

INSPECTION REPORT

ASHFIELD INFANTS AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Otley, Leeds

LEA area: Leeds

Unique reference number: 107877

Headteacher: Mrs Yvonne Davidson

Reporting inspector: Mrs Pauline Kenyon
1562

Dates of inspection: 19-23 March 2001

Inspection number: 194243

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Weston Lane Otley Leeds West Yorkshire
Postcode:	LS21 2DF
Telephone number:	01943 463341
Fax number:	As phone
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Colin Campbell
Date of previous inspection:	20 May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
3762	Pauline Kenyon	Registered inspector
11072	Shirley Elomari	Lay inspector
1530	Beryl Walker	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Staffordshire and Midlands Consortium

Mr I H Jones
Kingston Centre
Fairway
Stafford
ST16 3TW

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6 - 10
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL?	11 - 19
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	n/a
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20 - 22

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ashfield Infant and Nursery School is a smaller than average infant school, with an Early Years' Unit, for boys and girls between the ages of three and seven years. 58 pupils attend the school full-time. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is generally below that found nationally but, by the Reception Year, children's attainment is broadly average. The number of pupils on the school's register for special educational needs is below the national average, but the number of pupils having statements, mostly for moderate learning or behavioural difficulties, is well above average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is around the national average. The percentage of pupils attending the school who speak English as an additional language is above average. The school serves an area that has suffered significant economic decline, which is reflected in growing levels of unemployment. The Local Education Authority is reducing surplus places in the area and the future of Ashfield School is uncertain.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school with many strengths and some outstanding features. Staff and pupils are happy and enthusiastic in the work they do. Parents overwhelmingly describe the school's work in glowing terms and appreciate its provision for their children. Pupils make good progress and they attain standards overall that are above the national average for seven year olds, and also above average in comparison with similar schools. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain very high standards in reading. The school is very effectively led and managed and this is a major factor in the school's success. The quality of teaching is very good. The surplus places in the school make running costs high, but overall the school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress and attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Staff have very high expectations of all pupils and teaching is very good, sometimes outstanding. The inclusive education of all pupils, whatever their ability, gender, ethnicity or circumstances, is very well promoted.
- The Early Years' Unit provides all pupils with an excellent foundation for further learning.
- The school promotes personal, social and health education very effectively. Pupils have high levels of confidence and self esteem, which enable them to learn well and behave outstandingly well.
- The partnership with parents is a strength. The school serves its community well and is valued by it.
- The school is very effectively led by the headteacher in a strong partnership with governors and staff.

The school has many strengths and no significant weaknesses.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1997. Since then, pupils' standards and the quality of teaching have improved. The school has also made significant improvements in all the areas that were identified for attention. Schemes of work have been appropriately developed for all subjects. Long term planning is securely in place and assessment information is used effectively. The school has ensured that sufficient emphasis has been placed on spelling, punctuation, grammar and presentation. Pupils' research skills have also been successfully improved. The school is well placed to succeed with its further planned improvements.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	B	B	A	A
Writing	C	B	B	B
Mathematics	B	D	B	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Children enter the Early Years' Unit with levels of attainment that are generally lower than those found nationally. They make rapid progress and by the end of the Reception Year children's standards are broadly those expected for five year olds. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. The 2000 national assessment results show that, by the age of seven, pupils attain standards that are well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. Pupils of higher ability attain appropriate standards in writing and mathematics national assessments, and well above the national average in reading. Despite minor fluctuations, standards have improved over time. Girls outperform boys overall, but the school's focus on improving boys' writing has been successful. In comparison with schools of a similar type, pupils attain very high standards in reading and above average standards in writing and mathematics.

