

24th October 2017



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Abington Vale Primary School
Ashford Close
Northampton
NN3 5NQ

Assessment Dates: 12th and 13th October 2017

Summary

Abington Vale Primary School is part of Northampton Primary Academy Trust which is made up of eight schools. Abington Vale School is a two-campus school: Stirling Campus and Park Campus. Stirling Campus was opened in 2013 and has grown rapidly with the school being asked to take a Year 3 and 4 class earlier than expected in September 2016. This campus is in the town centre. Park Campus is situated a few miles away. The Head and the Leadership Team split their time between the two campuses. The two campuses very much operate as one school. This has been successfully achieved with all the staff working seamlessly together towards the vision and strategic direction of the Head and the Leadership team.

The school is above the national average in terms of minority groups and has over thirty different languages spoken. The pupils have a very robust integration programme for those pupils who are new and come to school with little or no English. They are mentored by other pupils as well as by very skilled staff who ensure links are kept very closely with the pupils' home environments. The impact of this carefully thought out intervention means that all pupils feel safe, support each other and enjoy school.

The staff have high aspirations for all the pupils. It is very evident that they treat each pupil on an individual basis. The Head, Deputy and the Inclusion Lead ensure they plan meticulously from learning in the classroom to the organisation of the pupils' social time. Because of the detail in the planning, pupils become resilient as well as empathetic and accepting of different cultures and circumstances of others.

One of the key features that contributes to the success of the inclusive atmosphere and practice is the 'Growth Mindset' approach to all parts of the school's make up. This means that with the tailored support in place, pupils feel empowered to have the determination to succeed. The 'Growth Mindset' approach to everyday life in the school is complimented by the whole school 'Protective Behaviour' programme to keep pupils safe and aware of others. The benefits were immense to witness. For example, in assembly, the pupils were genuinely delighted when a class member was voted 'Super

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Hero of the Week' by the teacher. It was evident that there was genuine joy for a pupil who had made progress in their learning or in their attitude towards others or in their own behaviour. This was also witnessed when the School Council was explaining the benefits of the behaviour system. They understood that there were exceptional circumstances if someone had SEN needs or had just enrolled at their school which meant that they may need more support in following the behaviour structure.

The Learning Environment was of a high standard throughout the school. Both campuses had engaging displays throughout. The SLT were clear on their expectations of what they expected to see in each classroom to compliment the learning experience for the pupils. Tasks set enabled pupils to progress in their learning. Pupils felt that they were challenged in the lessons and that their teachers and teaching assistants had high expectations of them. Classrooms were equipped with whiteboards and computers and ICT was effectively used to enhance learning and ensure progress of each pupil according to their needs. Due to careful planning of the curriculum and an inviting environment, pupils' attitudes across the school were very positive. The pupils were extremely respectful of each other and took pride in their work. When the pupils were interviewed in a group session, they were honest and open. They shared their experiences of school life and stated that there was always someone to talk to. Any issues were immediately 'sorted out' in a collaborative way. If there was any bullying, it was dealt with swiftly through the behaviour policy. Regarding their progress in their learning, they knew their targets and what they had to do to improve their work. Every pupil spoken to really enjoyed coming to school and as one pupil said, 'felt they were part of a great community'.

Leaders have worked very hard to improve outcomes in KS1 and KS2. Even with the large mobility of the Stirling Campus and the vast amount of different first languages spoken, progress in all areas of English and Maths is constantly monitored, tracked and evaluated and the necessary interventions are put in place. If Leaders feel the impact is not great enough towards progress they will quickly re-evaluate. They are determined to improve progress and attainment from the pupils' baselines, for example, there has been a drive on improving Reading and Maths across the school and monitoring the progress to diminish the difference between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.

Abington School is a Teaching School and CPD (continual professional development) is a strength. The School successfully trains teachers who want to stay on as NQTs (newly qualified teachers). They are coached and mentored by outstanding practitioners within the school. CPD is encouraged throughout the staff. One of the Leadership team has just completed their Masters in her own time researching into literacy to support outstanding practice across the school. The Lead for Inclusion was completing a course in Dyslexia and freely giving up her time during half term to complete assignments. This shows the level of commitment to improve their own practice to ensure the educational experiences of all pupils regardless of their diverse needs is of a high standard.

The Head and Leadership team are rigorous in monitoring teaching and learning. High standards are expected through the appraisal system of all staff. Support and positive feedback is a key feature for staff from the SLT. The staff felt that it was a very supportive environment. All staff give up their time freely to run extra-curricular

activities. For example, there was a 'Film Night' across both campuses on the first day of the visit and a Diwali parade taking place in the town at the weekend. Both events were attended and run by staff.

