

Ashleigh Primary School and Nursery, Wymondham

Sheffield Road, Wymondham, Norfolk NR18 0HL

Inspection dates

13–14 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The inspirational headteacher, ably supported by governors and other school leaders, successfully drives a culture of high expectations, enabling pupils to do their best.
- Leaders have a highly accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. Their plans to develop the school further are precise, well informed and robustly checked.
- Governors fulfil their responsibilities conscientiously. They know the school very well and provide excellent challenge and support to school leaders.
- Senior leaders and governors have managed the expansion to become a primary and nursery school exceptionally well. During this time of change, they have successfully ensured that teaching and learning, and pupils' outcomes, have improved and are outstanding.
- Staff are very proud to work in the school. They value the high-quality training they receive so that they can consistently improve their skills.
- The well-designed curriculum and the on-site farm provide excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding across many subjects.
- Leaders constantly strive to improve outcomes for all pupils. Accurate assessment enables teachers to plan effective learning activities which challenge pupils of all abilities very well. As a result, all groups of pupils are making rapid progress from their individual starting points.
- Staff know pupils well. They ensure that they are extremely well cared for. Consequently, pupils feel safe in school.
- The Nursery and Reception provision is outstanding. Children get off to a super start to their education in the early years.
- Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and ask insightful questions to extend pupils' learning and enable them to become confident learners.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. They treat each other, staff and visitors with care and respect.
- Governors, staff, parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.
- Even though teachers have high expectations of the content in pupils' work, presentation of that work varies too much across the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers have consistently high expectations for pupils' presentation of their work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher is widely respected and provides outstanding leadership. His vision of a strongly inclusive school where every pupil achieves their very best has been fully embraced by governors, staff and pupils. Aspirational expectations enable pupils to develop their academic, social, emotional and behavioural skills so that they grow into happy, confident learners.
- Leaders and governors are very skilfully expanding the age range of the pupils to become a 'full' primary and nursery school. Over the past three years, this has involved recruiting many high-quality teachers for the new key stage 2 year groups, alongside the new build to accommodate this expansion. Leaders have allayed parents' concerns throughout this journey. As one Year 5 parent stated, 'I have no worries at all about them being the first "primary" class; they have been treated like pioneers.'
- Well-thought-through strategies are in place for the first Year 6 pupils in September 2018. This includes ensuring a smooth transition for the school's first pupils transferring to secondary education the following September. Additionally, during this time, the school has also expanded its Nursery provision. The number of pupils on roll has doubled since the previous inspection. However, throughout these many changes, leaders and governors have continued successfully to maintain and improve teaching, learning and assessment, and pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is detailed and accurate. It informs the clear, concise school improvement plan. Leaders and teachers know pupils very well and recognise what they need to do to continually improve and maintain the high quality of provision. Staff share an understanding of how each aspect of their work fits into the overall plan to provide outstanding education for pupils. Leadership capacity is very strong at all levels.
- Teachers benefit from high-quality training and support to continually improve their teaching skills. Outstanding leaders have the expertise to give teachers precise feedback to further refine their practice. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the progress they make. Staff morale is exceptionally high. Their responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire show unanimously that staff are proud to be working at the school. A typical comment states, 'I genuinely feel cared for and valued.'
- Senior leaders nurture the talent of teachers and provide opportunities for them to develop as highly effective leaders as the school expands. Highly skilled and motivated subject leaders closely monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress in their individual subject areas. As a result, leaders make well-informed changes to improve teaching and learning. Leaders ensure that assessment is accurate, which enables them to carefully check the progress pupils make. Any pupils who are underachieving are quickly identified and effective support is put in place quickly. As a result, all groups of pupils, whatever their ability, make consistently strong progress across the curriculum.
- Governors and leaders carefully scrutinise the expenditure of the pupil premium

funding. The progress of each eligible pupil is closely tracked and, if they fall behind, appropriate support is put in place. As a result, disadvantaged pupils now make progress that is similar to or better than that of other pupils from comparable starting points nationally and within the school. The recent employment of a dedicated pupil premium teacher is having an extremely positive impact on pupils' learning.

