

Abbas and Templecombe CE (VC) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123775
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	340425
Inspection dates	30 September –1 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Christine Huard

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs L Davies
Headteacher	Mr W Higgins
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils and spoke to parents in the playground. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's development plan, assessment and monitoring documentation. They also scrutinised the 62 questionnaires returned by parents as well as those returned by pupils and staff.

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

- how the governors plan to monitor the work of the school during the period of transition to ensure that high standards are sustained.
- how the school manages to provide so successfully for different groups of pupils in the school, including girls and boys, those who are gifted and talented and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- the extent of pupils' appreciation and understanding of those with differing backgrounds and cultures, particularly within the United Kingdom

Information about the school

Abbas and Templecombe is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Almost all the pupils are White British and very few are at an early stage of learning English. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are catered for in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. The school has the Healthy School award, Gold Artsmark and Gold Activemark. It has the Green Flag eco-status and Wake up to Waste Award. It also has the intermediate International Schools Award. During the autumn term, an acting headteacher is leading the school.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Abbas and Templecombe Church of England Primary School is an outstanding school. It has sustained the exceptionally high standards identified at the last inspection and provides an exciting and stimulating curriculum which inspires the pupils and enables them to achieve highly. Parents wholeheartedly support the school. One wrote, 'We have no complaints, only praise'; another stated, 'My child complains if he has to stay at home when he is sick,' and another: 'I am extremely pleased with the progress my child has made.' The acting headteacher is ensuring that the strong ethos and philosophy of the school continue to drive it forward. Teamwork and a total unity of purpose are the main reasons for the school's success. There is a strong commitment to provide the best possible education for each and every pupil in the school. The staff are enthusiastic, well motivated and work exceptionally well together. There is an excellent team spirit and a feeling of whole-school ownership of decisions made. Everyone strives to further improve what is already an exceptional school.

Children in the Reception class get an excellent start to their education. The exciting range of activities provided in the stimulating environment mean that they learn extremely effectively and make excellent progress. They are supported exceptionally well because staff have an extremely good knowledge of each child's individual needs. In Years 1 to 6, pupils continue this outstanding progress. Pupils greatly enjoy their learning and the challenges they are faced with. All groups of pupils do equally well. This is because of the rigorous way in which their progress is monitored and if any child is shown to be having problems, a programme is immediately put in place to remedy these. The school's register of pupils with special educational needs diminishes in size as pupils move through the school because of the quality of support provided to fill any gaps they may have had in their learning. Similarly, higher attaining pupils and those with particular gifts and talents are challenged extremely well, not only in class but also through a range of contacts with outside agencies and providers. The very few learning English as an additional language receive excellent support. There is no discernible difference in the progress made by boys and girls.

Staff and governors know how well the school is doing. The school has set highly challenging targets for future development but they are achievable. The self-evaluation is accurate and governors appreciate that 'you can't stand still, you have to keep on looking for ways to improve'. There is an outstanding capacity for further improvement, as illustrated by the sustaining of high standards at the end of Year 6 and the great improvement in standards at the end of Year 2. The school uses data exceptionally well to check its performance, and the robust monitoring system ensures that the quality of teaching and learning is rigorously evaluated. Governors regularly visit the school. They

promote community cohesion well. They have a good perception of the need for pupils to understand that they are growing up in a culturally diverse society although they recognise that pupils' knowledge of the range of cultures and beliefs found nationally is a weaker aspect of their understanding. They have plans to establish a link with an inner city school but these have not yet reached fruition. The school improvement plan is excellent, and a vital constituent in the concerted efforts to drive this school forward.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend pupils' awareness of those people who have different beliefs and backgrounds represented in the United Kingdom by developing the planned links with a school in a contrasting area so that pupils can gain first-hand experience of meeting with and learning from pupils from different cultures

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils are exceptionally well motivated and very keen to do well. Their excellent behaviour and enthusiasm are in response to the outstanding teaching they receive and which enables them to achieve very high standards. The attainment of children entering the school varies greatly from year to year, although it is almost always below that expected in literacy and communication skills. Children get an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and this prepares them well for learning as they move up through the school. Pupils really enjoy activities in class and make excellent progress. The youngest pupils in Reception learned to use the interactive whiteboard and thoroughly enjoyed tumbling Humpty Dumpty off the wall. They successfully brought in the King's men to try and mend him, and, at the same time, learned the traditional nursery rhyme. Pupils in Year 1 eagerly arranged their conkers in size order, then in groups of ten and learned to count to 100 in tens. Older pupils learned how to develop their extended writing. In Year 4, they discovered how to devise an exciting beginning to a story in order to 'hook' the audience, whilst those in Year 6 enthusiastically tackled the challenge of developing an adventure. They successfully introduced dilemmas and appropriate solutions before learning how to bring things to a successful conclusion. All pupils achieve exceptionally well because they receive the support or challenge that they need.

Pupils thrive in the nurturing atmosphere of the school. They are lively and energetic and have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy and keep safe. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective, assertive and confident. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The school council works very effectively. Behaviour in and around the school is outstanding and all the play spaces are happy and harmonious places. Pupils are rightly very proud of their Green Flag eco-award and through this are learning highly effectively about their wider global responsibilities. These, together with their very good literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills, ensure they are getting an excellent grounding for the future. Attendance has significantly improved since the last inspection because of the rigour with which absence

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

is followed up.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is outstanding and staff work hard to enthuse and inspire their pupils. They ensure that pupils know what they are going to learn and use resources, such as interactive whiteboards, skilfully. Teachers are skilled at planning a wide range of tasks. These are carefully devised to meet the learning needs of all pupils so that all are appropriately challenged or supported. Pupils have lots of opportunities to discuss and compare their thinking with partners. Marking is excellent and target setting is highly individualised so that each pupils knows exactly what they have to do to improve.