Parents were very supportive of the school. They felt that they are kept fully informed of all aspects of school life. They felt welcomed at the school and that 'nothing was too much trouble'. 'It is an 'open door policy'. One parent said that even though she lives three miles away now 'it is such a good school, she would not want to change'. They felt that any problems are always sorted out. They felt listened to and felt that they are kept informed of their children's progress and that interventions are always put in place to support any learning needs.

There is a very supportive parent association called FAVS 'Friends at Abington Vale School' that has a main body of parents with all parents being encouraged and welcomed to become involved. As one parent stated, 'we can 'dip in and out' of fund raising events, for example, there is a healthy tuck shop every other Friday. The parents raised the money for the new 'Roof Garden' at the Stirling Campus where outdoor space is extremely limited in comparison with Park Campus.

During the visit, there was a full Harvest assembly. Each class performed a song or poem. Every pupil from every class on the Park Campus was involved. The same assembly was taking place on the Stirling Campus. Parents were invited, and it was an inspirational celebration of the school's community spirit. The Head took the opportunity to announce that the school had won two awards in the 'Northampton in Bloom' competition including the best school award.

The Governing Body play an active part in the school. The Chair of Governors and the Governor for Safeguarding both stated that the Head and the Leadership team drive the school forwards and have high expectations of the staff and pupils. The Inclusion Governor visits the school regularly too. The Governors are aware of where the school is and what it needs to achieve to improve even more, for example, to continue to create more interventions so that the disadvantaged pupils' progress is matching that of non-disadvantaged pupils. On an equal note, to continue to create more interventions so that those capable of greater depth attainment achieve this by continually evaluating the data and interventions that are in place. Governors attend the necessary training, so they are up to date and confident in their roles.

The school has strong links with the local community. Visitors are welcomed into the school such as the local vicar, police, firefighters and St John's Ambulance. Parents are included in the community. They are keen to visit the school too to share their cultures and faiths with the pupils. The local community run clubs such as tennis, basketball and street dance to name but a few. The school choir goes out into the local community such as the local care home to sing to the residents. During the first day of the visit, pupils from both sites came together to make Diwali lanterns ready for the local Diwali parade in the town centre. This was a fine example of community links and how much the school values being part of the community.

In addition to this, the school works closely with the eight schools in the Academy Trust sharing ideas and training as well as moderation of standards within schools.

As part of the global community, through Erasmus, some of the School Leaders and teachers visited Italy and Sweden to gain ideas on Early Years and Forest Schools respectively. Practice in both is being developed now within the school.

The school's website is constantly updated with a regular weekly newsletter to inform the parents and the community of what is happening within the school. The website caters for families and communities whose first language is not English with a 'drop down' menu of additional languages spoken within the school.

I am of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark. There are only minor areas requiring development and the school is aware of these. I recommend that the school be awarded the Mark and be reassessed in 3 years' time.

I also recommend that the school consider applying for Centre of Excellence status, which I would fully endorse. This would be subject to the inclusion within its plans of the appropriate areas for development and the completion of the Centre of Excellence documentation. If the school chooses to pursue this status and it were to be awarded the school would be subject to annual review from this point forwards.

Assessor: Anne Spencer

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:



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Joe McCann MBA NPQH

Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd



IQM Self-Evaluation Report



Portfolio of Evidence:-

- School's IQM Self Evaluation.
- Policies.
- FFT data.
- Data discussion with the Head and Inclusion Lead.
- Learning walks on both Campuses.
- Book Scrutiny.
- Interviews with two large groups of parents.
- Interviews with Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Governor.
- Interviews with two groups of pupils including the School Council.
- Interviews with the Head and Leadership Team.
- Conversations with staff.
- Lunchtime.
- Harvest Assembly.
- The Healthy Tuck Shop run by Parents.



Element 1 - The Inclusion Values and Practices of the School

Strengths:-

- Policies including Inclusion Policy.
- Outstanding relationships with Parents, Governors and the Local Community.
- Calm and inclusive environments on both campuses catering for a variety of needs and languages.
- Growth Mindset ethos permeated throughout the two campuses.
- 'Aspiration Squad' to support pupils' self-esteem and confidence through activities such as abseiling.
- Extra-curricular activities.
- Breakfast and after school clubs.
- Inclusion network meetings.
- Safeguarding is dealt with extremely effectively.
- Head and SLT are operational as well as strategic so that staff feel supported.
- External agencies work closely with the school such as educational psychologists, SEN specialists, GPs.
- Effective 'pupil speak', 'paddling, snorkelling or diving' to encourage pupils to take ownership and evaluate where they are in their learning and what they need to do to progress.

Areas for development:-

- To evaluate the impact of the focussed interventions on different groups of pupils to improve outcomes.



