

# Asfordby Hill Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119904
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	291563
<b>Inspection date</b>	3 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Helen Barter

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	110
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Karen Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jo Kitchen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 June 2005
<b>School address</b>	Melton Road Asfordby Hill Melton Mowbray LE14 3RB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01664 812244
<b>Fax number</b>	01664 813840

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school serves the area in and around the small community of Asfordby Hill. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is lower than is found in most other schools. Children start school in the Foundation Stage with skills and abilities which are broadly average, although a number have language and literacy skills which are below the levels expected for their age.

The school was subject to special measures from October 2003 to June 2005. Having been the deputy and acting headteacher during this period, the headteacher was appointed permanently in May 2005.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Asfordby Hill Primary School provides its pupils with a good education. It has come on in leaps and bounds since being removed from special measures and is well placed to continue making further improvement. Parents greatly appreciate the hard work of all staff in bringing this about, typically saying, 'It's a lovely little school, it's well run and the children are well behaved.'

The school is, indeed, well led and managed. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the staff have become a strong and united team who now have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in their academic standards and personal lives. The results of this can be seen in pupils' huge enjoyment of school, their above-average attendance, good achievement and standards which are rising.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage and most meet their early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. A few, especially boys and those born in the summer, continue to need help with their reading and writing skills. In class, children experience a good range of activities which promote all areas of their learning. However, the outdoor environment provides only limited opportunities for children to use their physical skills and explore and learn for themselves.

Good progress continues in Years 1 to 6. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen steadily from a low point in 2003 to be currently above average in English, mathematics and science. Under-achievement amongst more-able pupils has been well and truly eradicated, with a far greater number of pupils reaching the higher levels in all three subjects than is seen nationally. Pupils with learning difficulties also achieve well because they are well supported in lessons. The rise in standards has been brought about by the implementation of a good system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. Through this, the school has recognised that, at the moment, some less able pupils, while making satisfactory progress, do not do quite as well as other pupils.

Good quality teaching in all classes and a good curriculum which inspires pupils' interest in learning have a significant impact on raising pupils' achievement. The school environment is bright and stimulating and pupils say how much it has improved over the last few years. They are very proud of their art work around the school, which is of a high standard. Information and communication technology (ICT) is a favourite subject amongst many pupils and their skills are developing well as a result. Pupils are keen on sport and know that this helps them to be healthy.

Good quality care, guidance and support are significant factors in pupils' good personal development and well-being. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, describing it as 'brilliant', 'delightful' and 'a better place to come.' They are developing into sensible and responsible young people who make a good contribution to their school community and have a lot to offer in their future lives. The supportive and inclusive atmosphere is seen in pupils' happy faces, good behaviour and developing confidence as they grow up into young people who are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Asfordby Hill Primary School has been on a difficult journey but it can now celebrate its successes and move on to even greater things.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Make effective use of information about the learning of the less able pupils to ensure that their needs are met and their progress accelerates.

- Improve the outdoor environment for children in the Foundation Stage so that they have greater opportunities to develop their physical and independent learning skills.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, although some, particularly boys, still struggle with their communication skills. Good progress in Years 1 and 2 helps pupils to reach standards which are broadly average and improving. This good progress continues in Years 3 to 6. Standards are above average at the end of Year 6 and have improved significantly through good quality teaching and work which is well matched to most pupils' needs. This has helped pupils, particularly the more able, to exceed the challenging targets set for them. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well but for some less able pupils, achievement is only satisfactory.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' good personal development is testimony to the caring school atmosphere which values them all individually. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and know how to behave well. They say that any bullying 'doesn't last long because we're just one big family.' Pupils have trusting and respectful relationships with adults. Their self-esteem is high and they are very proud of their school. Pupils' cultural development through art and music is good, although their multi-cultural awareness is not quite as strong. They know that their school community does not fully reflect British society and enjoy learning about different cultures through religious education and activities such as making Indian sweets. Pupils know that eating well and exercising regularly are important factors in leading safe and healthy lifestyles. They are good members of their school and local community, assisting with tasks in school and helping others through fundraising. The school council actively seek other pupils' views so that they can help to improve the school. Pupils love Asfordby Hill because they feel well known and cared for in the small-school environment. Others nodded when one pupil said thoughtfully, 'You see, it's quality not quantity that counts.'

