

Abercrombie Primary School

Higher Albert Street, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 7QE

Inspection dates

18–19 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The senior leadership team provides strong and effective leadership. Team members have successfully introduced new strategies, which have improved the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Almost all governors are new to their roles. They have made a very strong start to checking the work of the school. They do not yet receive precise enough information about the spending of additional government funding in order to hold leaders fully to account.
- The effectiveness of subject leadership is variable. Some leaders have had more impact on the development of the curriculum and on the quality of teaching in their subjects than others.
- The curriculum is planned to ensure that pupils study the full range of subjects. However, some subjects are less well planned and pupils cannot securely recall the things they have learned.
- Teachers plan learning that builds precisely on what pupils already know and can do. They provide an appropriate level of challenge so that pupils of all abilities can achieve well.
- Teachers introduce pupils of all ages to a wide range of new and interesting vocabulary.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use well-considered questions to check pupils' understanding. They reshape their explanations to help all pupils grasp the concepts being taught.
- Pupils repeat spelling errors when they are writing. There is no clear strategy to teach spelling.
- Outcomes for pupils have improved over recent years. Pupils now make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils behave well around school and in class. The school environment is calm, welcoming and conducive to learning.
- Pupils have a limited knowledge and understanding of the range of world religions and cultures
- Children make a strong start in the early years. Teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is consistently good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership by:
 - Ensuring that leaders evaluate the use of the pupil premium funding and the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium so that they provide accurate detailed reports for governors as well as to parents and carers through the school's website
 - further developing the skills of the recently formed governing body so that they can hold leaders to account with even greater precision
 - developing the role of subject leaders so that they can all fully impact on the quality of the curriculum, teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Ensure that pupils are fully prepared for life in modern Britain by gaining an understanding of a range of religions and cultures other than their own.
- Improve pupils' ability to spell correctly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and what they would like to improve further. Over recent years, they have used this information to plan and implement improvements systematically. The quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils have improved since the last inspection.
- Leaders have established a strong ethos of care and respect throughout the school. Supported by a strong staff team, they place the needs of the pupils and their families at the heart of everything they do.
- Leaders at all levels use their knowledge of pupils' attainment and progress to plan for improvements to teaching. Staff, including those who are new to the profession, benefit from a range of professional development, both within the school and in collaboration with other schools locally.
- The leader (SENCo) with responsibility for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has a very clear overview of the provision for, and outcomes of, these pupils. She provides useful training for staff so that they can support pupils with SEND well in class. She keeps a very close check on the individual support for pupils with SEND, quickly making adjustments when she notices that provision can be further improved.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils' books and displays around school show that pupils study the full range of subjects. While the planning of some subjects ensures that learning is carefully sequenced, and pupils remember what they have learned, pupils' books and discussions with pupils demonstrate that this is not the case in every subject.
- Subject leaders have an accurate view of the quality of the curriculum in their subjects. Some leaders have ensured that the curriculum is carefully planned so that pupils build up their knowledge of the subject over time. They have provided useful training for staff to improve the quality of their teaching. However, the leadership of a few subjects is at an earlier stage of development.
- Leaders ensure that the pupil premium funding is used to support disadvantaged pupils' academic and personal development. While they check whether interventions are making a difference for the individual pupils, they do not evaluate the overall impact of the funding as well as they could. They do not provide governors with a fully detailed evaluation, nor do they publish a detailed-enough evaluation on the school's website, which they are required to do.
- Leaders use the primary PE and sports funding to provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to be active and to participate in a range of sporting activities. In common with the pupil premium funding, leaders undertake some evaluations of the spending to provide information for governors and parents, but they are not sufficiently detailed. For example, they do not precisely evaluate pupils' levels of participation in sport.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils sing with gusto in assembly. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to reflect and

express themselves through music, art and learning about their local community. Some aspects of pupils' cultural understanding are not as strong. While pupils have a growing understanding of British values, they do not demonstrate an understanding of religions and cultures that may be different from their own.

