

# Abbotswood Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132199
<b>Local Authority</b>	South Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	293980
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	James Sage HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	302
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dawn Lane
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lisa Kicinski
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 December 2002
<b>School address</b>	Kelston Close Yate Bristol BS37 8SZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01454 867777
<b>Fax number</b>	01454 867778

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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Abbotswood is a larger than average primary school. The area suffers from some social and economic deprivation, although the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national figure, and the proportion with a statement of special educational need is well above average. Most pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language.

At the time of the inspection the deputy headteacher was acting as headteacher.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. Children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is well below average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly in line with average. However, progress through the school is uneven. Overall achievements and standards are satisfactory.

The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children arrive with very low levels of attainment, but they make good progress and their personal development is good. This is because teaching, the curriculum, the care, guidance and support pupils receive, and the leadership and management are all good. Despite this, because of their very low starting points, by the end of the Foundation Stage children's attainment is still below the expected level.

In Years 1 and 2 standards and progress are satisfactory and standards at the end of Year 2 are just below average. Data from the end of the Foundation Stage are beginning to be used well to set targets and monitor the progress of individual pupils. The progress made by pupils this year has improved and standards, although still below expected levels, have also improved. However, teaching is weakest in these two years and although there has been some focused professional development its full impact is not yet fully apparent.

Standards and progress in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory and by the end of Year 6 the large majority of pupils are at the expected levels. Achievements in English are better than those in mathematics and science. Pupils' progress through the key stage is uneven. Teaching is generally good in Year 5 and particularly good in Year 6. The progress pupils make through these years is much better than in earlier years. Teaching is less effective in Years 3 and 4. It does not provide sufficient challenge for pupils. Curricular arrangements mean that best use is not always made of teaching time.

The school is very caring and pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and behave well. There are good relationships at all levels. Parents are positive about what the school does for their children.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's self-evaluation is good. There are robust systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and rigorous analysis of data to track pupils' progress and achievements. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and of areas that require improvement. Some actions have already had an impact. Actions to improve some aspects of teaching are leading to improvement, but more attention needs to be given to developing some teachers' understanding of the subjects they are teaching and the most effective ways of teaching them. The capacity to secure the improvements required is satisfactory.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 by improving teachers' knowledge of some subjects and how to teach them.
- Improve the level of challenge for pupils in lessons in Years 3 and 4.
- Ensure that the curriculum is planned to make best use of the teaching time available.

A small proportion of schools where overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Children enter the school with attainment that is well below average and make good progress in the Foundation Stage. However, when they enter Year 1, they are still below the expected levels. By the end of Year 2, although they have made satisfactory progress, most pupils have not reached the expected standards. Attainment for the pupils now in Year 2 has improved and is closer to the national average.

From Years 3 to 6, most pupils make satisfactory progress, so that standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6 with around one-third of pupils exceeding the expected levels. Despite this, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels and meeting challenging targets is not high enough, although improving. In 2006, the school's targets for the end of Year 6 were generally met. Standards are highest in English and lowest in science. The school's monitoring of pupils' progress shows that they are currently on course to meet their targets this year.

Previous variations in achievement between boys and girls have largely been evened out although, despite significant improvement this year, boys' writing in Years 1 and 2 still lags well behind that of girls. Girls' achievements in science have improved this year and are now broadly in line with those of boys, but boys still achieve better than girls in mathematics.

The individual support provided by teachers and teaching assistants enables pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make good progress throughout the school.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good. They develop positive values and attitudes and demonstrate good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy school, as shown by their good attitudes, behaviour and attendance. In lessons, they engage in tasks conscientiously and respond very positively to good teaching. They treat each other and adults courteously and act responsibly. They work collaboratively and listen well to each other in lessons. While they learn about other countries, the school recognises that pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn about Britain as a diverse society.

Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. They understand and respond positively to the school's system of rewards and sanctions. Bullying is rare and attendance is good. Pupils look after themselves and show a good level of concern for the safety of others, for example in practical and physical education lessons. They are confident that they can turn to any adult in the school if they have any concerns.

Pupils understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily and generally adopt healthy lifestyles, although this is not always shown in their own packed lunches. They are aware of the need to take adequate exercise and many engage in physical activity.

Pupils make a positive contribution to the community, such as their links with their neighbouring special school and a residential home for old people. The school council helps to develop pupils' social and community understanding, as well as providing them with a chance to make decisions and influence the school's environment and its activities.

Pupils develop satisfactory skills to prepare them for their future economic well-being, mainly because their progress in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is satisfactory. However, many gain good understanding of financial literacy through activities

outside lessons. Their attitudes to learning are good and they are beginning to develop more independence.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. All teachers have good relationships with their classes and pupils behave well and work hard. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and leads to children making good progress and to good personal development.

