



Ashwater Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113126
LEA Devon
Inspection number 279099
Inspection dates 5 October 2005 to 5 October 2005
Reporting inspector Hazel Callaghan RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ashwater
School category	Community		Beaworthy
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Devon EX21 5EW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01409 211228
Number on roll	46	Fax number	01409 211228
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr C Smith
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Debbie Tomlinson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one inspector for one day.

Description of the school

Ashwater Primary is a very small school. There are 46 pupils who live in a wide area around the school. All children speak English as their first language. The number of children identified as having special educational needs fluctuates from year to year, but is usually below average. The number of children eligible for free school meals is low.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspection is in full agreement with the headteacher that Ashwater Primary is an effective school that provides very good education for all its pupils. Provision for children in the reception class is good. Standards are high by the end of Year 6. Pupils make good progress in their learning through the school because of good teaching.

Pupils' personal development is very good. In some aspects, it is outstanding because of the excellent support and opportunities provided by all staff. Pupils are well cared for and feel safe and secure. They enjoy school. Parents are very supportive and comment on the tremendous commitment of the headteacher and senior staff.

Governors carry out their duties effectively and are fully informed and involved. The headteacher provides strong leadership. Management systems are well established. The school is not complacent and continues to seek further improvement. Senior staff have started to analyse information from pupils' tests to identify aspects that need further improvement. They plan to continue this process by looking at pupils' writing to help them raise standards further. The school has the capacity to maintain its very good standards and improve further. It gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further develop the analysis of data from tests and other assessments so that strengths and areas of weakness are more fully identified.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The numbers in each year group vary from year to year but are generally much smaller than are found in most schools. Children enter the reception class with a wide range of abilities but, because the number is small, standards fluctuate enormously from one year to the next. Children get off to a good start in the reception year. They achieve well, particularly in their personal and social development, partly because of the good teaching and partly because they are mixing with older pupils in their class who act as positive role-models. Most attain the standards expected and many have good standards in their early language and mathematical skills. Children are well prepared for more formal learning as they move into Year 1.

In Years 1 to 6, pupils achieve well so that, by the time they move on to their secondary schools, standards are often well above average in English, mathematics and science. Challenging targets are set for them and in most cases these targets are met. Pupils' reading skills develop particularly well and this is a key factor in the good standards they reach in English. Pupils enjoy their activities and are developing very good basic skills that prepare them well for their next stage of education.

Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties make good progress and, as a result, many achieve average standards in English, mathematics and science at the

end of Year 6. Able pupils are effectively supported and also do well. Pupils with special talents, in art for example, are encouraged and their skills are well promoted by links with other schools and with specialists.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is very good, especially their ability to take initiative, show responsibility and care for one another, which is outstanding. The school gives very good attention to pupils' personal development and this results in their very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children interact well with one another and relationships are very good. Older pupils are enthusiastic about their developing role as mentors for younger children, an initiative planned by the school council. Pupils see the school as a friendly and happy place. They say bullying is not a problem but, if it should occur, it would be dealt with very quickly. Pupils enjoy school and their parents agree. They come to school regularly and attendance is above that found nationally.

Pupils behave very well and their attitudes to their work are extremely positive. Children of all ages concentrate well and persevere with their tasks, trying hard to do well. Opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility are outstanding. Pupils feel confident to suggest new ideas and these are regularly discussed within the school council. This is made up of all the pupils in Year 6 and representatives from all other age groups, except reception. The council takes an active part in planning future improvements so that the life of the school is further enriched.

Within their own work, pupils are also encouraged to make choices and to be independent. They are actively involved in supporting local and national charities and regularly play host to visitors. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the activities they plan. They have many opportunities to make a positive contribution to the wider community. Pupils are encouraged very effectively to embrace healthy lifestyles. They recognise which foods are healthy, enjoy regular exercise and have a clear understanding of how to keep safe.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good across the school. Staff are sensitive to pupils' feelings and give good levels of encouragement and support. Even at this early stage of the year, children in the reception class have settled well. Their confidence is growing and they gain great pleasure from the wide range of activities available to stimulate their good learning.

Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching provided and their own very good attitudes to work. Teachers know their subjects well and they use this knowledge

skilfully to engage pupils' interest and motivation to learn. Activities are purposeful and relevant so pupils are fully engaged.

Staffing is used imaginatively so that the wide range of ages and abilities in each class are taught in smaller groups, ensuring that pupils' learning needs are well met. Pupils are given opportunities to explore and experiment, and are building their understanding well. Relationships are very positive so pupils feel confident to 'have a go'. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' good behaviour and the working atmosphere in lessons is calm and positive.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum develops pupils' knowledge and skills well. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and successfully prepares them for the next stage of learning. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is carefully planned to cover all required subjects. Many aspects of the planning effectively promote high standards. In science, for example, there is a strong focus on investigation and this has led to pupils' good progress. The new computer suite enables pupils to use and develop their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) to support their work in other subjects.

The school has developed a good range of additional activities, such as embracing the 'Devon Arts Week', that extend pupils' learning and promote their lively interest. There is a very good range of after-school clubs for such a small school. Most are run for half a term at a time and cater for pupils' different interests. The school council also runs a club in response to children's suggestions. The curriculum is well focused on encouraging pupils to embrace healthy lifestyles. They are enabled to make informed choices in many aspects of their learning and personal development and understand how to keep safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good levels of care and support given to all pupils play a significant part in the level of enjoyment they obtain from their time at the school. Pupils feel safe and secure and are eager to learn. Teachers know their pupils well and respond successfully to their intellectual and personal needs. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to be evaluative of their own work and individual targets for improvement are discussed with them each term. Tracking systems are used effectively to monitor pupils' attainment and progress, to identify those pupils who need greater support and those who would benefit from greater challenge. The views of pupils about the school and their learning are sought regularly.

During the inspection, a very high number of parents responded to the questionnaire about the school. They were generally very positive. The procedures for supporting pupils when they start school are very effective. Parents say that their children have settled very quickly into the reception class because of the high levels of care provided

by the Foundation Stage staff and the strong links with the onsite playgroup. Parents have no concerns about their children's safety. Procedures to monitor child protection and health and safety are effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and guidance provided by the headteacher are very good. She has good levels of experience and expertise and sets her sights on maintaining pupils' high academic standards and excellent personal development.

All staff work together well as a strong team promoting the school's effectiveness. The headteacher is very well supported by the governing body, which works closely with the staff in developing the future direction of the school. Governors have a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses, and the school's self-evaluation is good. The school has built on the strengths recognised at the previous inspection and its capacity for future improvement is good. Clear financial planning has enabled the school to create a new computer suite and library that add significantly to the quality of the accommodation. The headteacher has rightly explored with parents and governors ways to increase security on the school boundary.

The school works well with outside agencies and has developed a very successful partnership with parents, who are very supportive of its work. Governors regularly seek the opinions of parents and try to act on them. Management systems are good. Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching are well established and these systems ensure pupils' good progress. Although standards are high in Year 6, senior staff have looked closely at the results of pupils' tests in mathematics to identify aspects that were not as strong as others. Successful strategies were then developed to improve learning. The headteacher has identified writing as the next aspect for analysis so similar good improvements can be made.

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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	2	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	2	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	1	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

Ashwater Primary School Ashwater Nr Beaworthy Devon EX21 5EW

7 October 2005

Dear Children

I am writing to say thank you for making me feel so welcome in your school and for helping me with my questions. I really enjoyed chatting to you and found everything you said to me very interesting. I thought you would like to know what I found out about you and the school.

I agree with your headteacher Mrs Tomlinson that you have a good school and you are a super group of children. I can see that most of you really enjoy school and you try hard with your work. I think you behave well and are very kind to each other. I think you do a lot to help make the school a better place where everyone can be happy. My report tells your parents that you are doing well in your lessons. I think the teachers help you to understand how you are getting on and what to do to get even better at your work. Teachers help you to make sensible choices about keeping safe and healthy. I can see that most of your parents and carers think the school is doing a really good job at helping you become confident and grown-up. I have asked the school to carry on looking closely at your work so they know what you are doing well and can help you to find the things that you are not so good at to help you to do even better.

Best wishes

Mrs Callaghan Inspector