

Ashleigh Infant and Nursery School, Wymondham

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120922
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	358882
Inspection dates	7–8 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Richard Blackmore

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shaun Newby
Headteacher	Annie Catlin
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed eleven lessons and eight teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher and other teachers with leadership responsibilities. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including the school improvement plan, monitoring records, the school's self-evaluation document, pupils' progress records and the safeguarding procedures. Questionnaires from 65 parents and carers were received and analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How successful has the school been in raising standards, especially in writing?
- How well is assessment used to raise achievement?
- How much do pupils know and understand of different cultures?

Information about the school

This school is slightly smaller than average and most pupils are from White British heritages. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is above average. These pupils have a range of difficulties. There is a nursery and there is provision for Reception children in two classes. The school has gained Healthy Schools Status, Let's Go Cooking Accreditation, and the Artsmark and Active Mark. There is an after-school club managed by the governing body.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, because of good quality teaching and a well-planned curriculum. By the end of Year 2, attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Recent developments in promoting reading and speaking and listening, such as the use of 'perfect partners' (discussion partners), are having a particularly positive impact. As a result, pupils are confident and articulate and listen to members of staff and other pupils intently. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in all areas of learning so they begin Year 1 with average standards. In Key Stage 1 until recently, the girls were performing better than the boys in reading and writing. A range of strategies have been implemented, including the frequent and effective use of the outdoor area, and has successfully redressed this gender difference so that all pupils make good progress. Pupils' cultural development is limited because links with other countries have recently been made but are yet to have a full impact on their understanding.

The school provides excellent care and support at every opportunity and staff are highly vigilant in recognising the needs of pupils and act swiftly and incisively to support and challenge pupils to do their best. This inclusive and positive ethos contributes significantly to pupils' personal outcomes and encourages an above average rate of attendance. This is carefully combined with very strong relationships and consequently pupils say they feel safe and develop good workplace skills and personal qualities, notably the ability to share, support and cooperate. Those pupils that attend the 'Teatimers' after-school club also receive good quality care from well qualified staff who continue the effective pastoral support and a variety of interesting activities.

Assessment is used well to plan teaching and consequently most of the time pupils are challenged well and make purposeful gains. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are extremely well included in all activities and benefit from specialist support ensuring their progress is good.

Teachers and teaching assistants work as a cohesive team and know their pupils well, using clear instructions and demonstrations to make learning fun and purposeful. They plan effectively together to ensure pupils benefit from a variety of knowledge-based and more practical activities in their lessons. On some occasions, the teaching does not always fully challenge the more-able pupils in the activities they undertake or the questions asked of them. Marking does not always indicate to pupils how to improve their work, limiting the progress made. The curriculum has strengths in ensuring that pupils regularly practise key skills and keenly adopt the principles of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay safe. The successful emphasis which the school places on pupils' physical well-being is underlined by the high and enthusiastic take-up in after-school clubs. The curriculum makes some links between subjects but there are not enough

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opportunities for pupils to write across all subjects and use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

The senior staff have a clear vision for the school and a realistic view of its strengths and areas for development based on extensive monitoring arrangements focused on pupils' progress. Outstanding work with parents and carers is appreciated by many. Some parents or carers wrote, 'Ashleigh is a caring, exciting environment', and 'My son loves it here'. The school has maintained its good provision since the last inspection and some elements of its work are now outstanding. These factors demonstrate that the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the curriculum further through:
 - providing more regular opportunities for pupils to use ICT across the curriculum.
 - using writing skills more frequently across all subjects.
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures.
- Provide greater challenge for the more able pupils by:
 - making sure tasks are sufficiently challenging.
 - showing pupils clearly how to improve when marking their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment has been significantly above the national average for the last four years and lessons seen confirm this positive picture although progress in writing is slower than in reading and mathematics. Pupils progress well in lessons because the lessons are interesting and well-paced and the broad curriculum ensures the most is made of pupils' natural curiosity. This is reflected in their work which shows how much they care about the successful application of strategies taught by the teacher, neatness and presentation. In a Year 1 class the pupils adeptly pronounced a range of blends such as 'ou' and 'au' because the teacher had demonstrated the sound herself. The pupils were highly involved, pupils representing letters and standing in a line to show the position of the letter in various words. There are missed opportunities to improve literacy skills further by writing when engaged in activities across the full range of subjects.

Pupils are good at taking responsibility in school and the local community, for example by making suggestions about how to make the school even better resulting in the school council improving the equipment available in the playground. They show respect for other people and behave well because they enjoy coming to school and feel well supported by the very approachable staff. This behaviour, open culture and warm atmosphere support the pupils' good spiritual, moral and social development. Assemblies and class activities are used to promote pupils' maturity and good sense of teamwork. This was conclusively demonstrated in a Year 2 class when pupils worked together very well to solve number problems and in the opportunities to 'grow, cook and share' vegetables to develop a secure knowledge of healthy eating. This is reinforced in the calm, relaxed and very well led and organised 'Teatimers' after-school club where pupils often choose healthy food options and benefit from a choice of quiet and more lively group activities.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	2
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	2
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers create a good climate for learning by managing pupils well and ensuring there are opportunities to become involved quickly in lessons, for example, through volunteering to help the teacher illustrate a new idea. This technique is effective in securing pupils' interest and concentration and supports their learning well by enabling them to learn through explaining ideas to others. Teachers question pupils well and quickly clear up any misunderstandings and the pace of lessons is quick. Teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to use ICT during lessons and as a result they are less familiar and slower when completing work on the computers.

