

Abbey Primary Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120063
Local Authority	Leicester
Inspection number	358681
Inspection dates	15–16 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Joanne Harvey HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	640
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rashmikant Joshi (Councillor)
Headteacher	Tim Foster
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Twenty-two lessons were observed and 21 teachers seen. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, groups of pupils, parents, leaders at all levels, the special educational needs coordinator and Early Years Foundation Stage leaders. They observed the school's work, looked at the school development plan, assessment information, school and local authority monitoring information, lesson plans and school policies. They analysed 311 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with questionnaires from staff and a representative sample of pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are the very large majority of pupils on track to reach above average levels of attainment and to make at least good progress?
- Are all adults now using assessment and target setting effectively in the vast majority of lessons so that the vast majority of pupils make at least good progress?
- Is the school now a leader in providing high quality and bespoke practice in ensuring the safety of its pupils?

Information about the school

The school is much larger than average. Almost all pupils come from Asian backgrounds with those of an Indian heritage forming the largest group. A few come from a wide range of other heritages. The overwhelming majority of pupils are at the very early stages of learning to speak English when they enter the school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible to claim free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The school has gained the Healthy School award and has a Sports Activemark. The governing body manage a before- and after-school club which is operated on the school site.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. The school has successfully addressed the issues raised at the last inspection and indeed, its overall effectiveness is now outstanding.

The school was highly effective in many ways at the time of the last inspection. However, since then, there has been an exemplary focus on driving and embedding further rapid improvements. These improvements have been secured because school leaders, staff and the governing body have worked together highly effectively, under the determined leadership and direction of the headteacher. They have established rigorous and consistently applied procedures for self-evaluation and daily practice which have ensured that pupils at Abbey Primary and Community School receive teaching, a curriculum, and care, guidance and support which are of the highest quality. As a consequence, pupils' attainment has continued to rise. From low starting points when they join the school, children get off to a flying start in the exemplary Early Years Foundation Stage and then continue to progress outstandingly well through school, so that by the time they leave Year 6 their attainment is above average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Furthermore, evidence in school confirms that standards are on track to rise even further as current pupils move through the school. The lack of complacency and an outstanding commitment and capacity to continue to improve in the future has been ably demonstrated.

The promotion of an exceptionally cohesive and supportive community within and beyond the school underpins all of the school's work. The environment is extremely rich and stimulating. Staff form strong and trusting relationships with pupils, their families and communities. Pupils develop extremely positive attitudes to learning and behave exceptionally well. They are proud of their school and to take on responsibilities, such as membership of the school council and as safety officers or 'huff and puff' leaders. They show remarkable empathy and are extremely thoughtful of others, for example, in taking the lead in raising funds for those affected by Aids in Zimbabwe and in their ability to reflect on important issues, such as the importance of scientific study to everyday lives. Pupils enjoy school tremendously, and most demonstrate this through their good and much-improved levels of attendance. They particularly enjoy the varied first-hand experiences they are offered through, for example, educational visits to museums and bivouacking.

Members of the governing body are ardent supporters of the school and aspects of their work are very strong. For example, where previously there had been inadequate procedures to safeguard pupils, at the time of this inspection, procedures were seen to be at the forefront of high quality, bespoke practice. As a consequence, pupils and their

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parents say they are confident that their children are kept safe at school. The governing body has yet to lead its own systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the impact of the governing body by ensuring that governors are able to effectively lead their own systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work without the direction of the headteacher.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Observations by inspectors and other evidence presented by the school confirm that attainment is above average and rising. Well-organised additional intervention programmes provided for pupils who find learning more difficult, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the early stages of learning English, ensure that they also do exceptionally well. Indeed, most groups in school are seen to outperform their peers nationally. Throughout the school, there is an excellent focus on the rapid development of excellent language skills which underpin the success enjoyed by pupils across other areas of learning.

