

Abbey Hey Primary Academy

Abbey Hey Lane, Manchester, M18 8PF

Inspection dates

30 June–1 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Early years provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This good, cohesive, and harmonious academy is moving forward and developing at an exceptionally speedy rate.
- The good leadership of the highly ambitious principal, skilled senior leaders, increasingly challenging governors, and specialists from the United Learning academies trust, is all helping to ensure that the quality of teaching, and standards attained by pupils, are rapidly improving.
- From lower-than-typical starting points when children start in the Nursery and Reception classes, all groups of pupils in all key stages make good, and often outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2014 were in line with pupils nationally. Pupils' attainment is rapidly improving this year, particularly in reading in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils benefit from a good curriculum which helps to develop their love of learning.
- Pupils' attendance is continually improving. Their behaviour is good. Pupils are very proud of their academy, respectful towards each other and adults, and say that they always feel safe.
- The quality of teaching is good, and rapidly improving. Teachers work well with their colleagues including teaching assistants, and with local and national United Learning academies, to plan activities which boost pupils' attainment, and engage their interests.
- Newly qualified teachers are well supported, and are developing their teaching practice well.
- The academy's work to engage parents is good. Parents are of the opinion that the academy is 'transformed'. They say that their children are safe, and are 'coming on in leaps and bounds'. Parents are very appreciative of being kept well informed about their children's progress and academy events.
- All aspects of early years provision, including teaching, children's progress and leadership and management, are good and continually improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, pupils, particularly the most able, are not sufficiently challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability.
- Not all pupils know precisely what they can do to improve their reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- The local governing body is new. While governors provide an overall effective level of challenge and support to the academy, they are in the process of further developing their roles.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at improving their reading skills. Six joint observations were made with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the academy. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised during lessons and separately with senior leaders.
- Inspectors considered 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), as well as the academy's own surveys of parents' views. A meeting was held with six parents.
- A meeting took place with the primary director of the United Learning academies trust.
- Responses to the inspection questionnaire completed by 36 members of staff were considered.
- Meetings were held with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. A telephone conversation took place with the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors met with academy leaders and staff responsible for various subjects and phases, including English, mathematics, the early years, Key Stages 1 and 2 leaders, and the leader responsible for provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- A meeting was held with seven newly qualified teachers.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included the academy's reviews of its own performance, checks on the quality of teaching, information about pupils' progress, development plans, various records of pupils' attendance, behaviour records and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Lenford White Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Julie Peach	Additional Inspector
Simon Dyson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Abbey Hey Primary became an academy on 1 December 2013. The sponsor is the United Learning academies trust, which works closely with the local governing body. All but one governor, including the Chair of the Governing Body, have been appointed in the last 12 months.
- This is a well above-average sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by pupil premium funding, is twice the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- An average, but increasing, proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. An average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Children in the early years provision attend Nursery and Reception classes on a full-time basis.
- A breakfast club is available to pupils. This is managed by the governing body.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The academy is organised into 20 classes. There are three classes in Reception, and Years 1 and 2. There are two classes in the Nursery, and in Years 3,4, 5 and 6.
- There have been a number of appointments within the last 12 months, including the appointment of several newly qualified teachers. The middle leadership team has been reorganised, and a new principal and senior vice-principal have been appointed.
- The academy has been fully refurbished over the last 12 months.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and in so doing raise pupils' attainment, particularly in Key Stage 1 in reading, by ensuring that:
 - all pupils know precisely what they can do to improve their reading, writing and mathematics skills
 - pupils, particularly the most able, are always fully challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - enhancing and developing the role of governors on the local governing body, in order for them to provide an even greater level of challenge and support to the academy.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The highly ambitious and well-organised principal and senior vice-principal lead the academy well. They are effectively supported by a skilled senior leadership team, an increasingly challenging governing body and the expertise of the director of primary education for United Learning. This effective partnership has ensured pupils' good achievement, in both 2014 and this year. Senior leaders' careful planning and investment in continuous professional development are paying off, as shown in teachers' and teaching assistants' good and improving practice and in pupils' good behaviour.
- The middle leadership team is new. However, team members are well trained, effective, and have a clear remit. They play a full role in supporting and mentoring teachers who are new to the academy, and to the profession, and carry out regular observations in the classroom. They play a direct role in improving the quality of teachers' marking and regularly check pupils' work to assess how much progress they are making.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are set challenging but achievable targets, almost all of which are routinely met. Good systems support any members of staff who do not meet their targets. Inspection evidence shows that this support is effective and that, as a result of the improved teaching, in almost all classes pupils make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The academy's newly qualified teachers are well supported. Those who met with inspectors could all identify specific professional development that had helped to improve their teaching practice. Most were highly positive about the coaching and support received from their mentors, and found visits to other schools to observe various aspects of teaching highly rewarding. Inspection evidence, including observations of teaching, confirm that newly qualified teachers are helping to raise standards and developing well in their roles.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to raise standards and enrich the learning experiences of the pupils it supports. The attainment gap in all subjects between disadvantaged pupils and others at the end of Year 6 in 2014 was narrow. Disadvantaged pupils' performance is as good as their peers nationally in mathematics and spelling, grammar and punctuation, and is rapidly improving in reading and writing.
- Pupils benefit from an exciting new curriculum. Year 6 pupils regularly engage in residential visits, and all pupils visit museums and local places of interest. Pupils are able to undertake research, such as their detailed history study, 'Project Britain'. They enjoy engaging in scientific experiments, art, Spanish, and playing various musical instruments, including the steel pan, drums and the ukulele.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' writing and mathematical skills well. Until recently, pupils' reading skills were not promoted quite as well, but this is changing, particularly in Key Stage 2, where senior leaders have introduced a number of initiatives, including 'reading buddies', reading challenges and 'book baskets'.
- The academy promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and fosters good relations effectively, in this harmonious and increasingly culturally diverse academy. Pupils care about each other, and regularly raise funds for people less fortunate than themselves. They learn about the main world faiths, and celebrate festivals from different cultures, including Chinese New Year and Diwali.
- British values are displayed throughout the academy, along with the academy's core values and celebrations of 'special people'. Outstanding work in this area ensures pupils know that 'Britishness' includes people from many different communities, family backgrounds and faiths. Pupils understand democratic principles and the rule of law, and enjoy having their say during elections for academy council members. This all helps to prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- The academy has a good and rapidly improving reputation in the community. Several parents indicated that they could have sent their children to a nearer school but decided not to because they had 'heard good things' about the academy. Parents' involvement in the academy is improving as shown through their participation in coffee mornings, and their support for the summer fair, which took place during the inspection.
- Senior leaders and governors ensure the primary physical education and sport premium is well spent. It is used innovatively, for example, to support a mums' and dads' football team. These parents provide positive examples for their children of the fun and benefits of physical activity and team sport, encouraging them to participate. Funding also supports kayaking, climbing, orienteering, swimming, 'BMXing', football, martial arts, and netball. These activities help to promote the health and well-being of pupils, and increase their participation in competitive sports.
- The academy's work to challenge discrimination and promote equality of opportunity is good. Inspection evidence shows that all groups of pupils make at least good and sometimes outstanding progress. Senior