Element 2 - The Learning Environment, Resources and ICT

Strengths:-

- The displays in the school which celebrates pupils' work as well as focussing on learning.
- The outdoor learning environment which is spacious and offers the children opportunities to develop aspects Maths, Science and reading as well as GROWTH mindset on the Park Campus.
- The creation of a 'Roof Garden' on the Stirling Campus'.
- The welcoming at reception in the morning by the Head and SLT.
- Differentiated resources for more able learners and learners requiring additional support.
- Intervention spaces in classrooms set up to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- Resources are differentiated according to the needs of pupils.
- Celebrations of achievement such as 'Super Hero of The Week' for each class.
- The use of ICT and the wide range of digital resources available to support learning and improve outcomes in attainment for all pupils.
- A variety of language signs in each class.
- 'Buddy' system for new pupils and pupils used as translators for new EAL pupils.
- Parents used as translators and mentors for EAL families.
- Introduction of Forest Schools.

Areas for development:-

- The consistency of displayed targets for both English and Maths to improve outcomes of all pupils.



Element 3 - Learning Attitudes, Values and Personal Development

Strengths:-

- The pupils are welcoming and polite.
- The pupils understand the concept of a growth mindset and act upon it in their attitude to all areas of school life.
- The pupils respect and value their school.
- The School Council was made up of a group of pupils who were passionate about representing the views of their peers.
- The pupils were very aware of the importance of treating each other fairly.
- The pupils all stated that they knew who they would go to as a safe adult within school if they had an issue.
- The parents were full of praise for their children's positive attitudes towards school and each other.
- During the Learning Walk, all pupils were engaged in learning with tasks being differentiated by outcome.
- Reading was a clear focus in the school with a group created called 'Accelerated Readers' to challenge the more able pupils.
- Activities to promote anti-bullying such as 'Anti bullying Song Writing'.
- Consequence and rewards system valued by all pupils and staff.
- E-Safety delivered to all pupils.
- Family support worker supports families when needed.
- 1:1 support for pupils available.
- Induction programme for new pupils.
- A unit of work created for pupils new to England and new to English.
- Lunch Buddies and 'Friendship Stops' in the playground to ensure everyone is included.



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- 'Worry Monsters' in each classroom for pupils to write down their worries that they cannot verbalise. The worries are discussed sensitively with the pupil concerned.
- Philosophy is part of the curriculum.
- PASS (Pupils Attitude to Self and School) is collated and monitored.

Areas for development:-

- To monitor take up of clubs according to vulnerable groups.
- To monitor behaviour incidents at lunchtime to see the difference between the two sites and if it is related to the lack of outdoor space at Stirling Campus.



Element 4 - Learner Progress and the Impact on Learning

Strengths:-

- The Head and SLT scrutinise the data half termly to ensure all pupils are being challenged to achieve expected and greater depth levels as deemed appropriate from their starting points and personal circumstances.
- Relationships between staff and pupils is outstanding.
- KS1 and 2 results are broadly in line with the National Average taking account of the mobility and make-up of the school.
- A drive on Reading and Maths across the school with targeted interventions will strengthen outcomes where they are below the National Average.
- Accelerated Reading groups and Booster classes and 1:1 interventions will support the progress of those pupils falling behind expected standards from their starting points.
- Pupil progress meetings on a regular basis with Curriculum leaders and Class teachers.
- Staff Appraisal objective linked to progress of pupils.
- Moderation across the Academy Trust to ensure pupils are working at the level.
- Creative curriculum across the school to encourage engagement and a love of learning.
- Teaching and Learning policies.
- Whole school drive on raising attainment in Reading and Maths.
- Ensuring that pupils understand their targets in some areas.

Areas for development:-

- Marking and feedback is consistent across the school and acted upon to accelerate progress of all pupils.
- Evaluate interventions to diminish the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.
- Ensure all pupils are aware of their targets and how to achieve them.



Element 5 - Learning and Teaching (Monitoring)

Strengths:-

- Handbooks for year groups are available for Parents at the beginning of the academic year so they understand what is being taught in the curriculum and what to expect across the Phase.
- Class teachers ensure that all lessons are differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants plan together and systematically check pupils understanding for maximum impact on learning and outcomes.
- Outstanding teachers support CPD and coach and mentor NQTs.
- Individual Profiles on pupils ensure staff understand the pupils needs.
- Lesson observations and learning walks ensure that all teaching staff have individual feedback with specific areas for development identified.
- Progress meetings including work scrutiny ensures that evidence of good or outstanding teaching is evident by the quality of work produced and by the progress made by the pupils.
- Governors undertake learning walks to include work scrutiny and pupil voice.
- The Head undertakes joint observations with an external reviewer from the Academy Trust to validate her own judgements to be in line with national expectations.
- Specific needs of pupils are identified by the SLT who monitor progress to meet the specific needs and evaluate the impact.
- Annual appraisal cycle for all staff.
- All staff plan for differentiation according to the needs of all pupils.
- Targets for each pupil and for subject areas are closely monitored towards expected national outcomes at the end of the academic year.
- Teaching styles (VAK) support pupils learning. Pupils record their work in a variety of ways such as written, typed, kinaesthetically or verbally in order to improve individual pupil outcomes.