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is consistently good. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They plan a good range of activities which succeed in engaging pupils' interest and develop their skills well. Pupils make good progress because the pace and challenge of teaching are good, pupils' learning is regularly checked in whole-class reviews, and teaching assistants offer good support. Teachers use ICT well to add interest and variety to activities. They make good use of assessment information to plan work which challenges pupils to do better and supports those who have learning difficulties. They are aware of the need to more closely analyse the learning of the less able pupils to accelerate their progress. Pupils are motivated learners who thoroughly enjoy opportunities to work together, such as acting as a science 'expert' when explaining the life cycle of a frog to others. Pupils recognise they are learning well now. As one who is wiser than his years said, 'I think the school has got better because of teaching ability.'

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Teachers carefully plan activities that match the needs of the different year groups in the mixed-age classes and help pupils build on the skills already learned. Good attention is given to ensuring that pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are systematically developed through themed work. Pupils' life skills are well promoted through opportunities for teamwork and problem solving. Visits to the reservoir during a 'Water' topic and visitors like an actor playing a Roman soldier bring learning to life and support classwork well. The school provides a good range of extra activities, including sport and music, such as the recorder club and guitar lessons. The new 'freeflow' system for children in the Foundation Stage gives them greater independence in learning as they choose from a wider range of activities between the two classrooms. While outdoor learning is planned each day, the lack of easy access to a stimulating outdoor environment limits some aspects of children's physical development and their capacity to learn independently.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils have excellent attitudes and achieve well because they feel safe and well cared for. Pupils say there is always someone to whom they can turn for help. Arrangements for safeguarding children and for health and safety are secure and well known by staff. Parents believe their children are happy in school and are well supported by adults. The Early Bird club is an example of a school which strives to support pupils' needs and is active in helping them to get a good, punctual start to the day. Much work has been done to improve the way in which pupils are helped to understand how well they are learning. They really value the help they receive, saying, 'Now teachers understand you a lot more and help you to improve.' Pupils are given regular oral feedback on how they are doing and the next steps to take, although teachers sometimes miss opportunities to give them more detailed written guidance on points for improvement. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported in lessons and achieve well, although targets in their individual education plans are not always precise enough to accelerate their learning further.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides a highly effective and clear educational direction for school improvement and is very well supported by her dedicated and hard-working staff. All staff have worked with determination to improve the quality of education even further since coming out of special measures. The excellent vision of all staff to make Asfordby Hill a school to be proud of is everywhere to see – colourful displays of pupils' work, happy and motivated pupils and adults and ever-improving standards in everything the school does. Rigorous systems for tracking each pupil's progress have been the most significant factor in moving the school forward. As leaders and managers, teachers accurately evaluate where the school needs to improve next and strive to iron out any differences in pupils' achievement, such as currently for some lower attainers. Priorities for improving standards in the school development plan are sharply focused and the effectiveness of action taken is rigorously monitored by the headteacher. Governance is good. Much has been learned through the school's improvement and governors

have become better informed about what works well and what needs to be done next. Partnerships with parents, the church and other agencies are good and support pupils' learning and the school's development well.





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

4 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Asfordby Hill Primary School, Melton Mowbray, LE14 3RB

Thank you for making the inspectors welcome when we came to visit your school recently. We had a good day with you all because you were so helpful and friendly. You told us that you go to a good school, and we agree with you! We thought that you would like to know what we found out.

- These are the really good things.
- You are well behaved, polite and responsible young people and are a credit to yourselves, your families and your school.
- You all do well, from the time you start to when you leave at the end of Year 6.
- We found that those of you in Year 6 were working at levels which were better than most other pupils of your age. Since then, your headteacher has told me that you have done really well in your tests and even more got a Level 5 than the school expected. That's brilliant! Well done!
- You all learn well because your teachers make sure that you learn the right things and get to practise your literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in everything you do.
- The school makes sure you learn lots of interesting things outside lessons. It was good to see so many of you learning the guitar. Keep up the practice!
- The school cares very much about you. We were pleased to hear that you feel safe in school and adults will always listen to you if you have a worry.
- Your headteacher and all the other adults have worked very hard to make your school a good place in which to learn.
- These are the things which will make your school even better.
- Some children who find learning a bit more difficult don't do quite as well as others at the moment, so we have asked your school to find ways to help them.
- It isn't easy for Foundation Stage children to get outside on their own and learn and explore in a really interesting way, so we have asked the school to have a good look at how that can be improved. Perhaps you can discuss this in your excellent school council meetings.

With very best wishes for the future,

Yours sincerely

Helen Barter Lead Inspector