

Abraham Moss Community School

Crescent Road, Crumpsall, Manchester M8 5UF

Inspection dates

1–2 December 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Despite the school improving, there are some key aspects that are not good.
- Pupils' progress across Key Stage 3 is slower than in other key stages. Pupils have too much to do to catch up by the end of Year 11.
- Some school leaders do not use information to accurately evaluate the work of the school. This limits their ability to hold others to account.
- Achievement in mathematics in the secondary phase requires improvement. Improvement in the teaching in mathematics has been patchy.
- In the secondary phase, the quality of teaching is inconsistent. Some teachers do not know how well their pupils are learning. These teachers do not plan lessons well nor provide effective feedback to their pupils. Too few teachers systematically develop pupils' literacy skills, or require pupils to express themselves clearly. Too few teachers set good quality homework.
- Some teachers have low expectations of what boys can achieve and of how they should behave. In these lessons, boys make slower progress.
- Some members of staff do not provide a good model for how pupils should behave.

The school has the following strengths

- This is an improving school. The headteacher is being very successful in driving improvement across all aspects of the school. Improvements in some areas are rapid.
- Children starting their education in the early years get off to a good start. The developing primary phase already offers a good education for its pupils. These phases are very well led. Pupils learn enthusiastically and quickly because teachers combine good teaching skills with a desire to ensure every pupil thrives.
- Pupils in the primary phase behave well. Behaviour in the secondary phase is improving
- At the heart of the school is a passion for all pupils to succeed. All pupils are very well cared for and looked after. The school provides excellent specialist support for pupils who are new to the country, including refugees and those seeking asylum.
- Pupils' progress across all subjects in the secondary phase is improving. In English, science, art and in modern foreign languages, pupils make good progress.
- The school's efforts to improve pupil attendance have had an impressive impact. Attendance has risen very quickly and is now better than national

quickly.

averages for almost all groups of pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to raise rates of progress across the whole school, but most particularly across Key Stage 3 and in mathematics across Key Stages 3 and 4, by:
 - developing systems that will allow teachers to easily and frequently monitor the progress of pupils
 - ensuring that teachers assess the progress that pupils make more accurately
 - ensuring that teachers use the information they have about pupils to plan lessons that better meet pupils' needs and fill any gaps in their learning.

- Improve teaching in the secondary phase by ensuring that all teachers:
 - have higher expectations of what boys can achieve and how well they behave in class
 - use questioning more skilfully to develop pupils' confidence in explaining their ideas and justifying their opinions
 - using the best practice seen in the primary phase, develop pupils' literacy skills throughout the school
 - set good quality homework that will develop pupils' skills in learning independently
 - further improve the impact of teachers' feedback to pupils about their work so that pupils demonstrate that they have acted on the advice.