In the large majority of lessons seen during the inspection, pupils were observed to be making good and outstanding progress. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, typical of many seen in school, pupils were excited by the challenge to create a recipe for fruit punch. They progressed rapidly with their understanding of how to read and write instructional texts, and with their understanding of healthy lifestyles. This was because the class teacher and teaching assistant carefully checked the pupils' prior learning, used lively role play and excellent modelling with real resources to make it very clear to pupils what they needed to learn. They continued to support pupils' learning with careful ongoing individual questioning to check understanding and move learning on at an excellent pace.

Pupils acquire a range of exceptional personal and social skills that help them to develop into well-rounded individuals. The school cultivates high levels of mutual respect and cooperation and promotes pupils' confidence and self-esteem extremely well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, and initiatives to promote community cohesion, often through first-hand experiences which are woven through the curriculum, have resulted in a remarkable ability, for example, to reflect and comment on their place in a multicultural and multi-faith society. A large number attend the Human Values Saturday Club and this work, which complements work led by the Human Values Learning Manager in school, underpins pupils' emotional health. Pupils embrace the many dance and sporting opportunities with enthusiasm. Parents join them in a daily fitness session. A high proportion tuck into the healthy school lunches on offer. Their considerable confidence and ability with new technologies, highly developed enterprise skills and ability to apply their above-average basic skills ensure that they are prepared extremely well for the next stage of their education and lives.

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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	2
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

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

How effective is the provision?

Consistency is a key feature in the high-quality teaching which results in the remarkable learning journey pupils take while they are at the school. All adults have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers use excellent subject knowledge and a dynamic style of delivery to inspire pupils and build accurate understanding. The essential next steps pupils need to take to achieve success are made clear in every lesson. Lesson planning is presented innovatively and in its entirety to pupils. It is based on accurate assessments of what pupils already know and includes appropriate challenges for pupils of all abilities so that they can progress equally well. Skilful questioning throughout lessons results in misconceptions being cleared up swiftly, new challenges being set and learning proceeding at a rapid pace. Lessons follow a familiar structure which gives pupils confidence. They get lots of opportunities to discuss and develop their ideas with their peers and with adults who seize every opportunity to further develop language and thinking skills. Excellent examples of feedback to help pupils improve their work were seen, particularly in English.

The rich curriculum has an equally strong focus on developing personal as well as academic skills. It has been tailored to be delivered through lots of hands on opportunities, while progressively building knowledge and skills. Several subjects are often taught together through relevant topics which begin with a 'wow' event to capture imagination and interest. Each topic involves an enterprise, and ends with a 'wow' event

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or production which is shared and reflected upon, with a promise made to leave a legacy. For example, Eureka Science began with a visit to the Birmingham Science Museum, resulted in the pupils putting on their own science exhibition evening and being able to reflect that a great part of science is creative and wondrous and then making a promise about a contribution they might make to science in the future. Curriculum opportunities are extended through an extensive range of clubs which appeal to all tastes.

At the heart of the school's work lies the removal of barriers to learning and establishing an environment in which all pupils feel confident they can succeed. Strong links with and support for parents and carers, and highly effective partnerships with a range of agencies, help to achieve this. Well-being is a high priority and vigilant systems ensure that the potentially vulnerable are identified quickly and a range of successful interventions put in place. Transition arrangements, steered expertly by the learning mentor and specialist teachers of English as an additional language are very well developed.

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 headteacher gives a very strong strategic steer. He has created a positive, 'can do' culture in which no barriers are seen as insurmountable and motivation is high. Leadership has been devolved highly successfully. Effective systems for monitoring and evaluation are well embedded. Staff collaborate together to establish the features expected to be evident in every lesson and expectations are high. Staff are astutely deployed to capitalise on their particular talents and skills. They work closely in teams, led by learning leaders, to share support, professional development and best practice and this coaching approach has resulted in teaching, curriculum and care of exceptional quality. This high quality is also evident in the provision offered to pupils before and after school.

The governing body makes a valuable contribution to the school's work in many practical ways. Governors are highly committed to carrying out their statutory duties, though they rely too much on the drive of the headteacher to support them with playing their part in setting the school's strategic direction. At the time of the inspection, safeguarding practice was outstanding and seen to permeate all aspects of school life. There is an exceptional level of awareness by all at the school, backed up by high levels of vigilance in monitoring the application of policies and procedures. The school demonstrates its outstanding commitment to equal opportunities by ensuring that any potential differences in the performances of groups are anticipated, interventions swiftly put in place or the curriculum modified so that progress is accelerated and gaps do not develop.

