

Inspection of Abingdon Primary School

Abingdon Road, Middlesbrough TS1 3JR

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone is welcome at Abingdon Primary School where there is a strong sense of community. Pupils in the 'international arrivals hub' who speak English as an additional language are well supported by staff to quickly settle into school. This helps to prepare pupils who are new to the country for learning alongside their peers. Pupils say that staff listen to any worries that they may have. This helps them to feel safe.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' achievement. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are eager to learn. Leaders ensure that the curriculum reflects the diverse range of cultures and countries represented in the school. Pupils achieve well from their starting points over time.

Pupils behave well. They value the schools 'ARCH' values of 'Aspiration, Resilience, Commitment and Harmony'. Staff are determined that every pupil learns to become a 'good neighbour', no matter how long their stay at the school. Pupils enjoy working hard to earn 'ARCH' points for demonstrating the school's values. They develop leadership skills by becoming 'sanctuary leaders', helping their friends and those new to the school. Bullying is rare. Pupils know to report their concerns to staff, who take prompt action to resolve problems.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have revised the curriculum to reflect the diverse range of cultures within the school. In most subjects, they have identified the important knowledge and vocabulary they want pupils to learn from Nursery to Year 6. For example, in art and design, teachers use the well-sequenced curriculum to design activities. This helps pupils to remember their learning well. Pupils are inspired by the diverse range of artists and sculptors whom they study. One pupil commented, 'Wow, she looks like me. Maybe I could do that.' However, in a few subjects, such as geography, the curriculum does not identify the sequence of learning step by step. This means that some teachers are unsure exactly what pupils need to know and remember. Some subject leaders have not checked the effectiveness of the revised curriculum for their subject, including in the early years. This means that leaders do not know how well pupils are achieving in all subjects.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of phonics and early reading. This is helping pupils to access the full school curriculum. Staff use assessment effectively to identify gaps in pupils' phonic knowledge. Pupils receive support to catch up. They are enthusiastic about the books they read. Pupils read books that match the letters and sounds they know. They read often from the wide selection of good-quality texts. Staff help pupils to develop fluency and confidence in their reading.

Pupils develop good mathematical knowledge and skills. For example, children in the early years learn important mathematical language such as 'less than' and 'take

away'. They develop their understanding of patterns in numbers and shapes. This helps pupils to reason and problem-solve as they progress through the school.

Many pupils leave and arrive at the school mid-year. Most do not speak English when they arrive. Staff with expert knowledge help new pupils to acquire the knowledge and language skills they need to access their learning. Pupils with SEND are supported effectively to access the curriculum. Staff work well with external specialists to identify pupils' needs. Some pupils attend 'pre-teach' sessions to help prepare them for future learning.

Governors and leaders are passionate about supporting families in the local community. The 'children's centre' ensures that families receive a wide range of support and advice, for example in relation to health, finance and education. There is a strong focus on reading through the activities offered, such as 'reading to your bump' for expectant mothers. The 'community cohesion' group supports families new to the region. The 'team around the child' provides exceptional pastoral support for families. They help pupils to understand how to keep physically and mentally healthy.

The curriculum to develop pupils' personal development is exceptional. Pupils enjoy 'culture days' where some parents and carers prepare and share food. They join in the celebrations of different faiths and cultures represented in school. Pupils develop a deep respect for one another. There are a wide range of clubs for pupils, such as roller skating, chess and gymnastics. Pupils enjoy roles of responsibility. They influence what happens in the school. For example, some pupils chose to have more 'festivals of sport' rather than competitive sports. This encouraged a higher number of girls to access the different sports and fitness opportunities. Many pupils attend the free breakfast club.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the support that they receive from leaders to manage their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The strong pastoral support in the school means that pupils are well cared for. Leaders ensure that all staff attend regular safeguarding training. Staff know the procedures for reporting concerns if they are worried about a child. Leaders work well with external agencies to ensure pupils and their families access the help they need. The 'team around the child' provides much of this support in school. Checks are made on adults who work in school to ensure that they are safe to do so.

Pupils are taught about the risks they may face in the local community and how to keep safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, the curriculum is not broken down into small enough steps. This means that the content and sequence of learning vary from class to class. Leaders should ensure that all foundation subjects make clear the sequence of learning and check that pupils acquire the knowledge that has been identified in curriculum end points.
- Subject leaders for some foundation subjects do not have a full picture of how well the recently revised curriculums are being implemented. Leaders do not know where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge. They need to check that the curriculum is being implemented as intended, including in the early years. Leaders need to ensure that subject leaders continue to receive training to help them to make effective checks.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	131519
Local authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	10255715
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	635
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alison Kerr
Headteacher	Adam Cooper
Website	www.abingdonprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs breakfast and after-school clubs for pupils who attend the school.
- The school uses an assessment base for pupils with SEND at Hemlington Initiative Centre, which is part of Beverley Park School.
- The school runs a 'children's centre' which is open to members of the local community.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other school leaders, including the school's special educational needs coordinator, staff and governors, including the chair and

vice-chair of the governing body. The lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art and design, geography and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects, including physical education.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, around the school and at playtime and lunchtime. They spoke with pupils about their views of the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- To evaluate safeguarding, a range of information was scrutinised, including the school's single central record. The lead inspector met with the headteacher, who is the school's designated safeguarding lead, to discuss safeguarding systems and records.
- Parents' views were considered through the responses to Ofsted's Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and comments made in the free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke with parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Kate Longstaff	His Majesty's Inspector
Helen Haunch	Ofsted Inspector
Katie Lowe	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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