

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



13 November 2017

Mrs Ro Maybury
Headteacher
Abbotsbury Primary School
Abbotsbury Road
Morden
Surrey
SM4 5JS

Dear Mrs Maybury

Short inspection of Abbotsbury Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 31 October 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in June 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your team share a strong sense of purpose in your commitment to achieve the very best for all of your pupils. You, other leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of what is working well and what needs to improve. This is because systems to check the quality of learning, pupils' progress, attendance, behaviour and other aspects of the school's work are robust and accurate. You strengthen this further through regular evaluations from local authority consultants. As a result, changes are made quickly to address any shortcomings.

The school is a calm and nurturing environment where staff help pupils to develop well, academically and personally. Without doubt, pupils enjoy being at the school and they enjoy learning. The overwhelming majority of parents think that the school provides a very good standard of education. They particularly appreciate the caring ethos that allows their children to thrive. One parent captured this ethos by stating, 'This school is a home away from home for my children. They look forward to school every day and are well looked after.'

Governors bring a range of skills and experiences to their role and share the same passion and determination to excel. They have a positive impact through the support, challenge and level of questioning they afford school leaders. Together, governors and leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and direction.

In the previous inspection, you were asked to improve attendance among certain groups of pupils. Despite your efforts, this has proved challenging over time, with overall attendance falling to below national averages. In particular, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was in the lowest 10% of all schools in 2015 and 2016. However, you have identified the underlying issues and have revised your attendance policy and procedures accordingly.

Working alongside the local authority educational welfare officer, you have taken legal action, where you have deemed it appropriate, to address unauthorised absences and term-time holidays. Pupils are rewarded for meeting attendance targets and you regularly communicate the importance of good attendance to parents. Your staff support some families by making home visits and accompanying pupils to school in the mornings. These actions have contributed to a sharp improvement in attendance over the last year to above the national average, including for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. In addition, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has also decreased significantly. While this improvement has been sustained this term, you are vigilant in recognising that there is still more to be done to improve the attendance of these groups in line with their peers.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding pupils and support and care for the most vulnerable have high priority in your school. You and your leadership team ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are robust and fit for purpose. Referrals made to you in your role as the designated safeguarding lead are managed sensitively and in a timely manner. Partnerships with external agencies are effective. You ensure that records of good quality are maintained. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training and that those responsible for safeguarding and recruitment have appropriate and up-to-date qualifications. Those parents that responded to Ofsted's online survey are confident that the school is a safe place.

Pupils talk knowledgeably about the opportunities that they have to learn about staying safe online. They told me that they feel confident that all pupils from different backgrounds and cultures are accepted by their peers. They also say that bullying rarely happens at the school. They speak confidently about being able to approach any adult or the pupil 'anti-bullying champions' within school if they have any concerns. I observed a key stage 2 assembly in which pupil council representatives introduced 'worry boxes' to be placed around the school, into which pupils can post any worries or anxieties they may have. Leaders have identified that even more could be done to increase pupils' awareness of the risks associated with extremism and radicalisation and have plans in place to do this.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed on the key lines of enquiry. The first line of enquiry looked at how effectively leaders are improving outcomes in reading

and writing for boys by the end of key stage 2. This was because, in 2017, boys' achievement was weaker than girls'. Leaders tackled this innovatively, including by asking boys in the school what strategies they thought would be effective. The boys' ideas are summarised in an action plan displayed around the school. These newly introduced strategies designed to improve the quality of boys' literacy are already having an impact on pupils' outcomes.

- Pupils, including boys, read accurately and fluently. The pupils who read with me said that they enjoy reading and have plenty of opportunity to practise their skills. In class, teachers have high expectations of pupils' reading skills and challenge pupils to explain their understanding of texts. It is evident from the school's assessment information that boys are beginning to make faster progress in reading as a result of improved teaching.
- While the difference between the progress made by girls and boys in writing has not been eradicated, it is clearly diminishing. Work in pupils' books shows that there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum. In our discussions, you agreed that boys' progress in writing needs to accelerate further. You agree that the strategies to improve pupils' outcomes need to be fully embedded in key stage 2 to raise standards further.
- Another line of enquiry focused on the decline in the proportion of pupils at key stage 1 achieving the expected standard in reading and mathematics in 2016. Leaders are aware of the issues that caused this dip in performance; specifically, that the cohort had lower starting points and a higher number of pupils who have specific needs than in previous years. Leaders wasted no time in putting strategies in place, such as staff training and new schemes, to resource a more sharply focused approach to developing pupils' reading comprehension. My scrutiny of pupils' work, observations and discussions with pupils indicate that they are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Assessment information for 2017 indicates an impressive improvement in outcomes for key stage 1 pupils.
- Finally, we agreed that I would look at how leaders had secured a strong trend of improvement in mathematics at key stage 2. Leaders have introduced a new school-wide scheme that emphasises number strength and the mastery of mathematics using physical examples. Leaders supported this by introducing new mathematics resources and training for staff. The impact of this work is evident in improved attainment in mathematics right across the school, starting in key stage 1. When I visited classrooms with you, there was strong evidence of the effective use of reasoning and problem-solving work in pupils' mathematics books.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- actions to improve teaching of reading and writing in key stage 2 are embedded to further raise and secure standards for all groups of pupils, especially boys.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools

commissioner and the director of children's services for Merton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jacques Szemalikowski
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, your leadership team and middle leaders. I spoke with the chair of the governing body along with two other governors and spoke by telephone to a representative from the local authority.

I met with a group of Year 6 pupils, and talked with others at breaktime and lunchtime. I spoke to a number of parents at the school gate. I looked at a range of pupils' work. You accompanied me on visits to classes where we observed pupils' learning, spoke with pupils and looked at their work. I attended a key stage 2 assembly and listened to pupils read from Year 2 and Year 5. I examined a range of documentation related to safeguarding, including the single central register, child protection records and professional training certifications.

I scrutinised the 28 responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents and the 23 responses to the pupil survey. I also considered the eight responses to the staff survey. I looked at reports from the local authority, evaluating the work of the school. I examined the school's website and reviewed information about pupils' progress, attainment and attendance. I also considered the school's self-evaluation, improvement priorities and assessment information for current pupils.