- Leaders use the additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities skilfully. The dedicated special educational needs leader ensures that these pupils receive targeted support to make at least good progress from their various starting points. She ensures that teachers and teaching assistants are well trained to provide highly effective learning activities that are closely matched to pupils' needs.
- The 'Ashleigh curriculum' is skilfully planned to be exciting and relevant to pupils. The stimulating topics based on the national curriculum promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding very well. Activities provide equality of opportunity for all pupils. Pupils' learning is boosted by extra-curricular activities and interesting visits. Pupils gain a wider understanding of the world, by interacting with friends from different cultures who live in other areas, to better prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- Through close work with the local community, the school has developed an on-site farm. This provides a range of exciting learning opportunities across the curriculum. For example, pupils worked with local journalists to produce newspaper reports about the arrival of new lambs. The school holds a farmers' market to help finance the farm. This develops pupils' entrepreneurial skills and understanding of commerce. In 2017, the school won a 'Food Farming and Countryside Challenge' award of which they are exceptionally proud.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is spent effectively and used to create a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop new skills, play in sports competitions, improve their fitness and activity levels, 'buy in' specialist sports coaches and develop the teaching skills of staff.
- Parents spoken with during the inspection and those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, expressed overwhelming support for the school and its leaders. Typical comments include: 'The opportunities provided by the school are brilliant, children are always fully engaged, teachers understand their individual personalities and work with them. I can't speak highly enough of the school.'
- The headteacher is committed to offering the best opportunities to his staff and pupils and actively seeks working with other schools, especially to support the accuracy of teacher assessment. The local authority works with the school to share its excellent practice with other schools.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is highly effective. Governors take their roles and responsibilities very seriously. They know the school exceptionally well and have high expectations of staff and pupils. They carefully check the impact of actions in the school development plan to ensure that teaching and learning and pupils' progress consistently improve.

- Governors work closely with the headteacher to ensure that events, such as the recent building project and expansion of year groups within the school, do not distract leaders from improving the quality of pupils' education.
- Governors ensure that finances are managed effectively, including checking on how additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, and the sport funding impacts on the progress pupils make.
- Governors visit the school regularly in order to help them understand the impact of school improvement initiatives. They produce informative reports which are discussed by leaders and other governors to support further school improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is rightly given a high priority within the school. All required safeguarding processes and procedures are fully in place to ensure that all pupils, especially vulnerable pupils, are supported highly effectively.
- Records are meticulously maintained, monitored and updated. Leaders ensure that staff are appropriately trained in each relevant aspect of safeguarding.
- Governors carry out the necessary checks to ensure that school leaders are meeting statutory requirements. Governors ensure that all required investigations are made when new staff are appointed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- School leaders have created a culture in which teachers are highly motivated and are provided with high-quality training opportunities to improve their practice. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the previous inspection and is now outstanding.
- Teachers make very effective use of the school's accurate assessment information about what pupils are able to do. Teachers plan together, building on pupils' prior learning to provide stimulating challenges at three stages of difficulty. These activities inspire and motivate all groups of pupils so that they are eager to learn, enabling them to make rapid progress.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent and staff know pupils very well. Teachers and other adults apply a variety of effective teaching techniques to support pupils' individual needs.
- Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge and well-developed questioning skills to provide pupils with opportunities to discuss their learning. This enables pupils to demonstrate their deeper understanding of the subjects that they are studying, especially the most able pupils. For example, after discussing their ideas with the teacher and each other, Year 3 pupils used high-quality vocabulary, personification and embedded clauses to write a description of Puck from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to explain their mathematical reasoning with correct vocabulary, to further develop their skills. Pupils demonstrate great

resilience when working collaboratively on activities that challenge them. Year 5 pupils, for example, confidently discussed how and why coordinates change when translating and reflecting triangles. Pupils have many opportunities to use their mathematical skills across the curriculum.

