

# Abingdon Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131519
<b>Local Authority</b>	Middlesbrough
<b>Inspection number</b>	341155
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Linda Buller

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>	410
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Bob Brady
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Bob Eastwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Abingdon Road Middlesbrough North Yorkshire TS1 3JR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent 75% of their time looking at teaching and learning, visited 20 lessons, and observed 20 teachers. They met with the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, pupils' books, pupils' progress data and other documentation. 135 parental, 18 staff and 126 pupils' questionnaires were analysed.

- the progress made by all groups of pupils and whether some pupils underachieve
- the effectiveness of the actions taken to address the decline in standards since the last inspection, particularly in mathematics
- how well leaders and managers use self-evaluation to drive improvement and tackle underachievement.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. Eighty-five percent of pupils come from minority ethnic groups. An above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is in one Nursery and three Reception classes. The school has gained the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards.

**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?**

**4**

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

**4**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Although the teaching observed during the inspection was mostly satisfactory, it is not strong enough, particularly in Key Stage 2, to help pupils overcome previous underachievement and make the progress required to raise their attainment. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and good relationships are established. In the better lessons, expectations are appropriate and questions are used well to check on pupils' understanding. Nevertheless, attainment remains too low. Pupils do not reach standards that are appropriate for their age in English, mathematics or science. Teachers' planning is at times too broad and does not fully take into account differing abilities or any barriers to learning experienced by different groups of pupils. In too many lessons assessment information is not used effectively to support learning.

The curriculum does not meet pupils' academic needs. Whilst pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities which add significantly to their enjoyment of school and to many aspects of their personal development, this wealth of curricular enrichment has not been used effectively enough to develop pupils' enthusiasm for learning and hence to raise standards. Too often learning, especially for older pupils, involves the use of published materials which do not capture the pupils' imagination. Lessons are not always adapted well enough to the range of pupils' differing learning needs.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Behaviour is satisfactory and there have been no racist incidents reported for many years. However, arrangements to ensure that adequate safeguarding checks take place do not meet government requirements. The school recognises this and has begun to put in place measures to improve this aspect of its work. Attendance is low despite the efforts of the school to improve this.

The significant weaknesses in pupils' outcomes and in the quality of provision have not yet been addressed successfully by the school's leadership. Despite making good progress towards remedying the weaknesses identified in the Nursery and Reception classes at the last inspection, the pace of change to address low and declining standards elsewhere in the school, particularly in mathematics, has been too slow. Although the school has now identified the appropriate priorities for improvement, its self-evaluation process is inadequate because it lacks rigour and fails to provide an accurate view of performance. This, together with the decline in standards since the last inspection and

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the fragile improvements in the rate of pupils' progress, demonstrate that the school has an inadequate capacity to improve. Given that outcomes for pupils are inadequate, the school provides inadequate value for money.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is clearly evident in how well pupils from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds get along with each other. Pupils' contribution to the school and to the wider community is strong. They are rightly proud, for example, of how well they represent their school and the pleasure they bring to others as members of the steel band. The school plays a vital part in local community cohesion and is the hub for many activities. Parents are almost unanimous in their support of the school and express their appreciation of the range of experiences which are provided for their children. Partnerships with other agencies are good and used well to provide pupils with additional learning opportunities which could not be provided by the school alone. Improvements to provision in Nursery and Reception classes since the last inspection help pupils to get off to a good start. From low attainment on entry to Nursery, children make good progress to attain skills that are just below average by the end of their Reception Year. However, this good start is not maintained across Years 1 to 6.

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

- Raise attainment and improve the progress pupils make in English, mathematics and science, by:
- - improving the management of teaching and learning by leaders at all levels so that teaching enables pupils to learn at a much faster and more consistent pace
- - making sure that planned learning activities meet the individual needs of all pupils
- - ensuring teachers make more effective use of day-to-day information about what pupils have learnt, in order to increase the pace of learning
- - making effective use of enrichment activities to develop pupils' enthusiasm for learning.
- Ensure that safeguarding procedures fully meet government requirements.
- Improve attendance to at least the national average.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****4**

Although pupils' progress in the lessons observed during the inspection was mostly satisfactory the progress made by pupils over time was poor. As a result, learning and progress for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, is inadequate. In the last three years, most groups of Year 6 pupils reached standards in English, mathematics and science that were well below average. This pattern of low attainment continues to be evident in the current Year 6.

Due to a strong focus on improving pupils' writing skills, progress in English has been broadly satisfactory since the last inspection. This better progress has resulted in an improvement in the standards attained at the end of Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2

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however, whilst test results have improved slightly, the improvement was not sufficient to raise standards from their well below average levels. In mathematics, standards have declined in both key stages. Progress is slowest in Years 4 and 5. The school has recognised this key weakness and has begun to take action to address it but it is too early to judge the impact of this.

Pupils' behaviour and attitude to learning in lessons are generally good. A minority of pupils have difficulty in maintaining self-discipline, especially in unstructured times. Therefore behaviour is no better than satisfactory overall. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to eat healthily. The take-up of school lunches is good and most pupils make healthy choices. Many pupils enjoy participating in the wide range of physical activities provided by the school. Pupils relish the opportunities to contribute to their school community and to the wider community, either as school councillors, play leaders, members of the eco-committee and most especially, as members of the steel band. All of these activities contribute strongly to pupils' personal development and significantly raise their self-esteem. Despite the school's good efforts, which have seen the percentage of persistent absence halve in the last year, attendance overall remains low and the rate of persistent absence remains well above the national average. This, together with pupils' low basic skills, means that they are not sufficiently prepared for their future economic well-being.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</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>4</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4

<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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<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>
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### How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is variable but inadequate overall. Where there is better teaching, it is exemplified by the use of creative activities, challenging questions, good subject knowledge and high expectations about the consistent use of accurate vocabulary. When teaching is less effective, assessment information is not used well enough and teachers' plans describe what pupils will do rather than identifying precise targets about what each group of pupils is required to learn. Teaching assistants are, in the main, used well to help pupils overcome barriers to learning. However, some lessons do not always include the range of activities needed to support or challenge pupils of different ability. These lessons do they take sufficient account of pupils' different levels of understanding of the English language.