The small Year 2 class, and relatively high number of pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language, render comparisons with previous larger year groups somewhat unreliable. However, pupils' work seen during the inspection confirms that pupils of all abilities attain appropriately high standards. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are generally good and more able pupils demonstrate appropriately high standards in their work. Pupils with special educational needs, or English as an additional language, make good progress and attain appropriate standards due to effective support. In English, pupils read with fluency and expression, acquire good phonic skills and a growing understanding of correct punctuation and grammar. Pupils listen attentively, confidently make suggestions and give reasoned personal opinions. In mathematics, pupils attain particularly well in number, mental and oral work. In science, good teaching and investigative work enable pupils to carry out simple experiments and to predict results well. The school is likely to reach its challenging targets both for individual pupils and for overall school improvement.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have excellent attitudes to their learning, they work diligently and are eager to learn. They respond joyfully to the staff's high expectations.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is outstandingly good. They take responsibility for their actions and behave with exceptional maturity for their age.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Relationships with their peers and adults are excellent. Pupils show sensitive care towards each other and especially to those with special educational needs.
Attendance	Overall, attendance is better than the national average.

Pupils' outstanding standards of behaviour, attitudes to their learning and high quality personal development are major strengths of the school and make a significant contribution to standards attained.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is very good overall. 100% of lessons observed were at least satisfactory but generally better quality. 12% of lessons were of good quality, almost 66% of lessons were of very good quality and a further 18% were excellent. In the Early Years' Unit, teaching was generally of a very high standard indeed. Teachers have a very good understanding of the needs of children under five and they work with a strong team approach with highly skilled support staff. Planning is thorough and carefully structured. Staff have high expectations of what young children can achieve and they use a highly imaginative approach to learning. Children are well motivated and enthusiastic. Consequently, all children regardless of ability, make rapid gains in learning.

In Key Stage 1, teaching is generally very good. Teachers plan lessons well, have high expectations and use time and resources effectively. Support staff are well managed and help targeted pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are well taught. Teachers plan carefully to meet their pupils' needs and they receive structured individual support. Although most lessons had tasks planned carefully for pupils of different abilities, very occasionally some tasks for independent work were insufficiently matched to pupils' specific levels and this limited their learning. Marking is very thorough and pupils know what they have learnt and what they need to do to improve their work. Staff teach literacy and numeracy skills very effectively and this has a beneficial effect on standards.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements. The curriculum for Under Fives is outstanding and meets the needs of young children very well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school's provision is good. Skilled support staff give good quality, targeted support in the classroom and work is well matched to the learning needs of identified pupils. Consequently, pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The overall provision is good. Work is carefully planned and staff give a high level of individual support which enables pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Discussion in 'Circle Time' is used effectively as a powerful means to develop important aspects of pupils' personal development. Overall the provision for pupils' personal development is outstanding and includes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school gives a high priority to pupils' welfare and cares for its pupils very well. All staff know the pupils well and give very sensitive support.

The school has developed an Early Years' Unit for children under five. This provision is of very high quality and enables children to make rapid progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives strong leadership and purposeful direction for the school. She promotes high expectations in all areas of school life. She is well supported by staff who, despite carrying a heavy workload, fulfil their subject management roles well. These factors have a very positive impact on standards and sustained school improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are well informed and work in a very productive partnership with the school. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively and are fully involved in strategic planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Effective arrangements enable the school to monitor and evaluate its performance. Detailed analyses of all available data is undertaken and actions have successfully led to improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used very well. The decision to fund extra support staff has been particularly effective, resulting in high levels of individual support, enabling pupils of all abilities to make

	good progress.
--	----------------

The school is very effectively led and managed by a headteacher with vision and drive, who enables teachers to fulfil their own management roles effectively. These factors, together with the productive relationship between the governing body and the school, are key elements that have helped make the school successful. The school and governors apply the principles of best value appropriately in their decision-making processes.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy coming to school. • Their children make good progress and those who have special educational needs are well supported. • The very high standards of behaviour the school promotes and the way their children respond. • How the school helps children become confident and able to cope with the next stage of education. • The very good quality teaching. • The amount of work children do at home. • How well they are informed about their children's progress and the weekly note of work covered. • They find it easy to come to school if there are any problems. The teachers are approachable and work with the home 'to make a difference'. • The school encourages children to work hard and do their best and children respond to this well. • They like the close partnership with parents. • The school is well led and managed. • The range of activities beyond normal lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents identified no areas for improvement.

