

Hanham Abbots Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109016
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	288251
Inspection dates	3–4 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Nick Green HMI

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	373
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Thomas Bray
Headteacher	John Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	24 June 2002
School address	Creswicke Avenue Hanham Bristol BS15 3PN
Telephone number	01454 866576
Fax number	01454 866578

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than the average primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage and few come from minority ethnic groups. The socio-economic background of pupils is varied. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average, and that of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is around half the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry has varied over the last four years and more recently has been below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'Learning with each other, learning from each other' is the school's vision and this is strongly evident in the collaborative approach taken in all its work to promote pupils' achievement. The quality of the education provided by the school is good, with outstanding features. Underpinning its success is effective leadership and management at all levels, guided by the headteacher's clear direction and collegiate approach to developing and improving the school. This is focused firmly on raising standards and enabling students to thrive in a safe and caring environment. The school has effective, accurate systems for reviewing its work and performance. The improvements since the last inspection and the identification of key priorities for development show it has good capacity for further growth and improvement.

Standards are above average and in respect to their attainment on entry pupils achieve well. No groups of pupils under-perform. This is due to good teaching and learning and a well-devised curriculum that is broad and balanced, with strengths in information and communication technology (ICT), sport and music. While pupils achieve better in English and science than in mathematics, this is being addressed well through thorough analysis and monitoring of performance and the use of effective teaching and learning strategies. Pupils' confidence in their mathematical skills is improving; as one pupil said, 'Teachers make maths interesting and fun'. More-able pupils do not make consistently good progress across all subjects because work is not always sufficiently challenging for them. Assessment of pupils' current attainment is thorough, although marking and target setting are not consistent across classes and pupils are not always set sufficient targets to ensure that they know what they need to do to make the next steps in their learning.