- Continue to improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels by ensuring that:
 - all leaders and managers have consistently high expectations of pupil and staff performance
 - all leaders and managers skilfully use data and other information to accurately evaluate the work of those for whom they are responsible, and act quickly to make improvements
 - all teachers, leaders and managers ensure they are excellent role models for their pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Some aspects of the school are improving more rapidly than others. This is because leaders and managers responsible for the improving aspects are skilled and have high expectations of what pupils and staff can achieve and how well pupils ought to behave.
- Some leaders and managers do not use information or data to evaluate the performance of staff, for whom they are responsible, thoroughly enough. These leaders rely too much on evaluating what staff appear to do rather than evaluating the impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Despite pupils' behaviour improving, too many members of staff resort to raising their voices when addressing pupils who are not behaving as well as they should. These members of staff are not modelling the behaviours they expect of their pupils.
- The headteacher, who was appointed after the last inspection, has been driving improvements in all aspects of the school with considerable success in many areas. She is changing the culture of the school quickly. Older pupils say this is now a much better school for them, commenting on improvements to both teaching and behaviour.
- Staff training, to improve teaching and leadership, is both extensive and good quality. Systems to manage the performance of teachers and leaders are also improving and so they are beginning to be held to account with more rigour.
- The majority of staff are supportive of the leadership team and recognise the improvements made throughout the school. However, a small proportion feel that change has happened too quickly and without regard for them.
- Parents are generally positive about the work of the school, especially the care with which staff look after their children. Some parents are critical of planned opportunities for them to discuss the progress their children are making in the secondary phase. Some secondary progress reports sent home offer conflicting messages and, so, lack clarity.
- Many pupils have direct and personal experience of conflict throughout the world. Their contributions are invaluable during pupil discussions on human rights, prejudice and discrimination. Everyone in this school is fully aware of their responsibilities to challenge potential extremist views, no matter the source.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted from nursery through to Year 11 through a rich variety of activities, discussions, events and the curriculum. This is a culturally vibrant school with 62 different languages spoken in the homes of pupils. It is a cohesive community where the qualities of tolerance and respect do not have to be taught; they are embedded in the school's culture. The curriculum is constantly reviewed and adapted to meet the changing needs and interests of the pupils.
- Pupils at key stages of transition receive high-quality information, advice and guidance. This ensures they engage well with their next stages of education. A higher than average number of pupils leave this school to take up good quality courses and employment.
- Disadvantaged pupils benefit from additional funding as demonstrated by their good progress throughout the primary phase and in English. The gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others, within mathematics, are much slower to narrow. Additional funding to promote sport and physical education in the primary phase is being well spent. The school is using this funding to improve the skills of its teachers and to employ specialist sports coaches.
- The local authority has worked well with the school over recent years to support its improvement. The local authority has been instrumental in improving the governing body and brokered support from Seymour Road Academy. This is a nearby primary school. Their high-quality support and guidance has been one of the key elements in ensuring the primary phase has developed quickly to provide a good education for all of its pupils.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Since the last inspection, the governing body has undertaken a review of their work. As a consequence, they have reconstituted and reduced the number of governors from 15 to 12. They have recently managed to recruit new members with considerable experience in leading large and successful schools. The governing body is now much better placed to evaluate the work of the school, to celebrate its qualities and support the headteacher in driving further improvement.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding of pupils has the highest priority in this school. Staff frequently undertake effective training on child protection. Staff fully understand their responsibilities and how to raise concerns, including through whistleblowing.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because the quality of teaching is variable across the school. Teaching is consistently good across the primary phase and in many secondary departments. However, there is not enough good teaching to ensure pupils make consistently good progress.
- In the secondary phase, teaching in mathematics is improving. However, pupils still have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. This results in many pupils not working at the level expected for their age.
- Where teaching is weaker, teachers do not assess accurately what their pupils have learned. This means that they plan lessons without considering what their pupils already know or do not know. Consequently, pupils in these classes are not able to systematically build their understanding and skills.
- Many teachers demonstrate very strong practice in giving advice to their pupils on how to improve. This is seen across the primary phase and in some secondary subjects. When this happens, pupils know specifically what they need to do to improve and will do it. However, in the secondary phase, pupils' progress slows when teachers do not identify with sufficient precision what their pupils need to do to improve. Sometimes, when good advice is given, pupils do not act on this advice.
- Pupils' literacy skills are developed well throughout the school up to Year 5. Year 5 is currently the oldest year in the primary phase. Across all subjects in the secondary phase, teachers make an attempt to improve literacy with varying degrees of success. In some subjects, teachers limit this to ensuring pupils understand key words. However, they do not encourage pupils to write at length. These teachers accept simplistic answers to their questions – missing many opportunities to develop pupils' oral communication skills. So, pupils' skills in explaining and justifying their ideas are underdeveloped.
