

# Abbotsmede Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110779
<b>Local Authority</b>	City of Peterborough
<b>Inspection number</b>	337570
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 December 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Thomson

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	270
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Lindsey Welldon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Kate McVeigh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Kingsley Road Peterborough Cambridgeshire
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and analysed 58 questionnaires from parents, 97 from pupils and 15 from staff. The team also looked at the data the school had collected about the pupils' progress and at the school's records of its monitoring of the quality of teaching.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- current attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science, particularly in Key Stage 1 and of the more able
- how effectively teachers use assessment information to help pupils improve their work and involve them in assessing their own learning
- the effectiveness of leaders' monitoring and evaluation at all levels to identify and address any underachievement and to accelerate progress.

## Information about the school

Abbotsmede is a larger than average sized school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils who do not have English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also much higher than average. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision in a Nursery and in two Reception classes. The number of pupils entering and leaving during the school year is higher than average. The school has gained many awards, including the Healthy Schools award and Activemark. The headteacher was appointed in September 2009 having previously been the deputy headteacher.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Abbotsmede is providing a satisfactory and improving standard of education. Following a period when standards declined, there have been many significant improvements in the last year, resulting in gains in both pupils' achievement and in their personal development. Parents and pupils are extremely positive about all aspects of the school. Pupils typically say, 'My school is perfect for me. I feel safe, my education is good and it makes me learn more', and, 'Everybody is lucky to be at this school. It is like another home to me.'

Central to this success is the strong leadership of the new headteacher. Together with her leadership team, she has been instrumental in bringing about significant improvements in the progress of underachieving groups, such as more able pupils and pupils in Key Stage 1. Standards are rising quickly although they are still low. Rigorous and well focused lesson observations have led to improvements in the standard of teaching and also in the use of assessment to promote effective learning. Attendance has improved, but it is still low. Much absence is due to extended holidays abroad. Pupils overwhelmingly feel that adults care for them and are interested in their views. Children start Nursery with skills that are well below those typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and good progress in Years 1 to 6. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, their standards have improved. These, however, are still low, particularly in English and mathematics, because pupils are still catching up on lost ground from previous years when they made insufficient progress. At present, there are not enough opportunities to practise these basic skills in other subjects or to give pupils sufficient chances to improve handwriting or enrich their vocabulary. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or difficulties, and those who do not speak English as their first language, make good progress because of the good focused support they receive from the teachers and teaching assistants. Although teaching is good overall, in a few lessons, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, work is not matched well enough to the needs of all pupils. Questioning is not always extended to encourage pupils to practise their literacy skills. Pupils are not always given clear enough criteria by which they can tell if they are doing well. Where this is the case, progress slows.

Pupils are welcoming and confident. This was evident in the Nativity play performed by Year 1 and Year 2 pupils and enjoyed by the many parents and carers who attended. Pupils are soundly prepared for the future economic well being through their very good information and communication technology (ICT) skills and the mature ways they co-operate with each other. This is demonstrated through activities such as organising the sale of their home-made items in the 'outdoor shop'. The school is well aware of its

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strengths and areas for development. Although many of the school's interventions have already led to major improvements, the school recognises that it is important to embed and sustain all its strategies to maximise their effect on further raising pupils' achievement. The fact that the school has achieved so much in such a short period of time indicates that its capacity to improve further is satisfactory. The school achieves satisfactory value for money.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise attainment of English and mathematics further to be at least in line with standards found nationally by
  - embedding basic literacy and numeracy skills into other curriculum areas
  - giving more opportunities for handwriting practice, and extended writing that relates to pupils' interests
  - enriching pupils' vocabulary.
- Ensure all teaching is good or better to accelerate pupil progress by
  - always having work that is suitably matched to the needs of all pupils, particularly for the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - improving questioning to encourage pupils to develop their thinking and language skills
  - provide clear criteria for success so that pupils can tell more easily how well they are learning.
- Raise attendance to be in at least in line with that found nationally by convincing parents of the detrimental effect of extended absences due to trips abroad in term time.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

The quality of learning and progress in lessons is good, which represents a significant recent improvement. Pupils behave well, contribute to discussions and often respond to their teachers' questions with enthusiasm. They concentrate well on the tasks their teachers set them. In a Year 2 ICT lesson, pupils were given opportunities to demonstrate to others using the interactive whiteboard, how well they had learned 'finger spacing'. However, in some lessons, pupils could not say if they were learning well as it was not clear what was expected of them.

Although attainment at the end of Year 6 is still low overall, the previous decline in attainment in English, mathematics and science has been reversed. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is also low, but again the decline has been reversed and there are improved standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in reading is now

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just below that found nationally and this rapid improvement is attributed to an 'Accelerated Reading' programme. Boys, in particular, thoroughly enjoy the challenge of a quiz to test their knowledge and understanding of books they have read. Leaders acknowledge that, throughout the school, attainment in basic skills is still not high enough. No significant variation in the progress and learning of different groups of pupils was seen in lessons visited during the inspection.