The majority of parents are supportive and complimentary about all aspects of the school. As one wrote in a letter to inspectors, 'I cannot praise the school and the way it is lead enough'. Others commented that teachers are 'warm and friendly', have 'a wealth of knowledge' and are 'full of life and enthusiasm'. Teachers and all support staff demonstrate a strong commitment to encouraging pupils' enjoyment and achievement. The care, guidance and support they provide are good, with outstanding features. As a result, pupils' personal development and well-being are fostered very well. Pupils clearly enjoy their education, are well behaved, take on whole-school responsibilities readily and have a strong sense of belonging to the school which makes them feel safe. An outstanding feature is that pupils keep very healthy through a high level of participation in physical exercise. They make a good contribution to the school and local community through participation in the wide range of activities that enrich the curriculum. As one parent wrote, 'The school looks at the whole child with lots of emphasis on music, drama, art and sport'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the work for more-able pupils is sufficiently challenging to ensure they make maximum progress.
- Set pupils sufficient targets to ensure that they all know what they need to do to make the next steps in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' progress is good throughout Years 3 to 6, leading to above-average standards by the time they leave the school. This is due to effective teaching that motivates pupils to learn. Initiatives to raise standards in mathematics are beginning to have a beneficial effect and pupils made good progress in their mental and written calculations in the lessons seen by inspectors. Girls and boys make equal progress and boys achieve well in respect to boys nationally. Pupils with learning difficulties make similarly good and in some cases better progress than other pupils as their needs are identified accurately, monitored closely and addressed effectively. Rates of progress are swifter in Years 3 and 4 than in Years 5 and 6, where more-able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently to ensure they make maximum progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their education very much and are proud of their school. This is exhibited in their good behaviour, consideration for others and regular attendance. They are confident, and work collaboratively with their peers. Pupils say they feel safe and are reassured that what little low-level bullying occurs will be dealt with well by their teachers. At playtime, they act responsibly and peer mentors provide good care for other pupils. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good; they have a clear understanding of the cultural diversity in British society. Pupils know how important physical exercise is in keeping healthy and are also aware of what constitutes a healthy diet, but their lunch boxes do not always reflect this. The active school council ensures pupils have the opportunities to shape aspects of the school community. Pupils develop positive relationships with the wider community through participation in activities with local schools and celebratory events. Their secure basic skills and ability to work independently and in groups prepare them well for the next stage of their education and later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In lessons, high expectations are set for most pupils and teachers provide a wide variety of stimulating activities. Lessons are planned well and meet the needs of most pupils, although a few more-able pupils are not set sufficient challenge. Teachers' explanations are articulate and they use questioning skilfully to check and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. In most lessons, pupils are active and encouraged to work independently. Teaching is inspiring in the significant minority of lessons that are outstanding. Teachers are enthusiastic about their work and lessons are conducted at pace and with high levels of energy. Pupils respond well, are excited by their learning and consequently work hard. Their behaviour is exemplary in the majority of lessons. Those with learning difficulties are fully included and benefit from skilled intervention by teaching assistants. Teachers assess pupils' current attainment well and helpful developmental targets are set for some pupils, but marking and target setting are inconsistent across the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Careful planning ensures that there is continuity in pupils' learning across the school and that effective links are made between subjects. The main emphasis is rightly placed on the development of skills in literacy, numeracy and science and effective grouping arrangements cater well for the range of pupils' abilities. Opportunities to develop skills in ICT are very good and support learning well in other subjects. All pupils learn Spanish and curriculum arrangements for this are a strength. Music thrives at the school and a significant proportion of pupils receive specialist musical instrument lessons. A very well-organised programme of personal, social and health education is provided. The curriculum is enriched by an outstanding variety of opportunities which include a full programme of visits and visitors, special events, themed weeks and many after-school activities. The exceptional range of sporting events broadens pupils' experiences, increases their confidence and makes a good contribution to their personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils learn in an exceptionally caring environment where they are supported as individuals and provided with strategies to help them achieve well and stay safe in and out of school. Parents feel that many aspects of care and guidance are exemplary and they are full of praise for this aspect of the school's work. As one parent wrote, 'Hanham Abbots is a friendly school which seeks to put my child at its centre'. Health and safety procedures and child protection are robust and the monitoring of behaviour and attendance is good. A support staff coordinator and teaching assistants are very effective in supervising pupils around the school and lots of exciting and healthy activities are provided to promote their well-being. In conjunction with outside agencies, the quality of support for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties is exceptionally high and this enables them to achieve well. The effectiveness of academic guidance is variable because of inconsistent target setting which does not always clarify for pupils what they need to do to make the next steps in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are effective at all levels. The headteacher provides clear direction and promotes an open culture where all teachers are encouraged to contribute to decision making. In conjunction with the highly effective deputy headteacher, he has created a common sense of purpose among staff, particularly the subject leaders of English, mathematics, science and ICT. Effective procedures, including systematic observation of lessons, work sampling and pupil discussions, are used to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of teaching and learning. This has enabled the school to increasingly meet the challenging targets it sets itself. Performance data is used well to track the progress of pupils and to identify those who are underachieving. Successful strategies, for example, in mathematics, have been introduced to address pupils' underperformance. The promotion of equality of opportunity and combating discrimination is central to the senior leaders' vision for the school and they have created an ethos of inclusion that enables pupils to flourish, particularly those with learning difficulties. The school's resources are deployed effectively and the poor quality of some accommodation

is managed well to ensure that it does not hinder pupils' progress. The school has had difficulty recruiting and retaining a full governing body, and some governors are very new to the role. Longstanding members show a good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for improvement; overall the governors discharge their responsibilities satisfactorily.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

5 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hanham Abbots Junior School, Hanham, Bristol BS15 3PN

- I would like to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school. My colleagues and I enjoyed talking to you and finding out about how the school works. Yours is a good school and some things about it are outstanding. Here are some of the judgements we made about the school.
- You make good progress and achieve good results.
- You do better in English and science than you do in mathematics but your mathematical skills are improving because of the exciting way you are taught.
- Your behaviour is good; you consider each other's feelings and work well together.
- You said you feel safe and all the staff make sure that you are.
- Your participation in sports is outstanding and you know how important physical exercise and a good diet are in keeping healthy.
- Teaching is good; teachers expect you to do very well and most teachers make learning interesting and fun.
- The subjects and topics you study are carefully chosen and organised to give you broad and varied experiences at school.
- You can choose to attend an outstanding range of clubs and other activities particularly in music.
- Staff care for you extremely well and give you good support to enable you to learn and enjoy your lessons.
- The headteacher and other senior teachers manage the school very well.

We have asked your school to do a couple of things to make it even better:

- Firstly, to set you greater challenges, particularly for those of you who find work easier than others, to help you achieve as well as you can.
- Secondly, to set all pupils clear targets so that you all know what you need to do to make the next steps in your learning.

I am confident that, with your help, the school will improve still further.

Best wishes with your studies.

Nick Green

Her Majesty's Inspector