

Ashbrook Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112688
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number	289374
Inspection dates	20–21 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Jane Melbourne HMI

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	118
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Margaret Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Megan Wiltshire
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2002
School address	Victoria Avenue Borrowash Derby DE72 3HF
Telephone number	01332 662695
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Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves the south Derbyshire village of Borrowash, about five miles east of Derby city. It shares the site with a junior school. Pupils, who are mainly from White British backgrounds, enter the school with broadly average attainment. A very small minority of the pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. No pupils are learning English as an additional language. There is currently an above average number of pupils eligible for free school meals. The school has recently received the Healthy Schools Award and the ECO Schools Bronze Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Ashbrook Infant and Nursery School is a good school with committed staff and governors, so there is no risk of complacency. The team works hard to improve the whole school and the standards pupils achieve. Staff also ensure that in areas that are already good, standards remain above the national average, as they mainly have done over the past five years. The pastoral care and support afforded to pupils is good and pupils make good progress in their personal development. Attendance has improved this year, but it remains satisfactory.

The school ensures that 'Every Child Matters' and works effectively with a range of associated professionals to achieve this. Pupils make good or better progress throughout the Foundation Stage so that, by the end of the Reception year, many pupils are above local and national expectations. Most pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2. The monitoring of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) is very effective. Through carefully planned individual programmes of intervention and support, these pupils also make good progress. The expectations for all pupils are high.

Teaching is good across all year groups. Children are clear about what they are going to learn and are motivated towards class targets in all subject areas. They know what is expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics. Some lower attaining pupils are still struggling to write confidently. The school recognises who these pupils are and again puts in place good support and interventions. There is a successful whole school drive on improving writing which is monitored for its impact, particularly with reticent boys. The teaching of music has suffered this year from a lack of continuity, therefore making it less certain if pupils have made adequate progress in this area or if those with musical talents have been sufficiently nurtured.

The curriculum and other activities are good overall and meet the needs and interests of all pupils. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection. Academic guidance given to pupils is consistent across the whole school. Pupils understand the scheme of marking and know what to do next. Pupils are becoming surer of their personal and group targets and what they need to do to improve. The school has put effective strategies in place to help with this.

The leadership and management of the school are good, as is senior management team's capacity to improve the school further. The team is setting clear direction which is linked closely to the school's improvement plan. New roles in coordinating particular areas of the curriculum are developing well and the school is now seeing the impact of this, particularly in literacy and ICT. Teaching and learning are not yet monitored sufficiently regularly by the whole team across all subject areas. Neither does monitoring provide enough evidence for whole school evaluation and for links to be made against the assessment of achievement and standards, which is now rigorous. The deputy headteacher has been very effective in maintaining a strong supportive staff team in times of the long serving headteacher's extended periods of absence. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further develop the roles of all subject leaders to ensure that they take active responsibility for achievement and standards in all their own subject areas across the school.
- Improve the rigour and regularity of the monitoring of pupils' learning to involve coordinators and governors. Use information gathered to inform whole school improvement.

- Improve standards of writing, particularly for the lower attaining pupils.
- Improve the continuity of teaching and learning in music so that the progress of all pupils in this area can be monitored more accurately and to ensure that those pupils with musical skills and talents are effectively nurtured.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The inspector agrees with the school's own view, and that of the local authority, that standards at this school are now good, as they have been in the past. In the end of year tests in 2006, standards were broadly average, which was a dip from the above average picture in 2005. The school has worked really hard to ensure that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, do as well as they can and that all make good progress in all areas. From broadly average starting points, pupils make good or better progress. By the end of the Reception year, attainment is above national expectations. Pupils continue to make good progress throughout Years 1 and 2. Teacher assessment, work scrutiny, and accurate data provide evidence of this. Pupils are on course to meet or exceed their challenging targets; achievement for all groups of pupils is good overall. For many pupils, their progress in writing has improved with the whole school focus on this issue. The school recognises that lower attaining pupils are still not making enough progress in this area and has already planned to help them succeed in their writing skills. More emphasis on the teaching of phonics across the school has improved standards of reading this year compared to previous years.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils know how to keep healthy and conduct themselves safely and sensibly throughout the school. There are high expectations for behaviour and effective methods for managing this. Behaviour is therefore good across all age groups. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance has improved and is now in line with national averages. Some parents do still choose to take holidays in term time.

