



Abbotsmede Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110779
Local Authority CITY OF PETERBOROUGH
Inspection number 288770
Inspection dates 1–2 March 2007
Reporting inspector Joanne Harvey

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Kingsley Road
School category	Community		Peterborough
Age range of pupils	3–11		Cambridgeshire PE1 5JS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01733566847
Number on roll (school)	266	Fax number	01733343194
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Lindsey Welldon
		Headteacher	Mrs Brenda Wright
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size school located to the east of the city centre of Peterborough. A large majority of its pupils are entitled to free school meals. The majority of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities and many have statements of special educational need. Over half the pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Most of these do not have English as their first language and many are at the early stages of learning English. A very high number of pupils start and leave the school outside the usual times during the year.

The school has a Basic Skills Quality Mark, a Health Promoting Schools Award and a Young Enterprise Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that provides excellent value for money. While it has some areas for development it also has a number of outstanding features. The school's success is due mostly to the determination and passion of an extremely effective headteacher. Her firm belief that children cannot learn effectively without strong foundations to support their personal, social and emotional needs, is one of the main reasons for this success.

Excellent care and support are provided for pupils. Everyone in the school really does 'go the extra mile' to make sure each child feels valued, secure, confident and ready to learn. Consequently, pupils make exceptional progress in their personal development which, by the time they leave the school, is outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent. They develop a sense of responsibility through the many roles they are proud to take on and many develop confidence beyond their years. Pupils are extremely proud to help others in their community and beyond, often in unusual ways, such as helping to paint the walls of an old people's home.

The school's approach to developing the whole child is central to its success as most children start school with exceptionally low standards in all areas of their learning. They settle very quickly into the happy and stimulating environment of the Foundation Unit and make good progress. While standards are still well below average when they enter Year 1, pupils have developed vital skills which mean they are ready to learn. They continue to achieve well and make good progress throughout Years 1 to 6. This good achievement is not reflected in the results of tests and assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6 which show standards in English, mathematics and science are below, and sometimes well below, those of most pupils nationally. However, these results cannot demonstrate the school's success, particularly with the extremely high number of pupils who arrive throughout the year, or the high proportion who are at the early stages of learning English. Highly skilled teachers in the nurture groups, along with learning mentors and teaching assistants, work closely with class teachers to ensure those who need extra help do well. The behaviour and attendance teams make an extremely effective contribution to pupils' care and personal development.

Good teaching, based on positive relationships and a greatly enriched curriculum, helps to ensure that pupils are interested, learn well and make good progress. Most staff have a good knowledge of their children, how well they are progressing and what works best for them. Occasionally, planning for lessons does not always result in an appropriate level of challenge for all pupils and marking does not always tell pupils what they need to do to improve.

School leaders have ensured that work with parents is outstanding because of the way the way they value and encourage the partnership. It is no surprise that parents love the school. It is a centre for community services and successfully contributes to fostering harmony. There is good ongoing work with families in partnership with support agencies, for example where children's attendance is low. Leaders know the school increasingly well and have introduced more robust systems for checking how

well pupils are progressing. While there are good systems for recording pupils' progress in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), these systems are not yet as strong for other subjects. However, the school's past successes, coupled with a determination to do even better, demonstrates that there is good potential for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science to be at least in line with those found nationally.
- Ensure that the features of the good teaching seen are consistently applied, particularly those of detailed planning to provide challenge for all and informative marking.
- Ensure that the information collected about how well pupils are doing in all subjects reflects the good quality of that seen in English, mathematics and ICT.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Children enter the Foundation Unit with exceptionally low levels of attainment in all areas of learning. With good teaching and a wide range of well thought out activities they make good progress but have so much catching up to do that standards are still well below those expected at the end of the Foundation Stage. Children continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Teacher assessments at Year 2 in 2006, showed standards were well below average. Inspection evidence confirms the school's view that standards are beginning to rise. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress and, though still below average, standards at the end of Year 6 have been improving in recent years. A number of factors disguise the true picture of pupils' achievement. These include the high proportion of pupils who start and leave the school throughout the year and a large number whose progress is limited by their lack of spoken English. Records show that those pupils who remain in the school over a long time make particularly good progress. With good teaching and the excellent range of support available to them, pupils with learning difficulties and those whose first language is not English, achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being, including social, moral spiritual and cultural development are outstanding. The wide ethnic mix helps children develop an excellent understanding, respect for, and tolerance of different cultures. Pupils value the exceptional number of trips, visits and visitors the school provides and these activities really help to broaden their horizons and provide lasting memories. Pupils make an outstanding contribution within and beyond their immediate community, for example, helping to improve behaviour and enjoyment through 'play pals', the 'A-Team' or working alongside the local police. An emphasis on healthy eating and physical activity