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. Opportunities and activities, such as 'Wizzy Maths', an investigative set of tasks, are closely monitored to highlight the impact on performance and to establish new needs of pupils. Good plans have been carried out to maintain above average attainment, especially in reading, although writing opportunities are not as extensively timetabled. Pupils enjoy their educational visits, and a good range of clubs and visitors including those which are targeted at specific groups and cater for pupils' interests such as skipping workshops. Recently made links with countries beyond the United Kingdom are not yet embedded sufficiently in the curriculum to enable pupils to have a good understanding how other people live in different parts of the world. The activities at the after-school club are planned in response to the needs and interests of

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pupils. For example, the 'kids' kitchen' provides a fabulous opportunity for them to try their hand at new recipes.

Pupils' individual welfare requirements are central to the work of the school and all adults work hard to ensure these needs are fully met. Members of staff continually provide both planned and informal guidance of the highest quality. Pupils who have fallen behind in their learning or who require additional challenge are quickly identified and specific support packages have a positive impact on their learning. For example, for pupils who are reluctant to join in large group activities there is a range of one-to-one programmes tailored to individual needs to boost confidence and self-esteem.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders at all levels are successful in ensuring that members of staff feel supported and valued although the checking of some aspects of teaching are limited. Through highly effective partnerships with outside specialists and organisations such as the Wymondham Schools Cluster, staff expertise in the management of pupils' learning and providing support for potentially vulnerable families is well-developed. As a result, the school is working together exceptionally well with parents and carers to support pupils to ensure opportunity for all and tackle discrimination well. The governing body has a visible presence around school and is highly supportive. It is expertly led by the chair who carries out rigorous analysis of pupils' achievement and views from first hand observation and consultation. This information is used to fully challenge the school to improve further and ensures good safeguarding procedures are embedded at all levels and that all policies regularly monitored and evaluated. The school engenders a close community for its pupils who respond with sensitivity towards each other and enjoy the strong links with local schools and sports organisations. They do not yet have close enough ties with those from outside this country as these have very recently been established.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's skills, knowledge and understanding when they start Reception are below average for their age. They make good gains in their learning and development because there are good transition arrangements from the Nursery to the Reception classes. They quickly settle at the start of the school day and become curious and responsible learners through the varied play opportunities. One parent or carer writing about their child said, 'she loves the opportunities to learn through play'. Consistently good teaching and planning ensure that progress towards the early learning goals is made both indoors and outside. Children make particularly good progress in learning about letter sounds and speaking and listening, because these aspects of the curriculum are promoted especially well. For example, Little Red Riding Hood's house provides good opportunities for children to write notes and practise reading skills. The assessment procedures are being refined because they do not give a clear enough picture of children's short term progress. Children behave well, and are confident and independent when working on tasks they have chosen for themselves. Members of staff plan a wide range of exciting activities indoors and the effective leadership has identified correctly that there is less opportunity to learn outside, especially on wet days, because there is little covered space.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

All parents and carers were happy with their child's experience at the school, indicating unanimously that their children enjoy school and are prepared well for the future. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about the way the school deals with poor behaviour and about being informed about their child's progress. Inspectors found that behaviour is good and the school is a calm and orderly place and that the school's reporting arrangements meet statutory requirements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ashleigh Infant and Nursery School, Wymondham to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 228 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	63	24	37	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	62	23	35	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	34	52	27	42	3	5	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	54	27	42	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	58	25	38	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	55	25	38	4	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	58	27	42	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	68	18	28	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	49	30	46	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	46	26	40	4	6	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	48	32	49	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	29	45	31	48	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	63	22	34	2	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



9 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ashleigh Infant and Nursery School, Wymondham, Wymondham NR18 0HL

Thank you for being so helpful during our visit. We are pleased that you enjoy coming to this good school.

These are the best things about your school.

You achieve well and are especially good at reading.

You learn quickly because teachers give you interesting things to do.

The adults who work at the school provide you with excellent care and guidance.

Your behaviour and attendance is good - well done and keep it up.

The school works really well with your parents and carers and other people to help you learn as much as you can.

You behave well and are good at staying healthy. It is good that you help to grow, cook and share with each other your own vegetables.

Your headteacher and other leaders know what needs to be done to make the school even better. These are the things we have asked your school to do next.

Give those of you who find work easy activities and questions that make you think hard.

Provide you with more opportunities to practise your writing and use what you have learnt in different subjects.

Yours sincerely

Richard Blackmore

Lead inspector

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