Governance of the school

- Almost all governors have joined the governing body in the past two years. Some have joined in recent months and some vacancies remain. Members of the newly formed governing body have made a strong start in getting to know the strengths of the school. They ask pertinent questions of leaders and make visits to the school to ensure that they have an increasingly accurate understanding of the work of the school.
- Governors demonstrate great ambition for everyone associated with the school to do well. They show a determination to be a highly effective governing body that challenges and supports leaders in appropriate measure. They have undertaken a range of useful training and have made a very strong start in achieving these aims.
- Governors discuss the spending of additional government funding for primary PE and for disadvantaged pupils with leaders. They have not, however, asked searching-enough questions to fully understand the impact of the funding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that all the necessary vetting checks take place when adults start to work, or volunteer, at the school. Staff and governors benefit from up-to-date training in all aspects of safeguarding relevant to their roles.
- The designated leaders for safeguarding enlist the support of external agencies where this will support the safety and welfare of pupils or their families.
- Staff at all levels are very clear about how to raise a concern about a child's welfare, should the need arise. Records of concerns are detailed and kept securely.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and that they had someone to talk to if they ever felt worried. A few pupils told inspectors that bullying in school was very rare, while others said that they thought it never happened. All agreed that if it ever did occur, it would be dealt with swiftly and successfully.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to explain ideas to pupils. They make effective use of questions during lessons to check pupils' understanding, swiftly reshaping explanations if they spot any misunderstandings.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and engagement in learning. They have established clear routines in class, which pupils follow. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm, caring and respectful.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with SEND, so

that they can learn successfully alongside their peers.

- Pupils use the resources that are available to them, including making reference to the information teachers provide on the display boards and whiteboards, to help them complete their work to a high standard.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils use the phonic skills they have learned when they read and write unfamiliar words. Leaders have been creative in their approach to encouraging parents to read with their children at home. A 'bedtime story' event was very popular with parents and pupils. This allowed teachers to model storytelling for parents. Leaders took account of parents' requests during this event and have since provided parents with a list of suggested books for their children to read and are encouraging pupils to take part in the local library's summer reading project.
- Pupils' books show that teachers consistently implement the school's approach to teaching grammar. Pupils accurately apply the skills they have learned when they write. There is no clear strategy for teaching spelling. Pupils' books show that they make errors in their spelling of common words and of words that require them to use their knowledge of phonics. Teachers do not employ a common strategy to correct and improve pupils' spelling.
- Teachers set homework in line with the school's policy. Models and displays around the school celebrate the work pupils have completed.
- Teachers and teaching assistants extend pupils' vocabulary very well. They introduce pupils to words that they may not typically encounter in everyday speech, such as 'antiquated', 'encrusted', 'oxidised' and 'bystander', ensuring that they understand the meaning of the words. Pupils delight in using these words in their writing.
- Teaching assistants typically provide effective support for pupils. Very occasionally they do not promote pupils' correct use of phonics or understanding of vocabulary as well as they could.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' typically demonstrate their good attitudes to learning by listening attentively to their teacher and offering answers and suggestions willingly. They are keen to get on with their work in class. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy school.
- Teachers make certain that pupils learn the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle through eating a balanced diet and taking exercise. They also begin to learn about financial responsibility through their use of the school's bank.
- Pupils can take responsibility for a range of important tasks around school. These include representing their classmates on the school council, helping to set up assembly, and helping younger pupils at lunchtime. Pupils understand how these duties contribute to the smooth running of the school, help their teachers and are preparing them for life beyond primary school.
- While pupils demonstrate a growing understanding of British values, their

understanding of world religions is limited.

