



Abbots Farm Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125580
Local Authority Warwickshire
Inspection number 293300
Inspection dates 7–8 March 2007
Reporting inspector Marion Thompson

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Abbots Way
School category	Community		Rugby
Age range of pupils	7–11		CV21 4AP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01788 576074
Number on roll (school)	252	Fax number	01788 576074
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	G Newton
		Headteacher	J Alexander
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Abbots Farm is an average sized school, and the majority of pupils are of White British origin. Very few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. Pupils come from an area where the socio-economic circumstances are above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. Standards on entry to the school are broadly average. The deputy headteacher is currently on long-term absence.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'My child thoroughly enjoys going to school and finds his teachers, headmaster and all the staff very approachable. I am very impressed with my child's progress, the standard of teaching and the way that the headteacher runs this friendly, caring school.' This praise from a parent is typical of the views of many. Parents rightly value the good quality of education that the school provides for its pupils. A major factor in the school's success is the strong and enthusiastic leadership provided by the headteacher over a number of years. Leadership and management at all levels are good and governors provide increasingly effective support. The school accurately evaluates how well it is doing and plans effectively for improvement. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection and the school is well placed to improve further. Over recent years, standards have remained significantly above average and pupils achieve well. Pupils' achievement is particularly strong in mathematics. This is because teaching is good, and especially in mathematics, where pupils are encouraged to think through their approaches to problem solving, rather than rushing to find answers straight away. They are presented with challenging work and are confident enough to tackle it even if they risk being wrong. In addition, the school carefully identifies the areas of pupils' learning that are in need of improvement and provides help at the early stages. Writing has been correctly identified as a relative weakness, especially for boys. The school is working hard to engage and motivate pupils to improve their writing, using new teaching methods and providing more opportunities for writing across the curriculum. Standards are beginning to rise, but the organisation of extended writing is in need of further improvement.

Pupils' good personal development, above average attendance and their enjoyment of learning all support the good progress they make. They enjoy the wide range of experiences provided by a good quality, well organised curriculum. The vast majority of pupils treat others with care and respect and work sensibly and safely. Behaviour is satisfactory. Whilst most pupils behave well, a few pupils in Year 5 do not make as much progress as they should, because of their negative attitudes to work and occasionally unacceptable behaviour. Effective steps are being taken to address this, through the good care, support and guidance the school provides to all pupils, but there is further to go. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves fit and healthy and many reflect this in their choice of healthy school dinners. They take on a wide range of responsibilities within the school and wider community. Because of their good academic achievement and well developed social skills, pupils are prepared well for their move to secondary school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing.
- Improve the achievement and behaviour of the small number of pupils in Year 5 who are not making enough progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are significantly above average, representing good achievement from pupils' broadly average starting points on entry to the school. Pupils' hard work enables them to meet or exceed their challenging targets. Standards are particularly high in mathematics, especially in understanding how to solve word problems. This is because the teaching of mathematics is particularly skilful. Relatively speaking, pupils make least progress in English, especially in writing. This is now improving, as a result of the new methods of teaching the school has introduced. An increased emphasis on writing across the curriculum is motivating boys to produce better quality work. However, there is room for further improvement in the planning and organisation of extended writing. Achievement in science remains good, as it has been for several years. Good progress in other subjects, such as history, geography and design and technology, demonstrates the rounded nature of pupils' achievements. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and the small number of pupils at the early stages of learning English make good progress, because of well planned support.

A small number of pupils, especially boys, in Year 5 are not making as much progress as they should, because of their negative attitudes to school. Occasionally, their behaviour affects the progress of other pupils. The school is working effectively to address this and the situation is improving.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils accept a wide range of responsibilities which they take seriously. Some pupils are members of the school council, which has made useful contributions to developing lunchtime playground activities. Pupils also raise money for charities through bring-and-buy sales, and have established a 'friendship' bench.

Pupils have a good understanding of the need for healthy lifestyles. There is a good uptake of healthy lunches and the great majority of pupils take part in some sort of physical activity. Pupils develop a good understanding of responsibility and citizenship, encouraged by the opportunity to gain awards. Attendance is above average and pupils enjoy school and feel safe. They develop a good range of personal and social skills and acquire the necessary basic skills to prepare them well for their life after this school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. They have a good understanding of other cultures and faiths and some of their learning comes from other pupils and their families.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The great majority of lessons are well organised and planned effectively. The best teaching is in mathematics where teachers are enthusiastic, lessons are interesting and challenging, and there are many opportunities for pupils to engage in problem solving and to discuss their understanding. Pupils enjoy these lessons and make good progress as a result. While teaching is often good elsewhere, opportunities for pupils to discuss their work before writing or to draft what they intend to write are sometimes missed. The teaching of pupils with learning difficulties is good and pupils make good progress because the quality of support is good.

Marking is good. Teachers give accurate assessments of pupils' work and give good guidance on how pupils can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and is well planned to meet pupils' learning needs. It provides many opportunities for pupils to make good progress and is carefully planned to stimulate their interest. Pupils are provided with an increasing range of opportunities to write creatively, but these are still somewhat limited. There is a good range of visits, visitors and extra activities, such as French and dance, that adds interest for pupils and supports what they learn. Many out of school activities are offered and levels of participation are high. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory and is improving with the purchase of new computers and classroom equipment. The personal, social and health education programme is well planned and helps pupils, including those who are currently experiencing difficulties, to develop better personal skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for pupils. Their personal and academic progress is monitored well and carefully chosen targets help them to improve their achievement. Teachers provide good guidance for pupils on how to improve their work.

The care shown to all pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and disabilities enables them to achieve well. Pupils who experience difficulties are provided with good support. The school has good procedures to deal with unacceptable behaviour, which have already had an impact on improving behaviour in Year 5.

Procedures for safeguarding pupils are satisfactory and the school works well with outside agencies to provide extra support for pupils. Health and safety matters are

considered regularly by the governors and effective systems for risk assessment are in place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides a strong sense of direction for the school and is supported well by staff, governors and the vast majority of parents. As a result, since the previous inspection, there has been a steady rise in the standards attained and pupils' achievement. Good quality planning is based on a detailed and accurate evaluation of the work of the school. Subject leaders monitor and evaluate their subjects well and provide a good level of support for their colleagues. Governors provide a good level of support and challenge for the school. They monitor the work of the school well and have a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses. To date, they have had limited input into planning for the future, but plans are in place for their full involvement in the current year. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

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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?	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	3
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.

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

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. You made our time very enjoyable and provided us with a lot of information. We met with some school council members and a number of other pupils who gave us their opinions of the school. The information you gave us and the comments you made were very helpful. You will not be surprised to hear we think you go to a good school.

The best things about your school are:

- You achieve well overall and reach above average standards, especially in mathematics, which many of you love.
- Teaching is good. As you would expect, it is best in mathematics!
- The headteacher provides good leadership and all other staff and governors provide him with strong support.
- The school has good systems in place to check how well you are doing and to improve its performance.
- As you go through school you develop into sensible, caring and respectful young people.
- The curriculum the school provides for you is interesting and makes you want to work.
- Adults in school take good care of you and provide you with a lot of help on how to improve your work

We are suggesting to your school that governors and staff should now.

- Improve standards in writing.
- Improve the behaviour and achievement of a few pupils in Year 5 who are not making enough progress.

As you grow older, we hope you will continue to enjoy your learning as much as most of you do now.