

# Ashbourne Hilltop Infant and Nursery School

Wyaston Road, Ashbourne, Derbyshire, DE6 1NB

**Inspection dates** 8–9 May 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently well above national averages by the time the pupils leave the school.
- Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding, and has improved over time.
- Relationships within school are a real strength and pupils are keen to do well.
- Pupils enjoy school and this is shown in their enthusiasm to learn.
- All teachers and support staff show exceptionally high levels of care in their support for pupils with significant learning difficulties.
- The outstanding promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has resulted in an ethos within school that ensures outstanding behaviour.
- Pupils are extremely courteous, polite, get on well together and show respect for all. They say that they feel exceptionally safe in school and their parents all agree.
- The strong leadership team has made sure that the focus on maintaining and improving the quality of teaching is successful.
- Governance has become a strength of the school. Governors are actively involved in monitoring the work of the school and consequently understand the strengths and areas for improvement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The more able pupils do not achieve as well as they might in writing.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding do not yet consistently make as much progress as their peers.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or parts of lessons. All classes were observed at least once and most were observed twice. Four of the observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector also observed a number of small groups of pupils working with adults for additional support.
- All teaching staff were involved in discussions with the inspector, particularly the headteacher and her deputy.
- Discussions also took place with groups of pupils both formally and informally, seven representatives of the governing body, the school's local authority adviser and with parents.
- The inspector took account of the views of 45 parents from the online questionnaire (Parent View) and conversations were held with several parents at the start and end of the school day. The inspector also analysed the 27 questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' recent and current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, documents relating to safeguarding, and the minutes of various meetings.

## Inspection team

Nigel Grimshaw, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary age school.
- The school population is largely White British. A smaller than average proportion of pupils is from minority ethnic groups, mainly of Polish heritage. This proportion has increased over the last three years. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is in line with the national average. This is additional funding provided to schools for children in the care of the local authority and those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. However the proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is well above the national average. There are currently six pupils with very significant physical disabilities and learning difficulties.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of writing, particularly for the more able pupils, by encouraging pupils to write longer pieces of work in subject areas other than literacy so that they can practise the skills they have learned.
- Make sure that pupils eligible for pupil premium funding at all levels of ability receive effective support and challenge so that their progress is at least in line with that of their peers.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' attainment when they leave the school is significantly above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. An analysis of the school's own data in the current year shows that this is likely to be the case again in 2014.
- Boys did not do as well as girls in 2013. The school quickly identified this and made adjustments to teaching, including increasing 'themed' learning designed to engage boys. There is no evidence currently that boys are not doing equally as well as the girls.
- Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with very varied skills and knowledge but, overall, these are broadly in line with those typical for their age. Good and outstanding teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes makes sure that pupils have an excellent start to their school lives and that routines and expectations are quickly embedded.
- These high expectations are carried with them throughout Key Stage 1. The good quality teaching here ensures that the pupils continue to make good or better progress in Years 1 and 2.
- The teaching of phonics (how the letters in words represent different sounds) throughout the school is a strength and checks of pupils' phonic knowledge show that their skills are above the national average. This has made sure that standards in reading have been maintained at a high level and that writing has improved over the last two years to a current high standard overall.
- Pupils say that they enjoy reading and they read confidently to the inspector during the inspection. Most of the pupils said that they read for pleasure at home and the pupils' 'Reading Records' show that there are good links with parents supporting reading at home.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive outstanding care and support from the well trained staff and consequently make excellent progress. This was highlighted during the inspection where such pupils showed major individual steps forward as a result of patient and professional support.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress and are well supported by the member of staff appointed by the school who speaks their home language and who helps them to settle into school life happily and successfully.
- The effective use of the sports funding has increased the range of activities available to all pupils in lessons, at lunchtimes and in clubs after school. This has increased pupils' motivation, their physical wellbeing and their understanding of healthy lifestyles as well as their enjoyment of learning.
- Last year the performance of the pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium funding was average, whereas that of their peers was above average. From the school's data and a scrutiny of the pupils' work, it is clear that the gap is beginning to narrow, but pupils in this group still do not make the same rate of progress as others, especially those in the group who are more able.
- In writing, the more able pupils overall do not make as much progress as the others.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- From the school's own observations and from the reports from the local authority advisers, it is evident that the quality of teaching has been consistently good or better over time, and that the proportion of outstanding teaching is increasing.
- All staff are encouraged by the senior leaders to attend regular professional training to enhance their skills. This is clearly being reflected in practice, as evidenced by the high levels of skills and care demonstrated by the staff working with the children with severe disabilities and special educational needs.
- Teachers, teaching assistants and support staff all work together exceptionally well to ensure that all are clear about their roles and that they are focused on making sure that all pupils make good progress. Regular discussions and feedback make sure that all staff know the pupils very well indeed.
- As a result, the significant majority of work planned for the pupils is sufficiently challenging. However, some of the topic work has limited encouragement for the more able pupils to apply the literacy skills they have learnt, for instance in extended pieces of writing.
- All staff plan lessons that the pupils find interesting and enjoyable and they are therefore motivated to do well. This was particularly true in a lesson in the Nursery where the children were undeterred by the heavy rain when searching for clues to solve the riddle of the missing door handle. This made sure that the children worked effectively together to develop their social skills but also showed initiative and the ability to work on their own with perseverance.
- There are many examples of teaching encouraging a thirst for knowledge effectively by linking work with the pupils' interests. In the Early Years Foundation Stage the work is linked to themes based on their favourite reading books and on well known 'fairy stories'. In Key Stage 1 the staff had fixed a camera to a nesting box outside one of the classrooms and all the pupils were fascinated by watching the eggs hatching and the adult bird feeding its young chicks.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They typically behave very well in lessons and are extremely courteous and well-mannered around the school. In the celebration assembly they showed genuine pleasure and respect for others when they received awards for their good work or their behaviour and attitudes to others.
- The pupils themselves recognise that behaviour is of a high standard and this is echoed unanimously by the views of the parents and staff. One parent said, 'My child adores Hilltop. He seems so much more confident and mixes well with all the other children'.
- The use of reward cards for pupils' work and behaviour is welcomed and enjoyed by the pupils and their determination to 'fill their cards' is one of the factors that has made sure that behaviour is outstanding.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils and their parents say confidently that they feel safe at school and that bullying is not an issue.
- The pupils are taught effectively about keeping safe and therefore have an excellent understanding of how to achieve this. Pupils say that they would feel confident about