- Some pupils' books are not as neatly presented as others. These pupils do not demonstrate a consistent pride in their work.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in class, around school and outdoors during their recreation time. Pupils regularly demonstrate their very good manners when speaking with adults and their peers. They hold doors open for each other and adults sensibly. Inspectors were greeted on many occasions with a cheery, 'good morning' or 'hello'. There is a strong culture in the school of friendly respect.
- Pupils enjoy the rewards they can receive for their good behaviour, spending the 'Abercrombie pound' in the school stationery shop that is run by pupils from Year 6.
- On the playground, pupils play together sensibly, using the equipment provided or chatting with their friends.
- Very occasionally, adults do not notice if pupils are off task or talking at the same time as the teacher. Pupils told inspectors that sometimes their classmates are not as fully attentive as they should be.
- Pupils' rates of attendance are typically in line with the national average. However, the rates of attendance for disadvantaged pupils is just below the national average and too many disadvantaged pupils are persistently absent. Leaders are aware of this and have introduced a range of strategies to improve rates of attendance, which are proving to be effective for some pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2018, by the end of key stage 2, the progress made by pupils in each of reading, writing and mathematics was broadly in line with that seen nationally. This is a significant improvement from the rates of progress that were well below the national average just two years ago.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2018, eight out of ten pupils attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined. More pupils achieved this milestone than was seen nationally for the second year running. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, were well prepared to start secondary school.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard by the end of key stage 2 was in line with the national average in reading and mathematics and above the national average in writing. This represents a significant improvement since the time of the last inspection.
- By the end of key stage 1 the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in each of reading, writing and mathematics was above that seen nationally in 2018. The proportion achieving the higher standard has risen in reading and mathematics year-on-year for three years.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics check by the end of Year 1 fell slightly in 2018. However, very early indications are that this dip has

been reversed this year.

- The school assessment information shows that almost all pupils make the progress the school expects of them and some pupils exceed it. Disadvantaged pupils make progress broadly in line with, and sometimes exceeding, that of their peers.
- Current pupils' books show that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, make strong progress from their different starting points in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- The quality of teaching in the early years is consistently good. Teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes plan learning that is engaging and builds well on what children know and can do. The environment, both indoors and out, provides a range of well-considered activities to develop children's skills in all aspects of their development.
- Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour. Warm relationships between adults and children enable children to approach adults when they want some help with their activities. Adults have established clear routines, which children follow sensibly. The early years setting provides a busy, happy and safe place in which to learn.
- Teachers plan learning that makes effective use of the outdoor facilities. Adults use highly effective questions to encourage children to find solutions to problems for themselves. During the inspection, children were using different sizes of sticks and twigs to try to balance both sides of a bucket balance. They demonstrated great perseverance and concentration. The adult chose the right questions to ask at just the right moment to enable the children to successfully complete this task.
- Early reading is taught well. Children use the sounds they have learned and the strategies they have been taught to make plausible attempts at spelling and reading words correctly. Children's writing shows that they use their knowledge of phonics with increasing accuracy over time.
- The headteacher is currently the leader of the early years. Working alongside the Nursery and Reception teachers, she has a clear understanding of the strengths of the provision and plans in place to improve the provision even further in the future.
- Leaders draw on the expertise of external agencies so that they can provide appropriate support for children with particular needs. They forge strong links with parents, encouraging them to contribute to the ongoing assessments of what their children know and can do.
- Children typically enter the early years with skills just below those typically seen in children of their age. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the early years is broadly in line with the national average. Children make strong progress from their different starting points and are well prepared for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	112670
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10087341

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	249
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jill Brunt
Headteacher	Tracy Gannon
Telephone number	01246 232 425
Website	www.abercrombie.derbyshire.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@abercrombie.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 February 2017

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the leader with responsibility for pupils with SEND. Inspectors also met with leaders of English, mathematics, science, PE, geography and history.
- Inspectors also held meetings with governors. They spoke with a teacher who is new to the profession and with a representative from the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors observed learning in every class at least once.
- An inspector listened to pupils reading and visited an assembly.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils and observed pupils' behaviour during playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally as they brought their children to school in the morning. They also took account of the 127 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also considered the 23 responses from the staff online survey. There were no responses to the pupils' online survey.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including documents relating to safeguarding of pupils, the school's self-evaluation and the school development plan. Inspectors examined a range of minutes of governors' meetings and the school's most recent information about the progress pupils make.

Inspection team

Di Mullan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Carter

Her Majesty's Inspector

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