Pupils are very clear about how to stay safe and they have a good understanding of what it means to be healthy. They enjoy the many opportunities to take part in sporting activities and clubs. They have good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and they willingly contribute to their own school and the wider community through activities such as 'Play Pals' and cheerleaders. The school council plays a prominent part in school life and has a large say in what happens in school, such as the choice of playground equipment.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Pupils are engaged because lessons move forward at a good pace, with a wide range of

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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interesting activities and effective use of interactive whiteboards. Although the work usually caters well for the pupils' differing needs, it is sometimes not matched well enough. Teaching assistants provide good proactive support that enables pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who do not speak English as their first language to have full access to the curriculum. Teachers often use good questioning techniques to challenge pupils, but at times opportunities are missed for pupils to think and develop their language skills. In many lessons, teachers share with the pupils what it is they should be learning. This allows them to be involved in assessing their own learning. However, in a few lessons this is not apparent and, as a result, progress slows. Good assessment is evident in nearly all lessons in helping pupils to improve their work and teachers' marking is helpful in making clear the next steps pupils need to take in their learning.

The curriculum is currently being revised to extend links between subjects. At present, there is not enough embedding of basic literacy and numeracy skills within other topics, although ICT is integrated well and pupils' skills there are good. There is a wide range of after-school clubs and this boosts the pupils' enjoyment and adds breadth to the curriculum. Transition arrangements to the local secondary school are satisfactory. The school looks after its pupils well as individuals, especially those who are most vulnerable. In the pupil questionnaires, almost all the pupils indicated that they felt that adults cared about them and were interested in their views. There were many comments to back up those views. There are many examples of significant successes in the way in which the school helps pupils overcome difficulties to achieve well. This was seen to good effect during the inspection in some of the small group work with pupils who do not have English as their first language. Strategies to boost attendance are beginning to have an effect on reducing the number of absences, such as giving additional work when pupils are away.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has a clear vision of where the school needs to go and how it will get there. She is building a strong leadership team with well defined roles and responsibilities. These are increasingly becoming understood well. As a result, the school has made satisfactory progress towards its goals. For example, challenging targets and good teaching are being used to raise standards. Monitoring and evaluation of pupils'

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progress is rigorous and already there is evidence of underachievement having been tackled, with particularly rapid improvements in reading. Gaps in performance of different groups of pupils are closing, indicating that equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The leadership and management of teaching and learning are very meticulous. There is evidence of support for teachers having raised the quality of teaching, but there is also a recognition that all lessons need to be good or better to further raise standards and accelerate progress.

Safeguarding is good, with extensive, clear policies and secure risk assessment systems. Parents and carers are most positive about all aspects of the school and welcome initiatives such as the 'parent classes' the school puts on to help them with their basic skills. Partnership with the local authority is helping to bring about improvements. There has not been enough time for all of the recent initiatives to show impact. The school has carried out an evaluation of the three aspects of socio-economic, religion and culture in community cohesion. Whilst the promotion of community cohesion within school and locally is good, planned links with schools nationally and internationally are yet to be fully established. Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development. They are visible and active around the school. They ask appropriate questions of the school, but they are not sufficiently involved in evaluating its performance.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children start in the Nursery with skills that are mainly below those expected for their age. A significant minority have less well developed language and literary skills. Good



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induction procedures with parents help the children to settle quickly and get a confident start to their school life. Most children play together well and are well behaved. They make satisfactory progress and, at the end of the Reception Year, reach the levels expected for their age in some areas of learning but standards are still low in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development.

Adults provide well for children's welfare. There are well-established routines to promote their personal development, such as tidying up and giving out healthy snacks. Activities are interesting and children enjoy their learning and are engaged. There are opportunities to make choices and show independence. Children were seen in a range of activities to celebrate Christmas, including making cards. This stimulated both their creative development and their writing. The outside area is fully accessible and has a range of activities, but does not offer enough opportunities for language and mathematical development.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The team works successfully together to give the children a happy and productive time. Systems are now more robust for checking what the children know, understand and can do. Although adults are involved in observing and assessing, at times they are not used well enough to ensure that the activities are matched well to the ability of the children. At present, there appears to be no effective system to check on their experiences. For example, to see how long the children spend on a particular activity. Tracking the progress of different groups of children is beginning to be analysed better to inform planning more effectively.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

About one quarter of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. All felt that their child enjoyed school. This high level of enjoyment was clearly seen by the inspectors. A very small minority of parents and carers thought that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, take account of their suggestions and concerns, and help them support their child's learning. The inspectors did not agree with those views and felt that the school did those things well.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Abbotsmede Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 270 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	57	25	43	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	50	28	48	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	47	29	50	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	47	28	48	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	52	27	47	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	43	25	43	6	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	34	30	52	5	9	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	33	32	55	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	36	28	48	4	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	40	27	47	5	9	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	38	27	47	6	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	45	29	50	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	52	27	47	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



15 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Abbotsmede Primary School, Peterborough PE1 5JS

Thank you for making the inspectors feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you, both in your lessons and around the school. Your comments were very helpful to us.

We judged that your school is satisfactory and getting better. You are able to learn in a very friendly atmosphere. You have a good understanding of what it means to be healthy. You behave and work and play together sensibly. Your questionnaires told us that you enjoy all the things that you do at school very much and that you feel safe there. They also told us that you feel adults look after you well and are interested in your views.

Your new headteacher has made many improvements in school and standards in your work are improving. We have asked her, the governors and teachers to help standards to improve even more, especially those in reading, writing and mathematics and to match the activities better to the needs of the children in the Nursery and Reception classes. We have asked them to make it clear what you have to do to be successful in your lessons and to involve you more in checking how well you are doing. We have also asked them to improve attendance.

You can help them by continuing to work hard and by asking your teachers to make it clear to you how you can tell if you are doing a good job in each of your activities in class. You can also help by making sure that you come to school as often as you can.

We especially enjoyed your Christmas activities, such as the Nativity play and your Christmas shop. We would like to wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alison Thomson

Lead inspector

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