The inspectors fully endorse the parents' positive comments about the school. There are no significant weaknesses in the school's provision.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils make good progress and attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science.

1. The school has organised its nursery and Reception provision into an Early Years' Unit which serves the needs of children under five. Children generally attend the school's Early Years' Unit for part-time nursery provision before transferring to full-time education in the Reception section of the Unit. They enter the nursery with levels of attainment that are generally low, although a few pupils exceed this. Pupils make rapid progress because of the outstanding provision in the Unit, the high expectations of all staff and the very good teaching they experience there. The curriculum is of very high quality and is carefully tailored to meet the needs of young children. Activities are stimulating and highly imaginative and, consequently, children learn eagerly and make swift progress. Baseline assessments, undertaken when children enter the Reception class, show that children's attainment is above average for the Local Education Authority. Work seen during the inspection indicates that children in the Reception Year largely attain the standards expected nationally for five year olds in all six areas of learning.
2. Pupils generally continue to make good progress throughout Key Stage 1. By the age of seven, pupils' standards in the 2000 national assessments in reading were well above the national average, with above average standards in writing, mathematics and science. In comparison with schools of a similar type, they also attained well above average standards in reading and above average standards in writing, mathematics and science. This sustained rapid rate of progress is the result of consistently high quality teaching, thorough planning and lessons where skilled support staff work with carefully targeted pupils. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively and this has had a beneficial impact on the standards pupils attain in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because work is well matched to their stage of learning. Teachers adapt their approaches sensitively to ensure pupils can succeed and support staff give high levels of individual support and challenge. Gifted and talented pupils attain appropriately high levels in English and mathematics, however, their performance in science in the 2000 national assessments was lower than it should have been. This was due to insufficient opportunities for pupils to undertake tasks that enabled teachers to assess their work at a high enough level. This weakness was quickly identified and remedied by the school. Work seen during the inspection clearly indicated that more able pupils undertake suitably challenging tasks and attain appropriately high levels in science. There have been minor fluctuations in pupils' standards over the past three years but overall standards have improved, particularly in English.
3. The current Year 2 class is small and contains only 16 pupils, with a relatively high proportion of pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language. This makes direct comparisons with the larger class who were assessed in the 2000 national assessments unreliable. However, pupils' work seen during the inspection confirms that pupils generally attain good standards in English, mathematics and science. Girls outperform boys overall, as is the national picture. However, the school's analysis of assessment data led to an adjustment of its teaching approach. Lessons included a greater emphasis on the use of non-fiction texts and the use of frameworks to help boys improve their writing. This successfully improved boys' attainment.