- The expectations teachers have of their pupils in the secondary phase are variable and not always high enough. When teachers set high standards and teach well, pupils rise to this and make good progress. However, too often, some teachers accept an inferior quality of work and behaviour from boys in their class and this slows their progress. The same pupil will produce a different quality of work in different classes. This includes pupils who will produce very good work in the school's specialist resourced provision, and mediocre work in some classes.
- Homework is not currently making a good contribution to pupils' learning. It is set too infrequently and when it is set, the quality is often not good enough as it simply replicates what is done in the classroom. In the secondary phase, pupils have limited time to spend learning on their own. This restricts their opportunities to develop skills they will need in future when they will have to learn and work more independently. Leaders and managers within the school have already identified this as a priority area for improvement.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- This is an extremely diverse and inclusive school where their vision of 'no child or family being left behind' is realised through welfare systems of the highest quality. Specialist provision, additional support and the headteacher's passionate drive, ensure all pupils have equality of opportunity. This infectious culture inspires the pupils to work and play harmoniously.
- Within the school's curriculum there are many high-quality opportunities for pupils to learn how to protect themselves, including from those dangers when using social networking technologies. In addition, the school works very effectively with a wide range of external agencies, ensuring pupils know how to be safe, and are physically and emotionally safe. Pupils say they feel safe. They know staff take good care of them and there are many adults, including the residential police officer, to whom they can turn if they are concerned for themselves or about their friends. Parents are also confident in the school keeping their children safe.
- Pupils say that bullying happens occasionally and is usually started by name calling with regard to appearance. However, they are also very confident in the effectiveness of staff to deal with these incidents.
- The school was recently awarded the Inclusion Mark at flagship standard. This is an award given to schools that excel in the areas of personal development and welfare.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is despite behaviour improving since the last inspection. Pupils consistently say that behaviour has improved. However, it is not yet good.
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning in the secondary phase are variable. There are examples of exemplary behaviour. However, some boys in particular can lose focus when teaching is not good. The quality of work they produce shows a lack of pride and poor accuracy. The school is aware that some teachers need to do more to tackle low-level disruption in their classes. However, work on this is at an early stage of development.
- Management systems to improve behaviour have been effective in reducing the incidence of more serious misbehaviour. Rates of exclusion have reduced.
- A whole-school priority has been to improve punctuality and attendance. Due to concentrated efforts and high-quality leadership in these areas, both have improved remarkably.
- Pupils are lively and confident. They are respectful and show courtesy as they move around the school. Occasionally, behaviour becomes a little boisterous and some younger pupils find this intimidating.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- The rate of progress that pupils make across Key Stage 3 is variable and therefore requires improvement. Too few teachers evaluate how well their pupils are learning. This prevents teachers from identifying when individual pupils' learning begins to slow and adapting their teaching quickly enough in response. Only at Key Stage 4 do teachers recognise that some of their pupils have much to do to catch up. Teachers rely too heavily on a range of additional activities that supplement class teaching. Progress picks up again in Years 10 and 11.
- Since the last inspection, pupils have made better progress in mathematics. However, rates of progress in Key Stages 3 and 4 are variable between different classes and therefore require improvement. There have been a considerable number of staff changes within the department. While those who have been appointed recently teach well, some of their pupils still have gaps in their understanding and mathematical ability.
- Pupils make consistently good progress in English, art and ICT. In 2015, Year 11 pupils left having also made good progress in science. Progress continues to be strong in these subjects for current pupils.
- The good progress that starts in the early years continues throughout the primary phase. However, due to their low starting points, a smaller than expected proportion of pupils reach national levels of attainment as they leave Key Stage 1. All groups of pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 because teachers set high expectations for their pupils and have high expectations of themselves.
- By the end of Year 1, pupils' abilities to read and spell using the sounds that letters make (phonics) are below the levels expected for their ages. However, the gaps between pupils in this school and other pupils nationally are narrowing, year on year. Improvement in reading continues through Year 2 and by the time pupils start Year 3, pupils' phonics skills have almost caught up to the expected levels.
- All aspects of Key Stage 1 have been improving rapidly. Good rates of progress across all subjects, including English and mathematics, continue for pupils currently in Years 3 to 5.
- Support for disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs is good in the primary phase and so they progress as well as other pupils. Support is well targeted because leaders identify the needs of their pupils accurately and train teachers and teaching assistants well. However, progress dips for these pupils in Key Stage 3 because teachers do not adapt their teaching well enough to support them and teachers do not identify when progress begins to slow. Pupils' progress improves again in Key Stage 4.
- Pupils who are supported through the school's specialist resourced provision make very good progress. Pupils thrive in this nurturing setting – gaining in confidence and self-esteem.
- Most-able pupils make strong progress across all phases of the school. Pupils who are low in ability also progress well. There are many staff looking out for these pupils and they receive good support and guidance. Those pupils who benefit from additional funds to help them catch up with literacy and mathematics do so. However, for some, these improvements in their literacy do not transfer to improvement in their other subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making better progress in English than in mathematics across the secondary phase. Any gaps between the achievement of this group and other pupils in the school, in English, are narrowing and are now small. In mathematics, gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others