- Pupils across the school enjoy reading. Year 1 pupils like choosing books from the new library and talk positively about their choices. Year 2 pupils read with fluency and clear understanding when reading to an inspector. Older pupils use their inference and deduction skills to understand the difficult texts they are reading. The teaching of phonics has improved significantly over time. As a result, younger pupils use their knowledge of phonics very well to improve their reading and writing.
- High-quality work in pupils' science and topic books show that they have many opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills effectively across the curriculum. This is supporting their grammar, spelling and punctuation skills while enhancing their vocabulary exceptionally well.
- Classrooms are inspiring environments in which to learn. High-quality displays serve as excellent points of reference for pupils during their learning. Classroom learning is supplemented by a range of exciting outdoor learning opportunities, including on the school's farm. Activities include pupils caring for animals, producing instructions to feed chickens and developing effective strategies to sell the produce grown.
- Teachers and other adults check pupils' work during lessons and give clear guidance to clarify misconceptions or ask skilful questions to improve pupils' thinking. This enables all groups of pupils to make strong progress.
- Teachers have high expectations of the content of pupils' work. However, in some classes, teachers' expectations of how pupils should present their work do not match these high standards. As a result, neatness of pupils' work and the development of handwriting vary too much across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- School leaders have ensured that pupils are well cared for and have effective support so that they develop into confident learners. As a result, pupils develop high-quality social and academic skills.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are respectful. Pupils listen to each other extremely well and share their ideas confidently. One parent stated, 'The children are taught to treat each other with respect and to be considerate of others' feelings'; they go on to say that, in their experience, 'this is consistently demonstrated'.
- Leaders have taken great care to develop highly effective systems to ensure that the school meets the differing needs of pupils who require additional support. Adults are precisely trained to support pupils' social, emotional and behavioural development effectively.
- Pupils are very aware of the importance of acting in a safe manner. They say they are

happy and safe in school. Governors, staff and parents fully agree. Pupils know how to stay safe on the internet and know they can talk to the school's 'digital leaders' for support.

- Pupils understand about bullying and say that 'bullying hardly ever happens in our school'. They know who to speak to if they have any concerns.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are very courteous, polite and mix together extremely well. They move around the school cheerfully and maturely. They enjoy breaktimes and lunchtimes on the well-supervised school grounds.
- There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in classrooms. Interactions between pupils and staff are underpinned by respectful relationships. Almost all lessons are characterised by an enthusiasm for learning and pupils' desire to do their best.
- Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning. They want to 'tackle' the more difficult tasks, especially the most able pupils.
- Leaders track and monitor behaviour thoroughly. The school is successful in meeting the needs of the small number of pupils who have difficulty in managing their own behaviour. High-quality support and skilled intervention enable these pupils to improve their behaviour.
- Attendance is higher than the national average, reflecting the pupils' enjoyment of attending school. Leaders monitor attendance closely and take effective action when it is needed.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- School leaders have taken highly effective action to ensure that pupils are making outstanding progress this academic year in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. This is due to rapid improvements in teaching and learning, and leaders' more precise monitoring of pupils' progress. Where there is a risk of a pupil falling behind, highly effective support is put in place to enable these pupils to make rapid progress. Extensive work scrutiny of pupils' English, mathematics, science and topic books by the inspectors validates the pupils' outstanding progress across the curriculum.
- Many children enter the Nursery with starting points that are below those typically seen for their age. However, a high proportion achieve the expected standard of a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. This proportion was above the national average in 2017, when it rose to the school's highest result for three years. Inspection evidence, including children's work and the school's assessment information, indicates that these high outcomes have been maintained this academic year. This represents outstanding progress from children's various starting points. Consequently, children are very well prepared for Year 1.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics

screening check has risen significantly over the past three years and was well above the national average in 2017. Evidence indicates that this high standard is being maintained this academic year, due to high-quality teaching and learning and leaders' vigilance in ensuring that assessments are accurate.

