

Ashington C of E First School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 125971 |
| Local Authority | West Sussex |
| Inspection number | 293419 |
| Inspection dates | 2 May 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Linda Kelsey HMI |

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

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| Type of school | First |
| School category | Voluntary Controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4-10 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | 172 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Dawn Watson-Jones |
| Headteacher | Mr M Garratt |
| Date of previous school inspection | 10-12 June 2002 |
| School address | Foster Lane, Ashington Pulborough West Sussex RH20 3PG |
| Telephone number | 01903 892365 |
| Fax number | 01903 892584 |

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| Age group | 4-10 |
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector evaluated overall effectiveness and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, personal development and well-being, the quality of provision and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from: observations of teaching, reviewing documentation, analysing questionnaires returned from parents, holding discussions with senior staff and governors and talking to pupils at the school.

Description of the school

The school serves a rural commuter village south of Horsham. It has doubled in size in the last eight years and is now housed in a new building. A new headteacher was appointed three years ago after the last inspection and new members of staff have been appointed to the school including two newly-qualified teachers this year. The numbers of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is low, as is the number who receive free school meals. At the time of the last inspection, the school had weaknesses in foundation subjects, subject leadership and assessment practices.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is an effective school where leadership and management are outstanding and the right priorities have been identified for further improvement. The school has rightly addressed the key priorities for development in its very good self-evaluation.

Pupils achieve well. Children enter the school with above average standards and, because of the outstanding provision and teaching in the Foundation Stage, make particularly good progress in social development and basic skills. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards are high and by the time they leave in Year 5, they are very well prepared, both personally and academically, for the next school. Pupils are very confident, articulate, and able to voice their views, having experienced an exciting and vibrant curriculum which includes music and French. The pupils' rate of progress has greatly improved, particularly during the last two years, and many pupils are now working well above the levels expected of them.

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They have a very good understanding of their own feelings and those of others, so much so that the school is a truly harmonious and happy environment. This is supported by the strong Christian ethos around the school. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their time in class and outside. Serving on the school council is taken seriously and pupils clearly enjoy this privilege and its contribution to the school's management. Pupils really enjoy assemblies, times of worship, lessons and the range of subjects that they study. Pupils show great appreciation of what they have at the school, whilst still caring for the needs of others less fortunate in other countries. Pupils know very well how to keep safe and healthy but do not always act on their knowledge to eat the healthiest food at lunch time.

Teaching is good overall and there are elements of excellent practice at the top end of the school and in the Foundation Stage. All teachers monitor pupils' progress well and generally use this information to ensure that lessons are planned so that they meet the needs of all the children. Subject knowledge is good and teaching assistants are very well deployed. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is excellent. These pupils make very good progress through the school. Where teaching is not of this high standard, teachers have not planned sufficiently challenging tasks and at times, some pupils became bored by the activities. This happens in classes where teachers are less experienced. The school is aware of this relative weakness and has appropriately focused on developing the quality of teaching. There has been some success, although there is still some way to go.

The curriculum is outstanding. It is rich and diverse and covers many interesting and lively topics. Pupils' work displays this exciting high quality curriculum and it is celebrated around the school and in class folders. The outside areas are excellent and developed to extend and enhance the learning environment. Pupils are excited by the new wildlife area, their extensive grounds and how these will improve. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about many subjects, explaining what they had learnt in design and technology, science, art, mathematics and English. Many of them enjoy learning French, which has been introduced to the whole school this year. The

teaching of music has greatly improved and many pupils play instruments; all are members of the choir. This diverse curriculum ensures that they are very well prepared for their future lives.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Arrangements are in place to safeguard pupils and to ensure they get the right information and support. Pupils are well informed and prepared for the transition to their future schools. There are good links with parents, carers and outside agencies and the children most at risk are well supported through robust monitoring procedures overseen by the special educational needs coordinator.

Leadership and management are outstanding and are clearly focused on raising standards and achievement. Since the headteacher's appointment, there have been noticeable improvements in English, mathematics, music, French and the learning environment. These achievements are recognised by the governing body and although there is more to do to raise the profile of teaching, there is no complacency about the tasks ahead. The school has excellent resources and a new and attractive school building, and these are all well used to enhance pupils' learning. This all leads to an excellent capacity for improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- raise the quality of all the teaching and learning to the level of the very best to ensure that all pupils are consistently challenged through each year group.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 1 |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 1 |

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |

The quality of provision

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|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 1 |

Leadership and management

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|---|----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 1 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | 1 |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

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.



Wednesday, 23 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Ashington C of E First School, Ashington RH20 3PG

Thank you so much for making me feel so welcome at your school. I enjoyed meeting and talking to many of you during break and lunchtime, in lessons and when I spoke to the school council. I was greatly impressed with how well you get on with each other and how well behaved you all are.

You won't be surprised to know, because you told me as well, that I think you have a good school. You have an outstanding headteacher and many talented teachers and helpers in your school. Your lessons are exciting and interesting and many of you spoke about how much you enjoy school and don't want to leave. I can understand that, as you have such a lovely environment in which to work. You are also cared for really well but also you are very mindful of those less fortunate than yourselves - this is commendable.

I have asked your headteacher and staff to make sure that every class gets the same level of high quality teaching, and the school knows it has to help the teachers who are new to the school. You can help here by making sure you always listen carefully in class and continue to work hard. In addition, perhaps some of you might like to think about what is in your lunch box, because you don't always choose the healthiest foods even though I know you can!

I wish you all the best for the future.

Linda Kelsey
HMI