leaders carefully review data that show how well different groups of pupils are learning. However, teachers do not always use this information to the best effect, particularly to ensure that the most able are challenged so that they reach their full potential.

- Various specialists employed by or brokered through United Learning academies trust have provided effective support to the academy. The support includes assistance in evaluating the accuracy of teachers' assessments, improving the progress of children in the early years and helping to raise standards, especially in reading, across the academy.
- The academy takes care to ensure that all statutory requirements for safeguarding are met, and has in place effective arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including children in the early years. All members of staff are exceptionally well prepared to respond to any concerns raised by pupils linked to their safety or well-being.

■ The governance of the school:

- The local governing body works closely, and effectively, with United Learning academies trust to both challenge the academy, and hold it to account. Although governors are new to their roles, they have a good understanding of the academy's strengths, and know exactly what it needs to do to improve further. Governors know that more needs to be done to improve standards in Key Stage 1, and that standards in reading are rapidly improving.
- Governors know exactly how the pupil premium funding is spent, and work closely with the academy to monitor the impact of this funding. They are aware that eligible pupils' achievement is continuing to improve, and that there is very little difference between their performance and that of their peers.
- Governors work closely with United Learning academies trust to ensure that the quality of teaching is continually improving. Together, they work effectively to ensure that teachers reach their targets, providing support where it is needed and rewarding teachers and teaching assistants for their good work.
- Governors are receiving good training, being eager to play an even greater part in supporting and challenging the academy. They wish to develop their roles further through, for example, meeting with parents, talking to pupils about their learning, and participating in a wider range of academy activities, including educational visits.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Almost all pupils are of the view that behaviour is good most of the time as are parents, staff, and governors. Inspection evidence, including a scrutiny of the academy's behaviour logs, shows that behaviour, including in the early years, is typically good over time.
- Pupils enjoy coming to the academy. Evidence of this is in their regular attendance, which is continually improving. Pupils enjoy learning. They work and learn well together and like to share their ideas.
- The breakfast club helps to ensure the good punctuality of those pupils who regularly attend this provision. These pupils enjoy playing board games, drawing, and catching up with their friends.
- Pupils enjoy celebrating each other's achievement. This was demonstrated during an assembly where all pupils listened carefully to their outstanding steel pan orchestra.
- Pupils are polite and courteous, and enjoy welcoming visitors into the academy. They say the academy has changed in many ways, from the way the corridors and buildings look, to what and how they learn.
- Pupils are respectful towards each other and staff and behave sensibly in class, during lunch times, when playing outside and when moving around the academy. Pupils are proud to wear their new school uniforms and take care of their academy.
- Pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibilities, for example, as school council members and digital leaders. Pupils from across Key Stages 1 and 2 diligently take on their responsibilities to support other pupils' reading and are helping to raise standards as a result.
- Teachers consistently apply the academy's well-thought-out procedures to manage the behaviour of the small minority of pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils take the view that bullying rarely, if ever happens at the academy. Parents also share this view and

