



Ashbourne Hilltop Infant School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 112686
LEA DERBYSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278990
Inspection dates 15 May 2006 to 16 May 2006
Reporting inspector Ms. Joanne Harvey LI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Wyaston Road
School category	Community		DE6 1NB
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01335 343041
Number on roll	134	Fax number	01335 343041
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms.Helen Ward
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Hazel Jacques

Age group 3 to 7	Inspection dates 15 May 2006 - 16 May 2006	Inspection number 278990
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school serving the town of Ashbourne. When they start school, pupils have a level of knowledge and skills which is similar to those of most pupils nationally. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds and their first language is English. Fewer pupils than in most schools are entitled to claim free school meals and fewer have learning needs and disabilities or a Statement of Special Educational Need. Attendance is close to that found nationally. The school has achieved many external accreditations and awards. These include a Basic Skills Quality Mark, an anti-bullying award and being a recognised Health Promoting School, Eco School and Investor in People.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It places the needs of the children at the forefront of all its work and manages to be both an oasis of calm and a place of joy. Effective leadership by the headteacher supported by her hardworking staff team has ensured that the school has continued to flourish over recent years. The facilities it provides, the personal development of pupils, the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum and the care provided for pupils are all good. As a result, pupils in both the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 progress well and standards across school are higher than those found in most schools nationally. Very skilled support staff work closely with teachers to ensure that the provision for pupils with learning needs and disabilities is very good indeed. Adults get to know the pupils well and gather much useful information about them. They now need to make sure that this is presented simply and clearly for all to understand. Subject leaders are planning to use this information more effectively to improve their knowledge of how well pupils are doing in their subject areas to help performance improve still further. Pupils are enthusiastic and well motivated by their personal development targets. Staff now need to ensure that pupils are all as confident about the academic targets they are set. Parents and pupils are almost unanimous in their praise for the school. There is plenty for pupils to do outside of lessons, and lunchtimes and playtimes are active and fun occasions. Much work has been done to improve provision in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection and quality and standards here are now good. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and it gives good value for money. Its success in the past and determination to do even better mean that the school's capacity for future improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all pupils know their academic targets and that they know what they have to do to achieve them. - Improve further the impact of curriculum leaders on standards and progress. - Devise a simple system to present clearly the pupils' progress tracking information the school has collected from entry to nursery to the end of Year 2.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the nursery with levels of knowledge and skills which are similar to those of most children of their age. At the time of the inspection the children in nursery were seen to be progressing well. They then make good progress in the reception class. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage, tracking evidence suggests that most children will have achieved the challenging targets set for them and many will have surpassed them. Pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 who entered Key Stage 1 with broadly average levels of attainment are making good progress. Here, tracking evidence also suggests that they will achieve the challenging targets set and reach standards above those found in most schools nationally when they leave the school. Though most pupils

make good progress, those pupils with learning needs and disabilities make very good progress. Measures put in place to improve the performance of boys in line with that of girls have helped all pupils to make better progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Hilltop is a harmonious place where pupils behave well, work hard and get on well with each other. Playtimes are active and cooperative occasions. Pupils are happy to come to school because they feel safe and valued, and learning here is fun. Attendance rates are close to those found nationally but could be improved further by a reduction in holidays taken in term time. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, having shown improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and are able to reflect on the consequences of their actions. Their knowledge and understanding of the lives and cultures of others at home and in other countries surpasses that of most pupils of their age. Pupils make healthy and safe lifestyle choices. This is helped by the high quality, healthy school meals offered to them and a range of sporting activities which they say they enjoy. Pupils take very seriously the opportunities they have to take on responsibility and influence school life. They are determined to do the best job they can as 'Playground Friends' and are looking forward to opportunities which the new school council will bring to develop their influence in school. Pupils are committed to achieving personal targets which they set for themselves. They make a good contribution to enhancing the lives of others through fundraising activities and performances within and beyond school. The school helps pupils acquire personal and academic skills that prepare them well for the next stage of their education and their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. There are positive relationships in lessons between pupils and adults which enable pupils to feel secure and confident in their learning. Pupils make good progress because of teachers' thorough planning, interesting content and confident teaching. They are given opportunities to carry out investigations, solve problems and work collaboratively. Lessons are tailored to meet the different needs of pupils and encourage the development of their thinking skills and imagination. Teachers know their pupils well and gather a great deal of useful information about them which they use to inform planning. They set pupils individual academic targets. Teachers need to ensure that these are as clearly understood by all pupils as their personal development targets are and that they always know how to achieve them. The best marking is evaluative and clearly informs pupils' next steps in learning. Increasingly good use is being made of electronic whiteboards as teaching aids. Good improvements have been made in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection and