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- Consultation evenings for parents with information of next steps of their child's learning and how they can support learning at home.
- The website keeps parents updated with Teaching and Learning Weekly Newsletters and end of year reports also are valuable sources of information for parents on their child's progress.

Areas for development:-

- Differentiated learning objectives continue to be articulated to the pupils that they understand so everyone is clear on the expected outcomes.
- Pupils continue to be challenged to extend their learning to improve outcomes.



Element 6 - Parents, Carers and Guardians

Strengths:-

- The Head and all staff freely give up their time on a day to day basis. There is an open-door policy.
- There is extensive provision to support children's learning for parents including Phase Handbooks, information evenings and classroom visits so they can be involved in their children's learning.
- Sports Day and Art Exhibitions of the Pupil's Work, School Productions as well as reading sessions and Curriculum Workshops are open to parents.
- FAVS support the school through events such as Christmas and summer events sports day, film nights and healthy tuckshop, enterprise as well as sponsored events.
- Questionnaires are used for parents' views and are all very positive.
- All parents spoken to said that the school could not do enough for their children.
- The parents felt very involved in their child's education and that the school was always extremely supportive with extenuating circumstances such as bereavement and illness.
- The parents praised the school and the Headteacher and felt it was an excellent school where they are always able to communicate freely.
- The parents felt that even though the school was on two campuses with two different catchment areas it was a very 'united' school.

Areas for development:-

- To continue the efforts to communicate regularly with parents especially parents with EAL.



Element 7 - Governing Body and Management

Strengths:-

- The Governing Body is very committed to inclusive practice. This was apparent in the meeting on the Assessment Day Two.
- Governors are involved in evaluating the SDP.
- The website states that the Governors' role is "to set the strategic direction of the School and to 'Challenge and Support' in a way that facilitates positive outcomes".
- The school website clearly sets out the role of the Governing Body and the key areas and their role.
- Governors support in the financial planning of the school.
- FGB Meetings take place each term.
- There is a dedicated Inclusion Governor as well as a Safeguarding Governor.
- The two Governors above are regular visitors to the school so that they are kept informed of any situations that arise.
- The Chair of Governors commented that the Chair of the Academy Trust is extremely supportive in the role of Chair.
- Governors regularly attend school events and are available to meet with parents if requested.
- The school website clearly sets out the role of the Governing Body and the key areas and their role.
- Training needs are undertaken so that Governors are up to date with latest Ofsted updates.
- Different groups and needs of pupils such as Pupil Premium, More Able, EAL are reported to the Governing Body three times a year.
- Governors are kept up to date with comparative national data and monitor the school's progress towards targets set at the beginning of the academic year.



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Areas for development:-

- To ensure the Leadership team have a systematic approach so that paperwork on progress and school improvement and the impact of interventions is readily available in relation to all different cohorts of pupils.
- To continue to seek opportunities which make Governors roles more explicit to staff and pupils.



Element 8 - The School in the Community

Strengths:-

- Being part of NPAT.
- Educational visits take place to a variety of places including places of worship, theatres, golf club, globe theatre as well as residential activity trips.
- Visits by parents to read to their children in their first language.
- Visits from parents to share their expertise in their field of work.
- Visits from parents to share their expertise with different cultures.
- Contacts at local sports teams such as rugby, football and cricket.
- Visitors to the school include the police, firefighters and St John's Ambulance.
- Performances in school from Lighthouse Theatre Company.
- Local church links.
- Transition visits to secondary schools.
- Choir performing at the local Day Care Centre.
- Music groups performing in other schools.
- Links with a local Special School.
- Participation in the Diwali Parade in the Town Centre.
- The school nurse and school dentist link with the school.
- External professionals such as educational psychologists, SALT visit the school to undertake assessments of individual pupil's needs.
- Visitors for the curriculum on 'living History'.
- Charity Events: Harvest Festival food donations and local food bank.
- Events held at the school for the local community such as Enterprise week, pupils' Art Exhibition.



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- Participation in and winners of 'Northampton in Bloom Competition'.

Areas for development:-

- To celebrate all the different cultures in the school by holding more open-door community events such as coffee mornings.
- Letting the Stirling Campus to the local community.