4. In English, pupils listen attentively and are keen to offer suggestions, share ideas and give reasoned opinions in discussions. Opportunities to extend speaking and listening skills are well used across the curriculum. Staff skilfully ask open-ended questions which stimulate pupils' thinking and encourages good communication. The contributions pupils make in 'Circle Time' discussions are of a very high standard because they concentrate well, listen intently to each other and confidently express their own thoughts and feelings. Pupils acquire good phonic skills systematically and successfully learn an appropriate range of strategies to help them tackle new words in reading. They enjoy reading and can talk about favourite stories and non-fiction books with enthusiasm. They respond well to the school's encouragement to take reading books home and enjoy visiting the library and making their choices with their parents. The use of reading diaries, with comments from staff and parents, succeeds in reinforcing the benefits of regular reading practice and has a positive effect on pupils' progress. Pupils write for a wide range of purposes, including making lists, cards, signs, labelling diagrams, detailing instructions, making their own books and writing stories and accounts. Classrooms are full of displays that help pupils' accuracy in spelling and writing, and pupils readily respond to these aids to learning. The use of models and frameworks to help pupils learn how to plan and organise different types of writing works well. However, opportunities for pupils to draft, refine and improve writing are too limited and this restricts the standards that are attained by the most able. The school's handwriting policy, where pupils learn to add 'flicks' to their letters is a positive step towards the use of joined script but there is insufficient attention given to the introduction of joined handwriting for those pupils for whom this is appropriate.
5. In mathematics, pupils attain particularly well in number work throughout the school. They respond well to teachers' high expectations in mental and oral work and make good progress because staff plan interesting tasks which motivate pupils well. For instance, in a Year 1 numeracy session, pupils used whiteboards effectively to work out the change from 20p using items bought from the class shop. Pupils also make good progress when teachers ask questions carefully matched to pupils' levels of understanding and which make them think hard. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher threw a beanbag to different children who were then asked to double given numbers as they caught it. The most able were asked to double high numbers whereas pupils with special educational needs were asked to work with easier calculations and were encouraged to use the wall charts for support. Pupils work well at independent tasks and use simple apparatus to help them solve problems and investigate. For instance, they successfully discover how many groups of two different numbers can be divided into and can record their findings accurately. In Year 2, pupils can order their classmates' weights correctly, add different coins and give change in money calculations and measure with rulers accurately. In Year 1, pupils recognise odd and even numbers, most can count accurately in twos using even numbers to 16, and many can count in odd numbers to 17.
6. In science, standards are generally above average. Pupils understand the life cycle of plants and butterflies and can record their findings. They know about different types of forces and can describe simple experiments and draw conclusions as to why some cars go further than others when pushed hard. They investigate how sound travels and can record this in diagrammatic form and on charts. They can keep simple weather records and know why weather forecasting is important in everyday life. Pupils make good progress due to skilful teaching in lessons that introduce scientific ideas in small steps that extend learning very effectively. In discussions, pupils talk with enthusiasm and clear understanding about experiments they have carried out, such as investigations into bouncing balls and the effects of gravity.
7. Very good quality teaching, pupils' exceptionally positive attitudes to learning, their high levels of confidence and excellent behaviour, result in the consistently good progress all pupils make and

the standards they attain.

Staff have very high expectations of all pupils and teaching is very good, sometimes outstanding. The inclusive education of all pupils, whatever their ability, gender, ethnicity or circumstances, is very well promoted.

8. Seventeen lessons, or part lessons, were observed during the inspection. All class teachers were seen teaching. The quality of teaching is of a very good standard overall and is a strength of the school. 82% of all lessons were at least of very good quality and in around 18%, teaching was outstanding. Lessons were never less than satisfactory and nearly 12% of lessons were of a good standard.
9. The quality of teaching of children under five was never less than good. In the majority of lessons in the Early Years' Unit teaching was of a very good standard and sometimes excellent. The high quality of teaching, allied to complementary group and individual work undertaken by skilled support staff, ensures that children make rapid progress throughout the Unit. Teachers and support staff have a very good understanding of the needs of young children. The curriculum is tightly planned around the required six areas of learning for children under five. It is organised with great imagination and flair and the children are highly motivated by activities that are exciting and irresistible. For example, a large tray set out with flower pots, twigs and garden debris with small squeeze bottles of cornflour 'slime' enabled children to experiment with snail trails and then eagerly share books to find out more about snails' habitats. A key feature of the very good teaching observed was the high level of staff interaction with different children. They know when to stand back and let children take the lead in activities but also when to intervene to move learning on by asking searching questions or introduce new ideas. Staff make careful assessments of children's stages of learning and plan high levels of individual support which enables all pupils, regardless of ability, to make good progress. For example, an autistic child was very well supported during induction sessions and made good progress in settling into a new environment. Staff produce resources of excellent quality and plan each session meticulously to ensure all children, of both nursery and Reception age, engage in a broad and appropriate range of activities for their stage of learning.
10. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching was very good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they plan lessons thoroughly and incorporate a lively range of varied activities which engage pupils' interest very effectively. They use skilful questioning, well judged to match pupils' abilities, which make pupils think hard. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are fully involved in all class activities. This is because staff involve them well in specific tasks. Support staff make a positive contribution to learning by working with target groups and individuals and giving a high level of help and challenge to pupils. Teachers generally plan tasks carefully to meet the needs of their pupils. Just occasionally, in otherwise effective lessons, a few pupils were given tasks which were not pitched precisely enough at their level of understanding, and this hindered their rate of progress.
11. Teachers and support staff have consistently high expectations of their pupils, regardless of pupils' capabilities and personal circumstances. Staff expect the pupils to work hard, behave responsibly and attain well and, consequently, they do. Pupils of all abilities respond very positively to the demands placed upon them. They are eager to learn, they concentrate deeply and work hard, and delight in their success. Pupils readily take responsibility around the school. A pupil with special educational needs confidently controlled the CD player for assembly music and worked with another pupil to clear away afterwards and set up a 'Big Bag of Worries' display in the library for pupils to contribute to later.