are happy that their children are safe and looked after well. Parents are especially happy with the academy's arrangements to make sure that its premises are safe from intruders. The academy is fully secure.

- Pupils have a good understanding of most forms of discrimination-based bullying, including racism, and homophobic bullying. They understand that racism is 'when you are offensive to someone because of their colour, race or religion'. Pupils are adamant that this does not happen in their academy.
- Pupils know how to stay safe while using the internet and know that 'nasty messages' can be sent to people through mobile phones, hand-held games and various wireless devices. They learn about internet safety and know that they should never share personal details with anyone over the internet.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe though, for example, cycling proficiency lessons, and are fully aware of the dangers of playing around lakes and other waterways. Older pupils are taught to administer basic first aid.
- Pupils learn about the dangers of alcohol and drugs through aspects of the curriculum which focus on personal safety, hygiene and relationships.
- Various visitors from the police, fire, health and social services, help to develop pupils' understanding of dangers and risks, and of safe and unsafe situations.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils learn in purposeful classrooms, with lots of information available to help them to improve their reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- Teachers and teaching assistants, including in the early years, are well trained and plan effectively with their colleagues. This enables them to share ideas, resources, and good practice.
- Teachers' work to develop pupils' confidence in talking about their learning is highly effective, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils routinely come to the front of the class and hold the attention of all, while giving detailed and accurate instructions on, for example, how to plot the coordinates of a four-sided shape onto a grid.
- Teachers' work to improve pupils' skills in writing, and understanding of the English language, is developed well across different subjects. This was exemplified in two different Year 5 classes. In English, the teacher developed pupils' skills in 'reading' a series of riddles and clues associated with various pictures and symbols linked to the Year 5 'Alchemy Island' theme. While in science, pupils developed their scientific language and reasoning skills in discussing how golden nuggets could be extracted from soil.
- Teachers' have good subject knowledge. This was shown in a highly charged and fast moving upper Key Stage 2 mathematics class, in which pupils were exceptionally eager to learn. Having identified algebra as an area of weakness from past activities, the teacher went step-by-step through the basics of creating algebraic formulas. Pupils listened intently and soon got to grips with working out different number patterns and representing them as formulae. All pupils, including the most able mathematicians, were fully challenged, and all pupils made outstanding progress by the end of the session.
- Teachers' and teaching assistants' skills in teaching phonics (knowledge of letters and the sounds they represent) have rapidly improved this year. They ensure that activities in class are appropriate to the skills and knowledge of pupils with different abilities. This was evident in a Year 2 class where all pupils, including those with special educational needs and learning English as an additional language, made good progress. This was because the words that they were reading were set at just the right level of challenge.
- Teachers do not always promote pupils' best progress, particularly in Key Stage 1 classes, because the work they are given is not always hard enough to fully challenge them to achieve to the very best of their ability. This is especially the case for the most able pupils.
- Teachers always identify misspelled words and incorrect punctuation, and encourage pupils to practise and improve their skills in these areas. Most books contain clear evidence that pupils take note of their teachers' advice and improve their work as a result. However, some pupils who spoke with inspectors, including in Key Stage 2, were not clear enough about what they could do to improve their reading, writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and mathematics.