Teaching is weakest in Years 1 and 2. Whilst they have secure generic teaching skills, teachers lack secure knowledge in some subjects and do not know the most effective ways of teaching them. This leads to pupils making poor progress in some lessons. For example, pupils do not develop a confident understanding of predictions in science. The school has correctly identified the need for greater challenge for some pupils, particularly the more able. In some lessons, time is not used effectively to enable pupils to meet the planned objectives.

In Key Stage 2, teaching is strongest in Year 5 and, particularly, in Year 6. Pupils make the most progress in these two years. Lessons taught by these teachers show secure subject knowledge, a good understanding of the most effective ways of teaching the topic, and good generic teaching skills, such as questioning. Pupils enjoy these lessons and work with interest and enthusiasm. In Years 3 and 4, whilst no teaching is inadequate, there is limited direct teaching and a lack of challenge. Whilst pupils often work independently and conscientiously, the teaching does not lead to them making the progress of which they are capable.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and meets the needs of children well. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum has been changed recently to meet pupils' needs better and it is now satisfactory. However, despite subject managers' careful monitoring of this, it is too early to judge if the changes will lead to improvements in pupils' achievements. There is an appropriate balance between discrete teaching, for example of aspects of literacy and numeracy, and a thematic approach. There is sufficient flexibility, particularly in Years 1 and 2, to modify this to meet the needs of the work being covered. Careful 'gaps analysis' is used to provide focused teaching to address identified aspects of, for example, numeracy that require special attention.

In Years 3 to 6, considerable time is given to English. Currently, whole mornings are devoted to literacy and numeracy, reducing the time available for other subjects. To some extent the thematic approach is dealing with this and the school has introduced a more flexible approach to the use of this time. The school has yet to implement its plan to move to a three-lesson morning. Currently, the time available is not used effectively enough.

Previously, participation in after school activities had been low but the school now involves all pupils through activities to enrich the curriculum. A wide range of interesting activities and visits broadens and enriches pupils' experiences and contributes to their enjoyment of the school.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good and lead to good outcomes in personal development and well-being. A lot of attention is given to developing pupils' social skills and well-being, particularly to improve their self-esteem and confidence. The school works well with parents and with other agencies to support pupils' progress. Involvement of the parents' action group in discussions about improving the quality of pupils' learning, as well as improving the school's environment, is a good example of this. Pupils are supported and cared for very well. All staff are fully committed to pupils' personal development and achievement.

The school makes rigorous use of data and teachers' good knowledge of individual pupils to set clear targets and to track progress carefully. Pupils know their targets, and most are aware of their current levels of achievement, particularly in English and mathematics.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, with some good features. The leadership of the school is focused well on improving standards and achievements, as well as on the personal development of pupils. The latter has been effective and the outcomes are now good. The various strategies to raise standards have led to improvements so that standards are now satisfactory. These improvements have been driven by strong senior leadership and the school is building an effective team of middle leaders. The improvements made since the previous inspection indicate that the school has satisfactory capacity to secure the further improvements required.

Self-evaluation is accurate and leads to appropriate actions to improve the quality of provision. Senior leaders know what is working well and what requires further improvement. Procedures for monitoring the quality of provision, including extensive use of pupil performance data, are rigorous. Senior leaders have accurately identified the strongest teachers in the school and those who require specific professional development. However, some of the actions taken have yet to have full impact. Some improvements have been made to the curriculum, but others are still required to ensure best use is made of the time available.

Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is fully involved in the school's self-evaluation; it is well placed to hold the school's senior leaders to account.

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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>	<b>School Overall</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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

29 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Abbotswood Primary School, Yate, BS37 8SZ

We thoroughly enjoyed visiting your school recently and would like to thank you for all the help you gave us. We very much enjoyed talking to you and were impressed by the way you made us feel very welcome.

You enjoy school, behave well and work hard. Your teachers know each of you very well. They give you good support, take good care of you and give you help when you need it. You know how to keep safe and healthy.

By the time you leave the school, most of you reach the standards we expect. Children in the Reception classes and pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good progress because of good teaching. In Years 1 to 4, you work hard and the school knows what it needs to do to make your progress better.

The school is working hard to make your work interesting. Using themes such as 'Pirates' help you enjoy your work. Teachers take you on visits and bring people into the school to help make school more fun. We think that better use could be made of the mornings. You spend a lot of time on literacy and do not have enough time for some other subjects. The senior teachers give the school strong leadership. They work hard to make sure you do well. They know what they need to do to make sure that you all make good progress.

I hope that you carry on enjoying your school.

James Sage Her Majesty's Inspector