has helped them to develop an excellent understanding of these aspects of how to keep healthy. They are taught extremely successfully about how to keep safe. The school's work to improve attendance has been a real success. Through hard work and perseverance, attendance is now broadly average and rising, representing very good improvement. Excellent personal skills and improving basic academic skills prepare pupils well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching is at the heart of the school's successes. Teachers work hard to make the lessons interesting. This ensures outstanding behaviour and relationships so that pupils gain increasing confidence in their abilities. Pupils enjoy their lessons and talk with enthusiasm about their work. Highly skilled teachers in the nurture groups, along with learning mentors and teaching assistants, work closely with class teachers and outside agencies to ensure those who need extra help do well. The school's leadership has improved the way it checks on the quality of teaching and how well pupils are doing and, as a result they can respond quickly where support is needed. They have implemented a robust target setting approach and pupils know their targets well. However, marking does not always tell pupils what they need to do to improve. Teachers plan conscientiously, but occasionally this does not result in sufficient challenge for all pupils. The school has a good number of able teaching assistants who are effective in supporting groups and individual children to progress well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It provides an appropriate emphasis on the development of basic skills and these are further enhanced through stimulating activities in other subjects which bring learning alive. The recent review of the curriculum ensures all subjects are linked together and taught in an imaginative way. However, this is too new to be able to measure its impact on standards. The attractive displays around the school show that pupils can reach high standards in their work, particularly in art and ICT. High quality opportunities are offered to pupils in developing their music and drama skills. The curriculum is much enhanced by a range of visits and visitors and by the use of the local community and environment. There is a very good range of extra activities, though not as many pupils take advantage of the opportunities on offer as the school would like.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The headteacher and staff believe passionately in providing not only the best academic opportunities but also the very

best pastoral care for pupils to promote their personal development. For example, the school funds all of the many extras in the curriculum in order that no one misses out. All procedures for safeguarding pupils are firmly in place; arrangements for child protection are rigorous and staff are fully aware of their responsibilities. The school's monitoring systems quickly identify where pupils are finding learning more difficult and enable staff to put measures in place to help them improve. Pupils are guided and supported well by the assessment arrangements that track key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Pupils arriving at different times in the year settle extremely quickly because of the excellent systems in place to make their entry to the school a very positive experience. The leadership of the school ensures care is outstanding through the focused use of highly skilled staff including learning mentors, teaching assistants, the nurture group staff and the behaviour and attendance teams who all make an extremely effective contribution to pupils' care and personal development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's outstanding leadership, partnered with strong support from the deputy headteacher and other senior managers, has ensured the school has gone from strength to strength. Success is based upon responding first and foremost to the children's considerable social and emotional needs. The quality of the teamwork is central to the school's success as seen through the headteacher's determination to share leadership. Systems for assessment and tracking pupil progress have been given a sharper focus. The leadership team has a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses, helping to make sure that everyone can play their part in school improvement and ensuring even more challenging targets can be set and met. Good information is collected on how well pupils are doing in subjects such as English, mathematics and ICT. New curriculum leaders are beginning to rise to the challenge of leading their subjects, and now must ensure that the quality of the information they gather on standards and achievement is also equally robust. School leaders promote strong partnerships with outside bodies and other members of the local community which add considerably to the personal development and care of pupils and their families. The governing body provides a good degree of challenge and supports the school well.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	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	3
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	1

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.

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	1
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 March 2007

Dear Pupils

Abbotsmede Primary School, Kingsley Road, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 5JS

We were pleased to meet you and all the staff and very much enjoyed the time we spent with you. Thank you for making us feel so welcome, talking to us, and helping us to find out so much about you and your school.

You go to a good school. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, teachers and all the other grown-ups at Abbotsmede Primary School do their very best for you. They look after you and care for you extremely well. Your teachers make learning interesting and enjoyable and they work hard to help you make good progress in lessons. Your excellent behaviour in class, around school and in the playground really helps you to learn well. It is clear that you are really happy at school. Your teachers and your friends help you to feel important and safe there.

The school is very keen to find ways to help you do as well as you possibly can. Though you already make good progress, we think you could do even better. We have asked the school to help you do as least as well in the tests you take as most other pupils the same age as you. Although the teaching in your school is mostly good, we have asked that everyone works hard to make sure it is always good, for example in the ways your work is planned and marked. The school knows a lot about how well you are doing in English, mathematics and ICT and uses what they know well to help you. We have asked them to make sure they know as much about how well you are doing in all the other subjects to help you do even better.

We are sure that Mrs Wright and all the other adults will continue to do all they can to help you. You can play your part by continuing to work hard and by coming to school every day.

We would like to wish you the very best for the future.

Joanne Harvey (Lead Inspector)

Simon Griffiths and Ann Taylor