12. Throughout the school, lessons proceed with a brisk pace and much ground is covered, which contributes to the good progress pupils make. Teachers give a high level of direct teaching to targeted groups and this maximises their use of time and extends pupils' learning well. Staff support pupils with special educational needs effectively, both in whole class sessions and in small group and individual tasks. A positive feature of most lessons is the teachers' use of open-ended questions and the time they give pupils to reflect before answering, which gives pupils the confidence to risk answers. Pupils are successfully encouraged to offer personal suggestions and ideas and to become independent learners. For example, in a Year 1 lesson where previous science work was being discussed, a pupil was happy to volunteer that she "Didn't quite understand" and the teacher thanked her for letting her know. The teacher then successfully involved the pupils in recalling the work on classifying materials in more detail and they were all able to tackle the writing up tasks confidently.
13. Teachers teach literacy and numeracy sessions very effectively. A deliberate decision was made to find ways to improve boys' performance in English. The school's analysis of all available data resulted in different strategies to be used in writing. Teachers adapted their approach to include the use of a greater range of non-fiction materials and they increased the use of writing frames to help all pupils, but boys especially, improve their planning of writing. This successfully resulted in boys improving their overall standards.
14. Teachers mark pupils' work very thoroughly. They consistently acknowledge and praise what has been learnt well and also give pupils clear indications of what they need to do to improve their work. This enables pupils to focus on realistic, small step targets and make good progress.

The Early Years' Unit provides all children with an excellent foundation for further learning.

15. The school has chosen to create an Early Years' Unit to cover the work of the Foundation Stage of education for children under five. The Unit caters for 52 part-time children of nursery age and 26 full-time children in the Reception Year, with good levels of teaching and support staff. The accommodation has been created from existing resources supplemented by recent building extensions. The area has been well organised into distinct bases where specific types of activity can take place. Space is used very effectively to ensure that the needs of both nursery and Reception Year children are met and that the required range of learning for children under five is fully covered. The environment is vibrant, stimulating and very efficiently organised to capture young children's imagination and to extend their learning. A wide range of role play, sand and water play, reading, writing, table top play, music and creative areas are all used to good effect. The provision is of a very good quality and includes an excellent outdoor area that has been imaginatively designed and well equipped for a broad range of outdoor play activities.
16. The design of the Early Years' Unit enables the staff team to provide a very high quality learning environment for all children under five. The curriculum is very well planned and covers the six areas of learning very thoroughly, with clear indications of how the specific needs of younger and older children will be met. For example, the Reception Year children have timetabled sessions when they work in a separate base for literacy and numeracy work, and this lays a firm foundation for later National Curriculum work in the main school. There is a very effective team approach to planning and all staff contribute productively to the process. Support staff are well deployed and take considerable responsibility for allocated base activities. They make a very significant contribution to the organisation of the sessions and to children's learning overall.
17. The quality of teaching in the Early Years' Unit is very good. No opportunity to extend learning

