

Ashleigh Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120922
Local Authority	NORFOLK LA
Inspection number	291913
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Cheryl Thompson

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	
School	233
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Simon Mitchell
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Sweet
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2002
School address	Sheffield Road Wymondham NR18 0HL
Telephone number	01953602410
Fax number	01953607510

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized infant school serving its locality on the edge of Wymondham. Almost all pupils are White British with very small numbers of minority ethnic pupils and those who are at the very early stages of learning English. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, there is a much higher than usual number of pupils who have significant learning difficulties and/or disabilities. On entry to school, children's attainment is very wide ranging but, on balance, typical for the age group.

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 and a happy community where relationships are excellent. The school is correct in its judgement that it provides a good education and good value for money. The key to the school's success is the headteacher's clear vision and determined leadership for high standards and making sure 'every family matters'. The success of this leadership can be seen in the above average standards pupils attain and parents' very supportive comments such as, 'My child has thrived and developed in the care of Ashleigh school,' and, 'The school is a fun and friendly place to be'. The school provides good care, guidance and support. Pupils and their families are known well so that any difficulties are noted quickly and dealt with. Pupils say they feel safe in school and are very happy with all it provides. They take pride in being an 'Ashleigh boy or girl' and detail their favourite aspects as 'our teachers' and 'we're never bored'.

From their start in Nursery, the great majority of pupils achieve well as they move through the school, not only in learning and in using numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology skills but also in their personal development. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average and pupils' personal development is good. They are well prepared for their future education. Pupils love coming to school and thoroughly enjoy all that it has to offer and demonstrate this with their good behaviour and attendance. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, fit and healthy and they take part enthusiastically in the 'huff and puff' sessions.

Teaching is good and underpinned by excellent relationships. Pupils know their efforts are valued, which encourages their positive attitudes to learning. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and developing well. There are a good range of clubs and the links between subjects in Year 1 provide interest and relevant opportunities to develop good literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers plan effectively in year group teams but are not always planning enough challenge for more able pupils in Year 2.

Leadership, management and governance are good with a strong commitment to continue to develop the very good extended school provision. The school has good systems in place to check on its work although it is not yet making the best use of all the information it gains from data to set targets for improvement. The capacity for further improvement is good.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage provides a good start to children's education. Children are keen to learn because the curriculum is well planned and teaching is good. A key strength is the emphasis on involving parents in their child's education and the information provided to help them do this. Through parental comments such as, 'A lovely school, caring adults and good teaching,' and, 'My child cannot wait to get up to go to school,' it is clear that parents are pleased with the provision and have great confidence in the school. Children make particularly good progress in their personal development in the Nursery and learn to consider each other and take responsibility for the equipment they use. The carefully organised transition from Nursery to Reception means that children continue their good progress especially in developing calculation skills and learning letter sounds to help them read and write. These skills give them a good start in Year 1. Though very new to the post, the Foundation Stage leader provides good

leadership for a strong team and has a good understanding of the strengths and areas to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further by ensuring more able pupils are sufficiently challenged in lessons.
- Make more efficient use of all the data collected about the school to set easily measured targets in school development planning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is very wide ranging but generally at a level typical for their age. As children move through the school they make good progress, not only academically but in their personal development. A strength is the good progress made in developing basic literacy and numeracy skills which pupils use profitably in Years 1 and 2 in their creative writing and problem solving activities. Pupils with high levels of difficulties and/or disabilities thrive in the school's good care and support and make good progress. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English also make good progress because of the proficient help they receive and the friendliness of the school community.

Standards are above average and have remained so since the last inspection in spite of demographic changes which have led to changes in pupils' attainment on entry. The school is usually more successful than most in ensuring a higher than average proportion of pupils reach the expected level for seven-year olds. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level is similar to average and the school has correctly identified that it must ensure a few of its more able pupils do even better.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Excellent relationships mean pupils are confident and have positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is good overall. When teaching is outstanding, so is behaviour; similarly, when teaching lacks sufficient pace, pupils tend to become restless. Pupils feel that there is no bullying in the school and are very confident that should they have any worries, any adult would deal with their concerns. Pupils have a good understanding of a healthy diet and how to keep themselves fit by vigorous exercise. The good range of visits and visitors contributes well to their understanding of how to keep themselves safe and how to prevent accidents.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Excellent relationships underpin teachers' good class management. Lessons move along at a suitable pace with good use made of the interactive white boards to enliven lessons and involve pupils in learning. Teachers of the same year group plan together effectively to ensure that pupils have the same work. Assessment is good and used to help set individual pupils specific targets for improvement. However, there is insufficient detail in planning to make sure that a few more able pupils in Year 2 are always sufficiently

challenged. Proficient teaching assistants are deployed effectively and have a positive impact on the good personal and academic progress made by pupils with high levels of need.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and developing well. The school is reorganising its curriculum to make better links between subjects. The success of the venture is obvious in the Foundation Stage and Year 1, where teachers have developed interesting topics and themes and pupils are very enthusiastic about learning. A start has been made in Year 2 in continuing the good development but there is still some way to go.

Curriculum provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very effective. The wide range of extra-curricular activities and school clubs are well attended, much enjoyed by the pupils and make a good, and significant, contribution to pupils' enjoyment and achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. Staff know individual pupils very well and any sign of unhappiness or learning difficulty is noted quickly and productive action taken. The school has good links with specialist services. Individual education plans are carefully planned to ensure pupils make good progress. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet the latest government requirements and procedures for child protection are very thorough. A significant strength of the school is the good links with parents. Home visits before children start in the Nursery are valued by parents and ensure a smooth start to school. Regular and productive links with the junior school help towards a good transition to the next stage of education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good with a strong commitment from all staff and governors to further improvement. The senior management team and governors share the headteacher's clear vision for a school with high standards and where every family matters. Governors have developed their role well since the last inspection and, together with the senior management team, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas to improve. Through a good range of assessments, observation of teaching and looking at pupils' work, the team collects a comprehensive range of data which is used to set challenging targets for raising standards. However, this data is not being used as efficiently as it might in terms of providing easily measured targets within the school development plan so that all concerned with the school have a clear picture of expected improvements. The school has a strong and successful commitment to inclusion. The special educational needs coordinator provides good leadership for a team of teaching assistants and supports all staff very efficiently with her good management systems.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	3
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

7 November 2007

Dear Children,

Inspection of Ashleigh Infant and Nursery School, Wymondham, NR18 0HL

Thank you so much for welcoming us to your school. Our special thanks to those of you who kindly gave up some of your dinnertime playtime to talk to us. We found what you had to say very interesting and it helped us to learn what you like about school. In return, I now want to share with you what we thought about your school.

We think Ashleigh is a good school. You told us that you love coming to school and one of the best things is your teachers. We agree with you and noticed how well everyone looks after you and cares about you. The good teaching helps you to make good progress and reach above average standards which will help you when you move to your next school. Your headteacher is doing a good job, making your school a happy and busy place to be. She has good help from subject coordinators and the governors. We have asked them to do two things to make your school even better.

To make sure that you always have work to make you think hard and to use the information from the tests you do to set targets when they are planning for the future.

Ashleigh is a good school, not only because of what the adults bring to it but also because of your contributions. It is very clearly a happy and friendly place to be and you all get on very well together. You are keen to learn and behave well in lessons and outside on your lovely field.

We hope you continue to enjoy your school life at Ashleigh.

All good wishes,

Cheryl Thompson

Lead inspector