The achievement of pupils is good

- By the end of Year 6 in 2014, pupils' attainment in mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling was just above average, broadly average in writing, and below average in reading. However, almost all pupils made at least good and often outstanding progress in all subjects from their different starting points. These were below what was typical for their age, especially in reading, on entry to the Nursery classes.
- Inspection evidence, including a full scrutiny of pupils' work and close checks on the academy's own data, show that most pupils made good, and sometimes outstanding progress across the academy in all subjects in 2014. The academy's data for this year show that pupils are continuing to make good progress across the academy. They are attaining well for their age and their skills and abilities, particularly in reading in Key Stage 2, are rapidly improving.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the national reading screening check at the end of Year 1 in 2014 was below average. However, pupils' achievement in reading has rapidly improved across the academy this year. Teachers and teaching assistants have a consistent approach to teaching reading and are exceptionally well trained. Parents reported that the academy's challenge to pupils to read as often as possible is having a 'dramatic impact' on improving their reading skills.
- Pupils' progress in writing was at least good across almost all classes in 2014. This year pupils continue to make good, and sometimes outstanding progress. This is because teachers regularly assess pupils' written work, support them well and ensure they have many opportunities to practise their writing skills across the curriculum.
- Bespoke support for mathematics leaders, training in 'maths mastery', and regular good practice sharing events with colleagues in United Learning's local and national networks, all helped to ensure pupils' good progress in 2014. These activities are ensuring pupils' continued good progress this year.
- The attainment of pupils who speak English as an additional language was average in mathematics, but below average in all other subjects in 2014. However, all made good progress in writing and mathematics and the vast majority made good progress in reading from their different starting points. The progress of these pupils was at least good across most year groups in all subjects. Pupils who are learning English are currently making good or outstanding progress across the academy because they are given the support they need.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds made the same good progress as their peers in 2014. The attainment of different minority ethnic groups varied, but was mostly at least in line with similar groups nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well by highly trained teachers and teaching assistants. At the end of Year 6 in 2014, these pupils' attainment was above that of similar groups of pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics and their progress, often from exceptionally low starting points, was good across almost all classes.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. In Year 6 in 2014, their attainment was less than a term behind other pupils in the academy in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment was about a term behind other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics, and about two terms behind in reading. Their progress was as good as their peers in the academy in all subjects, and better than other pupils nationally in all subjects. Disadvantaged pupils' good and often outstanding progress has been maintained across the academy in all subjects this year, and the small attainment gaps between them and their peers are continuing to narrow.
- The achievement of the most able pupils in Key Stage 2 is good and improving quickly, as shown in the higher proportion of pupils currently in Year 6 working at Level 6 in mathematics, reading and writing. Even so, the most able do not always tackle work that provides sufficient challenge to ensure they reach the highest levels of which they are capable. Year 6 pupils are confident and exceptionally well prepared for their national tests this year. However, in Key Stage 1, the most able pupils are not always fully challenged to achieve their best.

The early years provision is good

- The leadership and management of all aspects of the early years provision are good. The team of early years staff, responsible for five classes, are passionate about their work, and have a clear understanding of exactly what needs to be done to move provision from good to outstanding. Leaders constantly seek out new approaches to engage parents further in their children's learning in order to raise standards.

- All assessments of children's learning are closely checked through the United Learning academies trust. Almost all children start in the Nursery classes with skills and abilities which are low compared with those typical for their age in all areas of learning, including in personal and social development, communication, language, reading and writing. However, children make good progress through the Reception and Nursery classes.
- The proportion of children who reached a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year in 2014 was above average, and the majority are well prepared with the personal and academic skills they need for the next stage of their learning in Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is good. In the Nursery classes, there are clearly identifiable 'bases', with small teaching spaces, literacy and mathematics displays, and creative play areas. Children observed showed good attention and concentration when, for example, spooning lentils into small containers, and enjoyed experimenting and measuring water in different sized jugs.
- Children in the Reception classes enjoy story time, where they listen attentively and eagerly engage with their talk partners to discuss what they have been learning. Children's literacy books show clear evidence of good progress in handwriting, vocabulary, and sentence construction.
- Children behave well and safely at all times. This includes when learning and playing outside. They enjoy digging for 'dinosaur bones', looking for butterflies with magnifying glasses and making 'potions' in the mud kitchen.
- Children benefit from a stimulating and exciting curriculum. In the Reception classes, children recently enjoyed dressing up as book characters to celebrate World Book Day, and made number trolls from The Three Billy Goats Gruff story to help them to remember two digit numbers.
- Children in the Nursery classes enjoy finding out about people who help us, and recently participated in a range of activities, including sitting inside a fire engine and spraying a water hose during a visit from the local community fire-fighting team.
- Staff regularly assess how well children are doing, and share this information with parents. Parents are encouraged to record their children's developments and activities at home and share these with staff.
- Parents who talked to inspectors and those who completed the academy's surveys of parents' views are happy that their children are safe, well cared for, and making good progress.
- Staff ensure children's safety by applying the same good safeguarding procedures in operation throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 in the early years provision.
- Senior leaders have made it a priority to ensure that an even greater proportion of children are prepared for their learning in Year 1. They are currently focusing on a number of areas for development, including accelerating children's progress in mathematics, and ensuring that all groups of pupils achieve to the very best of their ability.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	139404
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	450088

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	553
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karin Connell
Headteacher	Paul Graham
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
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