Excellent links are made across a range of subjects. This has a particularly good impact on progress because pupils have many opportunities to practise their skills. The whole of the school environment, indoors and out, is used to very good effect. Year 1 happily searched for conkers in the school garden to help them with their numeracy skills and this area is also extensively used to bring subjects such as geography and science alive for the pupils. The use of information and communication technology is fully integrated

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

into all topics, and the development of e-learning means that pupils have a wide range of opportunities to further safely extend their learning using the internet. A wide range of visits and visitors as well as an excellent range of out-of-school activities provide pupils with many additional opportunities to enhance their learning.

It is firmly bound up in the ethos and culture of the school that every child's needs are individually known and catered for. As a result all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make excellent progress. The school works closely with parents and a wide range of outside agencies to enable them to make the best possible provision. Transition arrangements into and out of the school are effective. Pupils receive good support for their personal development and are very well cared for.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher is ensuring that the school does not just 'mark time' in this interim period before the new headteacher takes up her position in January. He is driving forward the ambitious programme outlined in the school development plan. The performance management programme is already under way and governors have instigated a rigorous monitoring programme to ensure that high standards are sustained. The school has successfully sustained and improved further the exceptionally high standards identified at the last inspection. The monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress have been further improved, with swift actions taken to remedy any perceived weakness. The system of personalised learning ensures that the needs of all groups of pupils are met and secures excellent equality of opportunity. Self-evaluation is extremely rigorous. Priorities for development arise from this very detailed analysis, and training for staff is provided and linked to performance targets where this is appropriate.

Senior leaders promote good levels of community cohesion and this is reflected in the International Schools award, as well as pupils' involvement in the school and local community. Pupils' knowledge of the differing cultures and beliefs represented in the United Kingdom is not well developed as their link with a school in a contrasting area is not yet fully developed. Governors have an excellent overview of the school's direction and the priorities which they help formulate. Regular visits, reports and meetings with staff, mean they are able to be an effective 'critical friend'. At the time of the inspection, safeguarding procedures were extremely thorough. There are very careful checks on all adults who work in the school, and health and safety checks, as well as risk

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assessments, are carried out rigorously.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make excellent progress and reach standards slightly above those expected by the time they join Year 1. The excellent induction process means that children have a carefully orchestrated start to school. As a result, they settle quickly, learn to play happily with each other and are rapidly learning the importance of sharing and taking turns. Their behaviour is excellent. Teaching is exciting and stimulating. Going on a 'wellie' walk, children excitedly pointed out all the green things they could see around them ' far more than just the trees and bushes. They enthusiastically learned how to record their findings using the digital camera, and by the end of the walk every child had successfully mastered this piece of technology. The curriculum is inspiring and motivating. There is an extremely good balance between those activities led by the teacher and those that children choose for themselves. There are many opportunities for children to use the exciting outside area. An excellent canopy ensures that it can be used in all weathers. In addition, the children's curriculum takes them out in to the rest of the school grounds and the school garden. They enthusiastically grew vegetables and provided leek and potato soup for others in the school to enjoy. The care and attention given to children's welfare, is outstanding and children's individual needs are catered for extremely well. The excellent leadership and management is reflected in the way the school's system of personalised learning starts as soon as children join the school. The teacher provides a range of activities which allows her to make rapid assessments of where the children are in their learning to date and where they need some extra help.

In this way, minor difficulties are identified before they become problems and every child's individual needs are provided for.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

There was a strong response to the Ofsted questionnaire, with 62 questionnaires returned, representing nearly half of the families attending the school. Nearly all the parents are extremely pleased with all that the school has to offer, and this was reflected in the comments made both on the questionnaires and in person to the inspectors. Parents and carers are very confident that their children are safe and well cared for. They also express confidence in the leadership and management of the school. Almost all are happy overall with the experiences their children are receiving. There are a very few reservations, mainly whether unacceptable behaviour is dealt with well, The school has a robust behaviour policy and inspectors have no reason to doubt poor behaviour would be dealt with appropriately.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Abbas and Templecombe CE 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 136 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	79	13	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	79	13	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	45	73	13	21	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	71	14	22	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	73	16	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	79	11	18	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	74	14	22	0	0	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)	46	74	14	22	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	73	14	22	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	68	17	27	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	52	24	39	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	47	76	12	19	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	82	9	14	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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



Dear Pupils

Inspection of Abbas and Templecombe CE (VC) Primary School, Templecombe BA8 0HP.

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and play so happily outside. The many of you who were kind enough to speak to us showed how proud you are of your school. You are right to be, because it is an outstanding school!

These are some of the outstanding things we found.

- The children in Reception get a wonderful start to school life; we loved the 'wellie walk' and thought you did really well with the digital camera!
- You all really enjoy school and make excellent progress to reach much higher standards than those found in most schools.
- You behave extremely well, both in class and out in the playground.
- You get on exceptionally well with other pupils and always look after each other.
- You know a lot about how to stay safe and live healthy lives.
- The leaders are excellent at running the school and understand how they could make it even better.
- The topics planned are very interesting and I can see how the learning platform makes learning much more exciting.
- Your teachers are doing an outstanding job. They work hard to plan interesting lessons and always mark your work carefully.
- All staff at the school take exceptionally good care of you and keep you safe.

What we would like the school to do now:

- We would like to see the school set up a link with a school in a very different area so that you can learn more about the different cultures there are in this country.

We hope you continue to enjoy school as much as you do now. Good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

Christine M. Huard

Lead Inspector

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