teaching and learning are now good overall. Teaching assistants are well briefed and capable. They make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning in their many and different roles across the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Care is taken to ensure a broad and balanced range of well resourced activities which stimulate, promote and develop pupils' learning. Pupils get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage, where the indoor and outdoor curriculum inspire a sense of awe and wonder in the children and provide many interesting and challenging new ways for them to learn. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection and curriculum provision here is now good. Improved provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has meant significant development of the children's computer-based skills and added a new dimension to their learning. The curriculum is becoming more creative, successfully integrating subjects, for example, through the introduction of theme days and weeks. Art and music enrich the pupils' experiences. Pupils also benefit from exciting trips and interesting visitors to school, all of which helps to bring learning to life, adding enrichment and fun. The school provides a relevant and effective programme of personal, social and health education. A good improvement since the last inspection has been the introduction of an extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities. These are valued by pupils and parents. They help pupils to make further progress in their learning and also enable them to discover their talents and develop important broader skills which will help them when they are older.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's caring ethos is evident in the good quality of care it provides. Staff promote strong relationships throughout school, which are trusting and respectful. They work hard to ensure that pupils feel highly valued and well supported, and that they always have someone to turn to if they are worried. In this environment, pupils grow to be confident and happy individuals who are developing high self-esteem. Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety, such as those for child protection, are thorough and well understood. The school's assessment procedures provide teachers with information which they use well to guide and support pupils. They set challenging targets for individuals to help them with the next steps in their learning and then help them to achieve them in an atmosphere of fun. Where the pupils know and understand these targets well they have the most positive impact on their progress but there is room for improvement in this area. The provision for pupils who have specific needs is very good and a strength of the school. Led very effectively by the head teacher, able teaching assistants work productively with outside agencies and parents to ensure that these pupils do as well as they can. The school works hard to ensure that pupils transfer smoothly from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 and then on to the school's partner junior school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision and gives good strategic management. She has been successful in creating a hardworking team which is united in its aim to 'Achieve Together' a high quality education in an atmosphere where everyone feels happy, valued, cared for and respected. Because of the good quality of information it collects, the school has a clear picture of its strengths and areas for further development. Its self-evaluation is accurate. The focus on improvement has continued despite staffing challenges faced by the school in recent months. This focus could be made even sharper by presenting data about standards and progress, from entry to nursery to the end of Year 2, in a way which is easily accessible and understandable by all. The governors, the head teacher and senior managers are careful in checking that plans are working and they target resources accordingly. Curriculum leaders are beginning to have a positive impact on standards in their subjects and are now ready to take greater responsibility, for example, by developing their role as the managers of pupils' progress tracking data. Performance management reinforces the improvement planning process. Governors have a good understanding of the school's work and play a full role in its development. Parents are very happy with the school and are very supportive and involved in its work. The school takes great care to promote effective relationships with all its partners in the interests of the pupils and staff. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection and demonstrate the school's capacity to improve further. It provides good value for money.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I was pleased to meet you and all the staff and very much enjoyed the time I spent with you. Thank you for making me feel so welcome, talking to me and helping me to find out so much about you and your school. You go to a good school where all the adults work hard to help you do your best in everything and be the best that you can be. They take good care of you and make sure your lessons are fun. You have lots to do outside lessons, and playtimes and lunchtimes are happy times of the day. It was lovely to see you all behaving well, getting on well together and working hard. You make good progress from when you come in to the nursery to when you leave the school at the end of Year 2 and reach standards which are better than most pupils at other schools. Those of you who need extra help because you find your learning more difficult make very good progress. The school is going to make sure that you all know your targets for school work and what you need to do to achieve them. Those who lead the school are going to make sure they make the best use of all the information they find out about you. This is because the school is determined that you will do even better! I would like to wish you the very best for the future.