effective acting headteacher has been in place since late September 2005 and major changes have been made within the governing body. Governors have not yet received sufficient training and further appointments of senior staff are still to be made. The recent changes have not yet made the impact necessary to put right the school's weaknesses. The school does not give satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- improve the quality of assessment and hence teachers' understanding of what children need to do in order to make progress
- raise standards of reading and writing in Years 1 and 2
- improve the quality of communication with parents to raise their confidence in what the school provides
- improve leadership and management by training governors and appointing staff at senior levels.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

Standards are too low. Although they start school with below average skills, children make a good start in the Nursery and most reach the expected goals. At the end of Year 2, standards of reading, writing and mathematics fell in 2003 and 2004, and were below the national average. Some teachers' assessments of the children's standards were inaccurate, especially in reading and writing. In the Nursery, children learn quickly because there is an interesting range of activities. They are taught well and benefit from the good use of support staff. For instance, three year olds were able to say

which was the smallest and largest of three groups of objects and could count to eight. In the Reception classes some children are not fully involved in the activities and get bored, so their progress is uneven. In Years 1 and 2 the children's progress is too slow, especially in English, and they do not achieve as well as they should. For example, when asked to write a letter the children were not given enough guidance concerning what they might write about or how they might word it, so many struggled to write anything. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, are identified and supported well and they make satisfactory progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

The pupils' personal development and well-being are developed satisfactorily. Staff are caring and children feel secure. Attendance was below the national average last year because a few children had poor attendance records. The school is addressing this effectively by contacting parents and introducing class reward systems. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Displays throughout the school reflect the good use of art and design and religious education to develop children's awareness of their own and others' cultures. Almost all children like school and want to do their best. They behave very well in the main, but in Years 1 and 2 they sometimes become restless as a result of too much time spent sitting on the carpet or at desks without being sufficiently engaged in their learning. In all classes, the children work and play in a safe and healthy environment. They enjoy a healthy mid-morning snack and have adequate time allocated to physical education. Children receive limited opportunity to take responsibilities in classes, but the school is in the process of setting up a council to involve the children more in contributing to the school community. Children's underachievement in reading and writing shows that the school is not making an adequate contribution to developing the skills that will help their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

The teaching and learning are inadequate because of weaknesses in assessing the children's work and using it to plan what the children should do next. The teachers work hard and, though much of the teaching is satisfactory, it does not result in learning that is effective enough. In the Nursery, a series of well planned activities enable children to develop good language and mathematical skills and also social skills, such as sharing and taking turns. Teaching assistants supervise the children well and assess their progress. To some extent, the same approach is adopted in the Reception classes but some of the more directed teaching leads to lessons that are sometimes too long, causing the children to become bored and restless. Assessment in these classes is improving, but teachers still do not know as much about individual children's

progress as is the case in the Nursery. In Years 1 and 2 there is some good teaching, such as the use of questioning and encouragement for children to use advanced vocabulary, for example, words such as 'terrified'. However, weak assessment has led to a lack of understanding of what children know and can do, and of what they need to learn next. As a result, children are sometimes given work that is either too easy or difficult, or which repeats previous work. This is rightly of concern to parents.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and it has been newly revised to ensure suitable breadth and balance. The work is planned to ensure that pupils in mixed-age classes do not repeat themes covered in the previous year. To some extent this addresses a parental concern that some Year 2 children appear to be repeating work. It does not explain why some children use reading books they have read before and learn the same spellings they have previously learned. Theme weeks help make learning relevant and interesting. There is a suitable range of extra activities, such as music and visits to places of interest. An afterschool sports club has recently started.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

All health and safety and child protection requirements are met. Children feel secure and turn readily to teachers and assistants for help. Parents are rightly pleased with the good level of care their children receive. The school provides good support for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Detailed plans and targets for these children guide them well and help their parents support them. However, the guidance in reading, writing and mathematics for most children is inadequate because systems for checking their progress and helping them know what they need to do to improve are underdeveloped. There are good opportunities for children and parents to become familiar with the school before they start and they receive clear information about the junior schools to which they transfer.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 4**

The school is led and managed inadequately. This is because, until recently, the school underwent a period of declining standards, low staff morale and lack of parental confidence that were not remedied by leaders and managers. Since the recent appointment of the new acting headteacher, an accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses has been undertaken, leading to a good quality improvement plan that focuses on the right priorities and includes additional support from the local authority. New governors have also been appointed and their work refocused. Recent initiatives taken in the highest priority areas, such as improving the quality of assessment, are beginning to have a positive impact on standards and quality. Raising the confidence of parents in the school's work by improving communications and

consulting them is also beginning to have positive results. However, much remains to be done. This includes the appointment of permanent staff in the most senior positions and training governors to fulfil their roles effectively. Teachers and their assistants require further training, especially in the accurate assessment of children's progress. Some parents still lack confidence, especially in the organisation of classes in Years 1 and 2. Although a significant amount has been achieved very recently, in a very short time, improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. The school does not show capacity to improve in the long term because presently it relies heavily on the local authority and the diocese for external support.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	No
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Abbey CE Infant School Aston Road Nuneaton Warwickshire CV11 5EL 21 November 2005 Dear Children, The inspectors who visited your school very much enjoyed talking and listening to you, and seeing your work. This letter is to tell you what we thought of your school and how it can be even better. The best things about your school are: • you behave well • you are polite to adults and kind to each other • children in the Nursery get a very good education • children who need special help are given it • you are taught how to be healthy. We think the school needs special help to improve so that: • your teachers can find out better what you can do. They will then make sure you get the right work to do next • you will be helped to learn to read and write more quickly • your parents or carers will be told more about how you are getting on at school • the school governors will appoint people to run the school. Yours sincerely Mr Sadler Lead Inspector