is lost. Staff are quick to recognise ways to build on children's play experiences and, in particular, they introduce young children to books and writing activities very effectively. This has a very positive effect on the standards children attain overall. Staff are highly skilled in questioning techniques which guide children's thinking and give them confidence to apply their learning well to new experiences. For example, during a clearing away session, the teacher asked children to find spaces to fit the chairs under tables in the area. She then challenged them to count a group of chairs, "holding the number in their heads" and then counting the next group until they had the total. Reception Year children benefit from very good teaching in their base and also from their involvement with support staff leading exciting activities within the wider Unit. They respond responsibly to the high expectations of staff to act as role models for younger children and to take a lead in some activities. Overall, children respond enthusiastically to the captivating and challenging activities which staff plan, demonstrating an excitement and a real joy in their learning.

18. A particular strength of the Early Years' provision is the range of highly imaginative role play activities which are linked to planned themes. For example, children created a fire engine and engaged in highly productive role play acting out a series of fire fighting adventures. Excellent quality resources such as uniforms, hoses, maps and building blocks, enabled their imagination to be stimulated and they responded with a high level of co-operative play and extended their communication skills very well. They also extended their Knowledge and Understanding of the World effectively because they were so motivated and wanted to discover more about the fire service through books. On another occasion, to reinforce learning on a theme of 'Journeys', an Indian parent governor visited school, bringing with her a collection of children's costumes. The children built a plane from chairs and flew to India, visiting the parent-governor's home where they chose their costumes and tasted a selection of authentic Indian foods. The experience greatly extended children's learning.
19. Children with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. An autistic child is being gradually and successfully inducted into the Unit due to the energetic individual support of a skilled member of staff, working in a team approach, with sensitive parental involvement. There is a well planned and effective new entrants' induction programme in place. Staff make a series of carefully structured home visits before children enter the Unit. Parents and carers are fully involved in the initial assessment of what their children can do, for example, sharing with the school how well children can dress themselves. Parents are welcomed at school. This forges productive parental links and enables young children to settle easily and make rapid progress in the Early Years' Unit.
20. Most of the children enter the Early Years' Unit with relatively low levels of attainment, but because they encounter rich opportunities for learning, very good quality teaching and a well planned curriculum, they make swift progress. Staff make careful assessments and plan work to enable children of different abilities to engage in specific tasks designed to help them learn. This enables children to make rapid progress in acquiring new skills in all six areas of learning for children under five. They are well on course to attain the standards expected nationally by the end of the Reception Year.

The school promotes personal, social and health education very effectively. Pupils have high levels of confidence and self esteem, which enables them to learn well and behave outstandingly well.

21. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is a strength of the school. Pupils understand from an early age what is expected of them in terms of respecting others' feelings

and they learn to take responsibility for their own actions. Each year in assembly, the school's aims are discussed with the pupils who then are helped to draw up their own set of rules which cover their rights and responsibilities. Teachers give pupils time to reflect on what has happened in stories and why, and also to reflect on every day life in school. Pupils are encouraged to consider how they, and other people, feel in different circumstances, particularly when someone is unkind to them. Sensitive help from teachers and support staff enables pupils to learn how to be assertive in expressing their own feelings. Pupils are praised for their good behaviour and responsible actions. Kindness and consideration to others is recognised, for instance, in assemblies and in a special achievement book. As a result pupils grow in confidence and self esteem.