remain too wide. Across the primary phase there are no gaps in performance between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school.

- Many pupils join this school when they first arrive in this country and usually with very little English language. The work of the school with these pupils is exemplary. Skilled staff offer excellent support and guidance to pupils when they first arrive. Pupils learn English quickly and soon join classes across the school. Due to this good start and the pupils' usually high aspirations, their rates of progress and levels of attainment are higher than other pupils in the school. Previous pupils who joined the school having had very difficult experiences, for example, as refugees from a war zone have been successful in gaining places at highly-respected universities such as Cambridge University. Improved rates of progress and high-quality guidance ensure pupils are now better prepared for the next stages in their education than they were at the last inspection.

Early years provision

is good

- Leadership and management in the early years are good because leaders and managers clearly understand the strengths and weaknesses of the practice across this phase. Leaders and managers act quickly to make improvements. The rate of children's progress has accelerated over the past three years.
- Children's progress is carefully and frequently tracked. This information is used effectively to plan for children's individual needs and interests.
- A very high proportion of children join this part of the school with skills that are much lower than those typically found for their age. They have particular weaknesses in language, communication and literacy skills.
- Consistently good teaching, support and care ensure that children make good progress during the Nursery and Reception Years. However, only a minority reach the good levels of development expected of them as they move to Year 1.
- Learning activities stimulate curiosity because they are well planned and resourced. There is good emphasis placed on developing spoken language, early reading and number skills with activities to promote these found in most of what the children do. Occasionally, some opportunities are missed to encourage interaction between children.
- Leaders, teachers and other adults quickly build positive relationships with parents. They work very effectively with other agencies to protect children and to promote their well-being. These good relationships help children settle quickly into their new surroundings. Children are happy and safe in this environment.
- Children show an eagerness to learn right from the start because teaching is lively and learning fun. This results in children developing good levels of concentration on their tasks. As a result, they behave well at all times. They play happily with their friends both inside and outdoors, sensibly sharing resources and willingly taking turns. They quickly start taking responsibility as they tidy up their activities and make choices about the resources they want to work with. Children's personal and social development are promoted well through a good range of enriching activities.

School details

Unique reference number	105560
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10008956

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1653
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graeme Hollinshead
Headteacher	Gill Houghton
Telephone number	0161 219 6699
Website	www.abrahammoss.manchester.sch.uk
Email address	admin@abrahammoss.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 January 2014

Information about this school

- Abraham Moss is a much larger than average-sized school.
- After a period of leadership turbulence, the current headteacher took up post in September 2014.
- The primary school has been open since September 2012; currently it has classes from Nursery to Year 5.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average. Over 20 different minority ethnic groups are represented and there are over 60 languages spoken at the school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very high.
- A well-above average proportion of the pupils arrive mid-year, many from abroad. Many speak little or no English.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is well above average.
- The school provides specialist resourced provision for pupils aged 11 to 16 with physical disabilities, autistic spectrum disorder and for pupils with speech and language impairments.
- Since the last inspection, the governing body has reconstituted and a new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in November 2015.
- A local primary school, Seymour Road Academy, supported the development of the Abraham Moss primary provision for 12 months to November 2015.
- A Somali supplementary school is run for parents and pupils on Sunday mornings. The aims are to help improve pupils' progress in learning basic skills, and to support parents.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards that set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors were aware during this inspection of a serious incident concerning a former pupil that had occurred since the previous inspection. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the incident were considered (where appropriate) alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a wide range of evidence during the inspection, including through observations of teaching, some of which were undertaken jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work during lessons and at a further sample of pupils' written work including English, science and mathematics.
- Inspectors visited assemblies and tutor time.
- Meetings were held with school staff, including the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff in charge of aspects of the school's work. Inspectors met members of the governing body and made a phone call to the new Chair of the Governing Body. They also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in formal interviews, during lessons and informally at lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered a large variety of documentation related to the school's work: improvement plans, the school's view of its performance and information concerning pupils' attainment, progress and attendance.
- Inspectors scrutinised records concerning safeguarding, pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching and learning.
- Inspectors analysed 48 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also took into account 19 written responses from parents. Inspectors spoke to parents as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors analysed 140 responses to the Ofsted online staff questionnaire. Inspectors also took into account 18 written responses from staff and one letter.

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