- In key stage 1, pupils' attainment has been similar to, or above, that seen nationally over time in reading, writing and mathematics, with a fall in 2017, especially at the expected standard in writing. Leaders swiftly improved teaching and learning across key stage 1 to address this issue. This academic year, a greater proportion of Year 2 pupils are working at the expected and higher standards than in the past three years, and inspection evidence indicates that Year 2 pupils are currently making outstanding progress from their various starting points in reading, writing, mathematics and topic work. These pupils are very well prepared for key stage 2.
- Pupils' work in English, mathematics, science and topic books shows that current pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are making consistently good and often better progress from their September starting points. The school's performance information for reading, writing and mathematics shows that the majority are working at age-related expectations. Additionally, school performance information indicates that a higher proportion of pupils are working at greater depth than in previous years. The school's leaders have ensured that pupils in Year 3 are making rapid progress, after their disappointing results in 2017 at the end of Year 2.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, are achieving very well. The school's teacher assessments show that a higher proportion of pupils are now making outstanding progress from their various starting points. These pupils often make better progress than other pupils, so that any differences between the two groups are rapidly diminishing. This is due to outstanding teaching, learning and assessment, aided by the highly effective targeted support from the skilled pupil premium teacher.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make consistently good and better progress from their individual starting points through outstanding teaching and learning. The special educational needs coordinator ensures that these pupils have additional tailored support, where required, to meet their various individual needs.
- The most able pupils make strong progress across a range of subjects because they are given opportunities that effectively develop their thinking and understanding. The 'three challenges' in English, mathematics, science and topic work enable these pupils to make the best possible progress.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children settle quickly and confidently into the expanded Nursery provision and Reception classes. Due to the high standard of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years, the children make outstanding progress from their various starting points. The proportion achieving a good level of development is above the national figure. Current Reception children are very well prepared for the key stage 1 curriculum.
- The safe learning environments in the Nursery and Reception areas are stimulating and well resourced, both inside and outside. Children enjoy a wide range of opportunities to

develop their skills through exciting activities in all areas of learning. Children's personal development is exemplary. Children follow school routines extremely well. They play together, take turns and share equipment harmoniously. They listen to each other and adults carefully, showing great respect towards everyone.

- The safety of children is paramount. The outside area for the Nursery is next to the school farm. Children watch and discuss the chickens as they very carefully dig for worms to feed them. The children told me that they cannot enter the farm without an adult or wearing their wellingtons. They say, 'this is to keep us safe'.
- Reception children showed good levels concentration and high-quality skills when writing factual information about bees. They wrote interesting sentences and used their knowledge of phonics very effectively to support their spelling. They developed their creative skills to construct a complicated bee hive. Children's perseverance in their own devised tasks, or those led by an adult, is a strength of the early years.
- Outside provision enhances children's learning. During the inspection, Reception children improved their throwing and catching skills during a high-quality PE activity. They learned how to look where they were throwing and to get their hands ready for catching. Later, outside, they were throwing balls at a large 'sticky' dartboard. They wanted to throw accurately so that their balls stuck to the higher numbers. They were encouraged to add up their score carefully to find their total and the winner of the game.
- The early years is led very effectively, and staff work extremely well together. Careful planning of inspirational activities meets the needs of individual children. Well-designed activities and adults' skilful questioning enable children to quickly become competent learners. There are many opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening skills.
- Careful observations and analysis of assessment ensure that leaders swiftly identify any gaps in children's development. Effective adult support and supervision are put in place to enable children to make rapid progress from their various starting points, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Additional funding is used effectively.
- The school fully meets the welfare and safeguarding requirements of the early years.
- Parents are extremely positive about the early years provision. Typical comments state, 'My child has had a great start in the Nursery,' and my child 'loves every day and always has lots to say about it'.

School details

Unique reference number	120922
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10046522

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

Type of school	Primary and nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	452
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Melissa Marfleet-Collins
Headteacher	Sam Nixon
Telephone number	01953 602410
Website	www.ashleighprimary.com
Email address	office@ashleigh.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 February 2011

Information about this school

- The school converted to a primary and nursery school in September 2015 from an infant and nursery school. The numbers of pupils on roll have grown each year as the age range in the school has increased. Currently, key stage 2 consists of Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils.
- There have been a number of new leadership and teaching appointments since the previous inspection. The headteacher was appointed in January 2015.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is lower than the national average.

- A large majority of pupils come from a White British background and speak English as their first language.
- Children in the early years attend full-time in the Reception Year and part-time in the Nursery provision.
- The school runs its own breakfast club and after-school provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including: teachers' planning; the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses; information on pupils' attainment and progress; records of behaviour and safety; minutes of governing body meetings; and safeguarding documents.
- A discussion was held with a group of pupils, as well as informal conversations with pupils during lessons and at breaktimes. The inspectors listened to pupils read and scrutinised work in pupils' books in all classes.
- Inspectors considered 138 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as 90 free-text comments. Views of parents were also informally sought at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors also took account of the views of 44 staff who responded to their online survey.

Inspection team

Julie Harrison, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Lowery	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Fletcher	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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