22. Pupils' behaviour is outstandingly good. Parents appreciate the school's commitment to high standards of behaviour and they comment on how well their children react to the school's provision. All staff consistently apply agreed strategies to implement the 'Golden Rules'. Pupils have a clear picture of what behaviour is expected and they respond enthusiastically. Pupils who behave well through the week earn the right to choose from a wide variety of activities that are planned for a Friday session of 'Golden Time'. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and staff spend time counselling the few pupils who find it more difficult to behave well. Pupils are successfully taught how to deal with anger and difficult emotions in a very sensitive manner and they gain confidence in dealing with demanding situations. For example, a pupil with special educational needs who was finding it difficult to concentrate on work had the confidence to talk to the teacher about the worry and had the problem resolved. As a result of the school's provision, pupils often behave with maturity beyond their years, particularly in working together, supporting each other and taking responsibility around the building.
23. Throughout the school, 'Circle Time' is built into the curriculum and provides a powerful but safe vehicle for pupils to discuss sensitive issues. The activities are carefully structured to enable pupils to listen to others and contribute their own suggestions for how their classmates might tackle worrying problems. For example, in Year 1, when pupils were discussing things that scared them, pupils readily offered helpful suggestions to a pupil who was anxious about having to watch frightening videos. Pupils make very good progress in communicating their own feelings and in understanding other people's viewpoints. For example in the Reception Year, children spent time considering how Nothing the very shy bear would feel. The teacher planned lessons where children wrote and invited him to visit them and then encouraged them to make presents for him. They were delighted to receive a reply. They talked about how they should behave when he arrived and how he might react. When skilled support assistant appeared with Nothing (a bear puppet), the children greeted his arrival with real joy and wonder. Staff worked well in a team to stimulate children to ask Nothing questions and to help them behave in a very quiet and gentle manner so as not to alarm him. Children responded in a very positive way, adapting their behaviour appropriately and making very good progress in social skills. A hearing impaired child made extremely good progress in moderating both voice and manner because of the targeted individual support received from support staff.
24. The school is committed to developing both the physical and emotional health of its pupils. The school uses questionnaires completed by pupils and parents together to gauge the areas which need attention and monitor provision. Assemblies are also used well to reinforce the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning covered in 'Circle Time' programmes. Assemblies are well planned and are designed to engage pupils' attention through the imaginative choice of subject matter with a high level of pupil participation. For example, pupils responded eagerly when listening to a story about a little girl weighed down with worries and gave their suggestions for how she might leave them behind. The headteacher had skilfully prepared a large bag of

familiar soft toys wearing labels itemising their worries. Pupils discussed these with great interest and sensitivity. The theme was followed through by leaving the bag in the library area with cards and pens. Pupils were encouraged to write out their own worries and place these in the bag and many had the trust and confidence to do so. The school's provision enables pupils to feel valued, to know what is expected of them and how they should behave. They grow in self esteem and have the confidence to deal with new work, consequently they learn well. Parents appreciate the increased confidence the school builds in their children and report that this prepares them very well for the next stage of their education.

The partnership with parents is a strength. The school serves its community well and is valued by it.

25. Parents greatly value the provision the school makes for their children. Their responses to the questionnaire overwhelmingly support every area of school life and there were no areas identified for improvement. The school works hard to involve parents in their children's education and it has created a parents' area within the middle of the school for them to meet and plan Parents' Association events. The area is welcoming, comfortable and well equipped with toys and games for toddlers to use and parents feel at ease there. Parents are encouraged to help their children at home. Reading Diaries are completed in school by teachers and by parents who hear their children read at home and this has a beneficial effect on reading standards. Parents appreciate the regular notes which inform them of what is being studied in school. As a result, parents felt more able to help their children at home. Parents stated they "had peace of mind" because teachers are always ready to see them to discuss their children's progress.
26. The school encourages parents to bring their children into their classrooms and to stay with them for a short while each morning. This is useful in helping pupils settle but also is effective in letting parents see the work of the school in action. For instance, in Year 2, several parents helped their children, and others, with a word finding exercise at the beginning of the day. Parents feel confident that the school takes care of their children well and felt that the teachers would always listen to parents and work with them to resolve any problems. Parents also appreciate being able to stay for lunch with their children as they start the Reception Year and feel this helps them transfer confidently to full-time education.
27. The school undertakes investigations and visits in the locality. It has been successful in winning two major local environmental competitions, one which required designing a local trail and the other identifying safe places for the community to use for play activities. This involvement greatly extended pupils' knowledge of their local area and reinforced geographical and literacy skills very effectively. A local pastor visits the school on a regular basis to take story-time sessions in the Early Years' Unit, which the children enjoy. The school supports the local carnival each year. The parents are very active in organising a good range of social events for children and families which bonds the community well.