The curriculum inadequately meets pupils' academic needs. Emerging links between learning in English and other subjects are starting to contribute to pupils' better progress, but they are not yet fully established. Literacy lessons, particularly for older pupils, lack creativity and do little to encourage those boys who are reluctant to write. The school has recognised that there are too few opportunities for pupils to investigate and apply their problem solving skills, particularly in mathematics. Although these now regularly feature in teachers' plans, too much time is still spent in lessons revising pupils' knowledge before moving on to applying their skills. Pupils enjoy frequent visits to places of interest, including regular residential visits for older pupils. These, together with a wide range of extra-curricular activities and the opportunities to work with visiting experts, ensure that pupils develop good personal qualities.

Staff know pupils extremely well. Relationships are good and the majority of pupils and parents feel very well supported. The good pastoral support pupils receive from staff leads to a harmonious, positive atmosphere around the school. Good links with other agencies and partner institutions ensure good support for those who are vulnerable and aid transition to secondary school. However, current systems to ensure safeguarding are inadequate and urgently need to be improved.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>4</b>

### How effective are leadership and management?

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The school's leaders have not been able to secure satisfactory outcomes for pupils. Whilst leaders set challenging targets for pupils' attainment and progress, too often these are not met because teachers do not use assessment information effectively to help pupils make up for previous gaps in their knowledge. Although senior staff undertake monitoring activities and regularly track pupils' progress, the information gained is not evaluated or used well enough to ensure the necessary improvements. There is insufficient analysis of the progress made by different groups of pupils, in order to take timely action to improve the quality of provision or to tackle underachievement. Governors are very supportive of the school. However, they have not been rigorous enough in ensuring that all statutory requirements in respect of safeguarding are met. The headteacher, staff and governors are dedicated to creating a school where pupils of all abilities and backgrounds feel happy and well cared for. The successful promotion of community cohesion is a strength of the school. The school has a detailed knowledge of the religious, ethnic and socio-economic context of the community it serves. Leaders have established a school community based on mutual trust and respect, where the promotion of equality is given a high priority and discrimination is not tolerated. As a result, the school is held in high regard in the local community.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
<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>4</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>4</b>

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

When children start in the Nursery, most have skills and abilities that are well below those expected for their age. They make good progress and by the end of Reception, despite their skills being just below those expected, they have the basic building blocks



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necessary to get off to a good start in Key Stage 1. Good teaching provides a range of practical activities. Children are well supported to develop good social skills and to grow in independence. There is a good focus on language development, although occasionally tasks lack a clear learning intention. Activities to engage boys in early writing are working well. Effective team work is a strong feature of provision in the Reception classes, with good deployment of adults in order to meet the individual needs of children. Systems to observe and record children's progress are in place, but are currently too ad hoc to be fully effective in supporting the planning for children's next steps in learning. The key stage leader has recently returned from an extended period of leave and has quickly re-established good systems of leadership and management to ensure children's continuing good progress.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

The vast majority of parents have very positive views of the school. They hold the headteacher in high regard and comment warmly about the family multicultural nature of the school. A few parents express concern regarding the effectiveness of the school in dealing with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found behaviour was satisfactory during the inspection itself. The school's records and discussions with pupils indicate that there have been occasions in some year groups when the behaviour of a small number of pupils has affected their own and the learning of others. Inspectors judge that generally, behaviour in lessons is managed well by staff and is, in the main, good. It is evident, however, that in unstructured situations, such as in the playground, some children do find it difficult to manage their own behaviour.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Abingdon 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 135 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 410 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	140	58	95	39	4	2	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	137	57	100	41	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	120	50	112	46	7	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	105	43	130	54	4	2	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	115	48	127	52	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	110	45	124	51	7	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	110	45	125	52	4	2	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)	91	38	135	56	1	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	90	37	144	60	3	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	109	45	109	45	16	7	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	106	44	111	46	11	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	126	52	110	45	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	129	53	106	44	1	0	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.**



Dear Pupils

Inspection of Abingdon Primary School, Middlesbrough, TS1 3JR

Thank you for the welcome you gave to the inspection team on our recent visit to your school. We were pleased to see what a valuable contribution you make to the school and to the local community, for example, as school and eco councillors and especially in the pleasure you give to the local community by playing in the steel band. You know what to do to stay safe and healthy. Your parents and carers told us that they are very happy with the work of the school. The governors and headteacher have your best interests at heart and are very dedicated to making sure you learn how to get along with each other and that your school is a happy, harmonious place. The very youngest children receive a good education in the Nursery and Reception classes. Although most of you make reasonable progress in lessons, it is not yet fast enough to help you to reach the standards you should for your age. There are some very important things the school should improve and because of this inspectors have judged that it needs special measures. This means that the school will have extra help so that it can improve and that inspectors will be coming back regularly to see how you are getting on.

Here are some of the important things the school must do in order to improve:

- speed up your progress in lessons so that you reach higher standards in English, mathematics and science
- keep a careful check on how well you are doing and make changes when necessary to make sure you do as well as you can
- make sure the work you are given is matched to your ability and is exciting enough to make you enthusiastic about your learning
- improve the systems to make sure you are safe
- improve the attendance of those of you who do not attend school regularly enough.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and attending regularly. It was a pleasure to meet you all and we would like to wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Linda Buller

Lead Inspector

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