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The school is a focal point and driving force for community cohesion. The school is committed to maximising opportunities for pupils and their families so that pupils can achieve the very high aspirations that they hold for them. Examples of success are many and varied and include cyber-cafe training, supporting local volunteers in gaining qualifications, 'Chatter Matters' helps parents to support children's learning at home and the 'Abbey Mela' enjoyed an attendance of over 3,000. It is no surprise, therefore, that parents and carers are highly engaged in the life of the school and extremely supportive of its work.

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	2
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are exceptionally well cared for and thrive in this exciting environment. The many purposeful activities ensure that children achieve exceptionally well. Children's knowledge and skills are lower than expected on entry to Nursery and few speak English at home. They gain a wide experience of the six areas of learning because their needs are carefully assessed and their progress tracked very closely. When they leave Reception, children have caught up with their peers nationally and an increasing number exceed the levels of knowledge and skills expected for their age in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development because of excellent daily focus activities.

Children become confident and develop skills that equip them extremely well for the future. They develop tenacity because they are encouraged to complete tasks. They quickly become independent and, for example, can organise themselves with clothing and tissues. They take turns and handle equipment with care. They are taught to keep themselves safe and healthy, for example, by regular hand washing and tucking in to healthy snacks. There is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, and opportunities are rarely missed by adults to intervene with well-chosen questions to

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promote further learning. The opportunities offered in the outdoor areas offer the same excitement, variety and freedom for children to explore and discover as they enjoy indoors. Exciting topic themes give lots of opportunities for children to revisit their learning in different ways. For example, the tickly octopus theme saw children examining a variety of real fish before drawing them, collecting pretend oysters and counting them as they rolled them down pipes, writing letters to the octopus and planning a route to deliver his presents.

Leadership and management have made a strong contribution to driving improvements since the last inspection. The environment is extremely well organised, vibrant and safe. Leaders model high expectations and have ensured that teaching is excellent. Adults are quick to spot potential barriers to learning and put support in place to ensure everyone is included and no-one gets left behind. Resources are extremely well directed. Parents and carers, quite rightly, value highly the care that is taken to ensure children are happy and enjoying school life and value the meaningful way they are involved in setting their children's targets.

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

A much larger proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire than in most schools. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded are extremely happy with their children's experience and express positive views on all aspects of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Abbey Primary Community 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 311 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 640 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	207	67	100	32	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	205	66	100	32	2	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	171	55	127	41	10	3	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	160	51	140	45	5	2	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	185	59	113	36	7	2	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	168	54	131	42	10	3	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	175	56	127	41	4	1	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)	153	49	134	43	10	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	138	44	156	50	4	1	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	157	50	130	42	11	4	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	127	41	162	52	12	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	164	53	126	41	9	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	192	62	109	35	6	2	1	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



17 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Abbey Primary Community School, Leicester, LE4 5HH

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. I am writing to tell you what we found out about your school.

We think Abbey Primary Community School is now an outstanding school. The teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and to plan exciting activities for you to do. As a result, you make excellent progress in your learning and your attainment is higher than that of pupils in most schools. The youngest children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage and make excellent progress. Those of you who find work more difficult or are beginning to learn English, get excellent support so that you can do extremely well too.

You told us that the school is a very happy place. You also said that teachers look after you very well so that there is always someone there for you if you have worries or concerns. We were very impressed with how excellently you behave and get on with each other. You concentrate really well on your work and try hard to do your very best.

The school is as exceptional as it is because the headteacher and staff are always checking how well it is doing and looking for ways to make it even better. The governing body already does a good job, but wants the very best for all of you. That is why we have asked governors to carry out all of their checks on how well you are doing without as much support from the headteacher.

You can help by coming to school regularly, working hard and always doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey

Her Majesty's Inspector

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