The school is very effectively led by the headteacher in a strong partnership with governors and staff.

28. The school is very effectively led and managed by an innovative headteacher with vision and drive. The headteacher gives the school a clear educational direction and works in a very productive way with all staff and the governing body. The headteacher has been very successful in establishing a whole team approach to school improvement. This success is clearly rooted within a culture of high expectations where the work of the school is constantly reviewed and good practice is shared with a strong commitment to raising standards. The headteacher has

empowered staff to introduce and develop high quality provision, particularly in the Early Years' Unit and in the school's personal, social and health education curriculum. Parents recognise and value the strong leadership of the headteacher and the very good management of the school.

29. Although the school is small and teachers carry a very heavy workload in subject leadership, staff have been very effective in carrying out their management responsibilities. They have successfully implemented all the requirements of the revised National Curriculum and Foundation Stage (for Under Fives) and given good quality subject leadership to each other. This has resulted in a consistently high standard of teaching. Teachers are fully involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's standards and provision, setting targets and in taking action to bring about further improvements in pupils' attainment. Their success is reflected in the good progress pupils make throughout the school and the standards they achieve. All the issues identified for further attention by the previous inspection have been fully addressed and this has had a positive impact on standards. The school is well placed to maintain and build on current good standards.
30. The governing body is well informed, knowledgeable and actively involved in the life of the school. Governors fulfil their statutory functions appropriately. Many governors spend time in school, sometimes helping in classrooms. They have good links with staff, including joining staff for training days, thoroughly discussing and agreeing school priorities. They have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and support the actions required to maintain high standards and secure further improvement. Governors are fully involved in budgetary decision making and appropriately heed the principles of best value in their work. For example, resources and specific grants are used well and the decision to fund support staff has resulted in high levels of targeted help for pupils. This has been a significant factor in enabling all pupils to make good progress and is reflected in overall standards.
31. The Local Education Authority is in the process of resolving a problem of surplus places in a group of local schools and this will directly affect the future of Ashfield School. This is a very unsettling time for the school and makes strategic planning difficult. The school development plan accurately identifies key school priorities and is of overall good quality, although limited to the current year. However, it will be difficult for the governors and school to update this in detail and to address longer term planning until a decision regarding the future of the school is known.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

32. The school has no significant weaknesses to address.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	11	2	1	-	-	-

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	58
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	13

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	10	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	20	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (91)	100 (91)	100 (73)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	11
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	22	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	95 (73)	95 (86)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	31
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15
Average class size	19

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	134

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.7
--------------------------------	-----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	279,520
Total expenditure	293,404
Expenditure per pupil	3,493
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,040
Balance carried forward to next year	16,156

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	111
Number of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	25	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	77	20	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	73	27	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	36	3	0	3
The teaching is good.	91	9	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	75	25	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	86	14	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	16	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	68	30	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	77	20	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	82	18	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	57	22	5	0	15

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents overwhelmingly indicate that they are very pleased with all aspects of the life of the school.

Other issues raised by parents

Parents expressed their appreciation of the quality of all aspects of school work and life. In particular they valued the commitment of the headteacher and staff, teachers' help in working together with parents to resolve any problems, the confidence that the school had given their children to move to the next stage of education and the high quality provision in the Early Years' Unit.