approaching adults if anyone upset them and feel sure that they would sort out any problems. The school has promoted the safe use of the internet with parents and pupils.

- Attendance has been consistently above the national average for several years and this is also the case in the current year.

## **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher has a strong commitment to making sure that all pupils receive high quality education and this has been shared with and adopted by all the staff. There is a clear sense of teamwork within the school and staff work effectively together to share and promote good practice.
- The headteacher and her deputy form a strong senior leadership team and they have focused on making sure that the quality of teaching is paramount in improving the school. Their hard work is reflected in the improvements being made and the number of outstanding lessons is increasing whilst also retaining consistently good practice.
- The effectiveness of all staff with allocated responsibilities has grown. Some were new to their role last year and they have developed extremely well with support from other staff and have a clear view of their roles, particularly in monitoring the effectiveness of learning in their areas of responsibility.
- The school has developed an exciting range of subjects in line with the recent guidance. The subjects are taught in a way that promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in an outstanding manner. This has resulted in a school ethos that welcomes all pupils and their parents and strives to meet all their diverse needs. The well-equipped sensory room for the pupils with severe special educational needs, coupled with the training of staff, is a clear example of how well this works.
- Parents are delighted with the quality of education provided by the school. As a parent said, 'We couldn't be happier. My child is learning fast and enjoys all the activities. The school is everything we could have wished for'. This view was echoed by all the other parents, particularly those who sought out the inspector to make this point.
- The school leaders have used the primary sport funding well through the employment of a teacher with expertise in this area that is being shared with other staff and through the use of outside expertise at lunchtimes to promote an increased range of pupils' games activities and their skills.
- The local authority supports the school well in checking on the quality of teaching and the outcomes for pupils. School leaders have developed much closer links over time with other locality schools for mutual support, training and sharing good practice and to make sure that the transition from one school to another has improved.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is now a strength of the school. The governors are very committed to the school and the support and challenge they provide to the school is based on a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school from their comprehensive monitoring activities. They have taken a lead in actively developing opportunities for joint training with other schools in the area to enhance their roles. They have a very good knowledge of the data available to them to check on pupils' achievement. They fully understand about the quality of

teaching and the appraisal procedures that have led to improvements. They have a good understanding of the use of the sports funding and the pupil premium funding and are aware that there are still improvements required in this area and how the school is addressing these. Governors are aware that pupils certainly have equal access to activities and that the school tackles any discrimination.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112686
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	431200

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	144
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tim Morris
<b>Headteacher</b>	Hazel Jaques
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 July 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01335 343041
<b>Fax number</b>	N/A
<b>Email address</b>	info@ashbournehilltop.derbyshire.sch.uk

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