



# Ashby Fields Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 131671  
**LEA** Northamptonshire  
**Inspection number** 282245  
**Inspection dates** 27 February 2006 to 28 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** John Eadie AI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Wimborne Place
<b>School category</b>	Community		Daventry
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Northamptonshire NN11 0YP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01327 310068
<b>Number on roll</b>	404	<b>Fax number</b>	01327 310232
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Sallyanne Martin
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 January 2001	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Neil Balliston

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school opened seven years ago and children have been joining in each year group nearly every year since. It is popular and practically full. Almost all children are White British, with small numbers from a wide range of other heritages, but only three are at an early stage of learning English. When they start school, children of all ages have significantly below-average levels of skills and knowledge. The school has been designed very well to accommodate children with disabilities and there is an above average number of these children in the school. The school has recently won a healthy lifestyle award. There have been a number of recent changes in the management structure of the school and it is currently being run by an acting headteacher.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

The school is providing a sound education for its children and is giving satisfactory value for money. It is improving rapidly. The school's own evaluation of its effectiveness matches that of inspectors. The acting headteacher has very quickly gained the support of staff, governors, parents and children in his desire to raise standards. Well-planned action has already improved standards of behaviour, which are now good. The school places a high priority on the personal development of the children and their care and welfare and these, too, are good. Children make a particularly strong contribution to the school community and to communities further afield and they are being excellently prepared for life. Provision is good in Reception, where the children make good progress and reach broadly average standards. Children's progress throughout the rest of the school is satisfactory and improving. The reason that progress is no better is that teaching, although never less than satisfactory, is inconsistent between classes. Not all teachers use the results of their assessments to provide work suitable for the full range of abilities. The new management structures have not yet had time to ensure consistency. Children joining the school in the older year groups do not always make the best possible progress. Bearing in mind the good progress made since the last inspection and the shared commitment to continued improvement, the school is well placed to improve further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the consistency of teaching by sharing the good practice found in many classes.
- Use assessment more effectively to ensure children of all ability levels are always given work that challenges them.
- Improve induction procedures so that children who join after the normal starting time are enabled to progress at their optimum rate.
- Develop the roles of the new managers in raising standards.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children reach average standards by the time they leave and make satisfactory progress through the school. Targets set for their performance in the national tests in Year 6 in 2005 were met. More challenging targets have been set for this year and children are well on track to reach these. Children start in Reception with significantly below-average levels of skills and knowledge. They make good progress but are still a little behind by the time they start in Year 1. Satisfactory progress is maintained through the rest of the school. This progress is improving because of recent initiatives, for example, ensuring that work set is better matched to individual needs. Analysis of data shows that children who have been right through the school perform at least as well as they should in the national tests. Children who join the school later do not always make progress at the expected rate right from the start. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress as a result of the good support that they receive and the clear plans made for their learning. The children who do not speak

English as their first language are integrated well and make similar progress to their classmates.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being, including children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, are good. Rates of attendance are average. Children's behaviour in classes and around the school is good; the newly introduced house system has had a significant influence on this. Children clearly understand the published classroom rules and care and respect for one another are evident throughout the school. Children are pleased to see visitors and easily engage in conversation. They have very positive attitudes and were most enthusiastic about their school. The school council feel valued and their suggestions are welcomed. Children are involved in fund raising and there are strong links with a school in Uganda. Children are safe in school and know to whom they can talk if any problems occur. They understand how to use the worry boxes in each classroom for 'serious worries, not tale-telling'. Children are very aware of healthy lifestyles and, in one lesson, older children knowledgeably discussed the arguments for and against organic food. Walking to school is encouraged and children are well aware of the need for exercise. The school has a very strong sense of community and children are proud to belong to their 'happy, friendly school'. They have opportunities to use budgets, and make items for sale. These highly commendable business enterprise skills ensure children make a positive contribution to the community and are contributing very successfully to their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and children are learning at the expected rate. In many lessons the teaching is good. Systems for assessing the children's progress are relatively new and therefore they are not always given work that matches their particular abilities. The school has analysed this weakness and has devised good initiatives to address it. A particular strength of teaching is the relationships that teachers and children share. These lead to a purposeful and happy environment where children enjoy their learning, work hard and want to do well. A further strength is the work of the teaching assistants. They support children's learning well and this is having a major effect, particularly on the progress of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Teachers keep good records of the standards children reach at the end of each year. Clear predictions are then made, and reviewed regularly, about where children should be at the end of the following year. The system for detailing how children should reach these goals is new and, although children are well aware of their targets and know how to improve, has not yet had time to raise achievement.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

Sound curricular planning underpins children's steady progress. The curriculum is enhanced by French lessons for older children and a good range of wellattended after-school clubs. Particular strengths include good provision for children in Reception and for those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Good local links with Daventry Country Park also help children to develop their mathematical, geographical and scientific skills. There is a strong personal, social and health education programme, which is enriched by additional activities, such as the lifesaver skills taught by St John Ambulance. All children in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to take part in an annual residential visit and this helps them to develop the self-confidence and skills for later life. The school has accurately identified areas for further improvement.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good level of care, guidance and support. Child protection procedures are secure. Attractive and prominent posters encourage positive behaviour, such as the use of kind words. Older children help younger ones during play and lunch times and take this responsibility seriously. Younger children dropped off by car are escorted safely to their classroom by duty staff. Provision for children with learning difficulties and disabilities is a strength and is very effectively supported by links with many outside agencies. All children are supported well during their lessons. They know their own learning targets and understand how to improve. Older children say they appreciate the 'constructive comments' received from teachers and enjoy the opportunities to assess their own work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The major reason why they are no better is that the new initiatives have not had time to improve standards. The acting headteacher has made an excellent start by producing some first-rate plans to improve the school. Some of these, such as the new behaviour management policy, are already having an effect. The school's selfevaluation is accurate, based on a very good range of evidence, and is underpinning school improvement. In his short time in charge, the acting headteacher has gained the support and respect of staff, parents and children in his drive to take the school forward. The support of other managers has been crucial in the rapid improvements being made. The acting deputy headteacher is largely responsible for the good progress made by children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Other managers are new in post and have already produced clear initial plans. Governance is satisfactory. Although governors are very supportive of the school and provide good levels of expertise, they are not yet monitoring what is going on in the school closely enough. Parents are consulted regularly and are very positive about the school, saying such things as, 'The best decision I have made is to send my child

here,' and 'There is a real sense of community and caring.' Bearing in mind the sense of purpose in the school, shared by all staff, governors, parents and children, and the many positive steps taken so far, the school is very well placed to continue to improve.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1	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	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

Dear Children, Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school this week. We really enjoyed meeting you and were delighted to hear you speak so enthusiastically about your school. We were particularly pleased that you told us how much your school is improving. Your school does a number of things well. These are some examples.

- You are being prepared exceptionally well for your future life, for example, with the project where you ran small businesses.
- You work hard, behave well, get on really well with each other and the adults in school and you thoroughly enjoy school.
- Those of you who find work difficult or have disabilities are supported very well and make good progress.
- You are being encouraged well to adopt a healthy lifestyle and to stay safe.
- You are looked after very well by all the adults in the school.
- Your acting headteacher has very quickly decided what needs to be done to improve the school. There are a few things we think the school could do better. Your teachers are already working on these.
- Lessons are often good, but are better in some classes than others. Where they are less good, you are not always given sufficiently difficult work.
- Those of you who join the school in Key Stage 2 do not always make enough progress from the time that you join.
- Some teachers have taken on new responsibilities and they have not yet had time to check on things to make sure your work is improving.

Yours sincerely, John D. Eadie  
(Lead inspector)