Pupils make a positive contribution to their school, local and worldwide communities. They respond to packing away in a mature manner and are willing helpers in every respect, frequently supporting others who they perceive require assistance. Links with the community are strong and a successful parent and toddler group runs in the community room. This is paving the way to become part of a children's centre in the near future. The children work hard to raise funds for families in other parts of the world who are less fortunate than themselves. They are particularly proud of their fundraising towards buying a herd of goats! The introduction of a School Council, the continuing work of the ECO project, and the planning of the school environment and curriculum, ensure that pupils develop well the necessary skills to promote their future economic wellbeing.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching throughout the school is good. Enthusiastic staff have consistently adopted good practice in every classroom in terms of the way lessons are structured and by ongoing assessment

of pupils' learning. It is expected that pupils will always be clear about their teachers' learning intentions and what their targets are for that lesson. There is always time to review what has been learnt and to check on pupils' understanding, so that staff know whether to revisit an aspect of learning or move on. The impact of the emphasis on speaking and listening, particularly at the lower end of the school, is that pupils are becoming confident conversationalists and are able to successfully express their needs and ideas. The whole school drive on developing writing skills across the school has also been successful, particularly for reticent boys. In the Foundation Stage, pupils show a keenness to write for a purpose and further up the school there are now lovely examples of extended writing emerging. The school is not complacent and is keen to ensure that lower attaining pupils also succeed in developing their writing skills. There are already measures in place to address this. The good personal development of the pupils and clear expectations ensure staff can get down to teaching quickly. Stimulating classrooms with aids to learning clearly displayed and good quality resources ensure that children mostly learn in active and practical ways. In all lessons the pace is good and all pupils remain interested because work is well adapted to their needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides good opportunities for learning and helps pupils' academic and personal development to flourish. The school has tried to engage boys' interests and developed some cross curricular activities which have greater appeal to them. The provision for those who have learning difficulties and disabilities is good and the curriculum is adapted effectively to meet their particular needs both inside and outside the classroom. Good provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT equips the children well for their next steps in learning, including the move to junior school. Information and communication technology is now good across the school, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities enhance the curriculum well, including some opportunities for pupils to work more closely with parents. The range of after school and lunchtime clubs is well attended and appreciated by pupils. Good use is made of visiting specialists in curriculum areas such as physical education and dance. However, the school has not been able to ensure total continuity of music teaching across this academic year.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The level of care, guidance and support pupils receive is at least good. Pupils have a developing understanding of their learning through their class and personal targets, which are regularly reviewed. These are now used consistently across the school. Work is now marked consistently in a straight forward and effective manner which is clear and understood by pupils. Good systems of monitoring pupils' progress enable staff to quickly identify those pupils requiring additional support. The school makes full use of the Magic Room as a learning resource, from which all pupils benefit. Arrangements for safeguarding children and minimising risk are in place and meet current requirements. The school works closely with outside agencies to ensure the needs of vulnerable pupils or pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are met. The school has a close and successful partnership with parents and offers many opportunities for their involvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Within the team of staff and governors, there is a determination to continually improve standards at this school. The learning environment has improved across the school, including the introduction of a multi-sensory room and a newly refurbished garden area, run as a project with older volunteers from the community. The school provision has also been improved to provide breakfast, after-school and holiday clubs on site. Academic standards have mainly been consistent, although they did suffer a dip in 2006 end of year tests. Standards this year are now improving again and evidence points to good levels of achievement and progress. The school evaluates its strengths and weaknesses accurately, although is not always able to provide sufficient evidence, due to the lack of regular monitoring in some subject areas. However, the school has prioritised well in order to bring about change and the early impact of this is evident. A favourable partnership with parents, the use of resources and effective pupil tracking data ensure that children's needs are quickly identified and interventions put into place when necessary, ensuring equality of opportunity. The school identified that it needed planned programmes for those pupils who were less able and strategies have been established to take account of their needs. The challenge for the more able is now effectively covered by teachers carefully planning and skilfully adapting work for the full range of pupils. Expectations are always high.

The organisation of management roles is working effectively and staff are motivated by new challenges and responsibilities. The school recognises that the next stage is to monitor this more rigorously, involving co-ordinators and governors. Currently governors are not directly involved in monitoring teaching and learning but they understand their responsibilities well and effectively hold the school to account.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

22 March 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Ashbrook Infant and Nursery School, Victoria Avenue, Borrowash, Derby DE72 3HF

Thank you for being happy to talk to me when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed looking at your work and seeing all the activities that you do. I am really pleased that you know what to achieve and that your teachers keep marking your work so you know how to get better.

Your teachers and helpers want you all to do well. They are helping you to succeed as speakers and listeners and you are all trying hard with your writing. I want your teachers to keep helping those of you that find this difficult. You do good work and are on target to do well in your tests. The school checks your progress carefully and knows who needs a little bit more help. I want your teachers to help those of you who enjoy music to also make good progress in this area.

I was pleased to see your good behaviour and you being friendly to each other. You are kind and share things well, especially in the playground. I enjoyed seeing your new garden area and I think the crocodile is going to be fabulous when it's finished. I am sure those minibeasts will love it too! I can understand why you all like the Magic Room - it seems fun. You are all doing very well at using the computers.

It is good that you find your lessons interesting and that you like your teachers. I think that the teachers and governors should keep checking that the lessons are always good and that the school keeps getting better.

I am pleased that you want to come to school every day although it is a shame some of you go on holiday during school times. For those of you that bring a packed lunch to school, keep up the good work with the healthy contents! It really does help you to concentrate in class.

I wish you all success in all you do.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Melbourne

Her Majesty's Inspector