

# Ashover Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112501
<b>Local Authority</b>	DERBYSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	310904
<b>Inspection date</b>	8 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Geof Timms

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	209
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paul Mason
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Cliff Hadley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 September 2004
<b>School address</b>	Narrowleys Lane Ashover Derbyshire S45 0AU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01246 590207
<b>Fax number</b>	01246 591454

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The Inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: what the school is doing to increase the number of pupils reaching higher levels in mathematics and science, and to raise the levels of boys' achievement; and how the staff check the performance of the school to support further improvement. In addition, the inspector investigated the reasons for the good results achieved by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Evidence was collected from observing lessons and the quality of work produced, discussions with pupils and teachers and from data that the school uses to inform itself of its own practice. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, and, although the school had underestimated how good some aspects were, the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

Ashover Primary School is of broadly average size. It is over-subscribed and takes pupils from a wide area, to the south of Chesterfield. Very few pupils are entitled to free school meals. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and no pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Attainment on entry to the reception class varies but overall is broadly in line with that expected. The school has an on-site private Nursery and provides after-school care. Most pupils attend the Nursery before starting at the school.

The school has specialist status for information and communication technology (ICT) which enables it to provide support and advice to other schools. In addition, the school has the Basic Skills Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Ashover Primary is an outstanding school. It provides pupils with an excellent start to their education and prepares them very well for secondary school and their future lives. It is a very caring school that challenges pupils well through detailed and effective target-setting, and the close monitoring of progress. This ensures that all pupils make excellent progress and achieve high standards. The school provides excellent value for money. Parents are very happy with the school. One wrote 'I feel my child is encouraged as an individual and is thriving in the learning environment'.

Whilst broadly average overall, children enter school with wide variations in the levels at which they are working. They often have weaknesses in their early writing skills, as well as strengths in their creative and number skills. They make good progress during the Reception year and most are starting to work at levels above those expected by the time they start Year 1. Through the rest of the school, pupils make outstanding progress and year-on-year achieve well above average standards. A major strength in the school is the progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who often achieve levels well above those typically achieved by such pupils nationally. This picture of outstanding achievement is the result of good quality teaching and learning, and excellent leadership and management. By the time pupils leave the school, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science, and in information and communication technology (ICT). The careful monitoring of progress means the school quickly recognises and addresses any underachievement, as happened recently with boys' writing, and in the lack of higher level grades in science and mathematics.

Pupils enjoy school greatly and this is evident in their lessons, their play and in talking to them. It is also apparent in the excellent attendance figures, which are consistently well above average. The very positive ethos of the school is supported by pupils' comments, such as, 'we all get on together'. When pupils are given responsibilities, they take them seriously. The school council is developing into a very articulate and effective body. It is having a positive impact on improving life at the school, and in leading money-raising events for a wide range of local and international charities. Pupils have an excellent awareness of how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Behaviour is excellent and pupils report that there is no bullying. All of this leads to excellent personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The outstanding teaching and learning are the result of detailed planning, good levels of resources, excellent teamwork between staff and the creation of very effective relationships between teachers and pupils. Lessons are characterised by good pace and excellent question and answer sessions, in which all pupils take a full part. The school has developed a very effective team of teaching assistants who provide good quality support, especially for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and sometimes for the higher attaining pupils. The school has created an excellent curriculum that is interesting and effective, where outstanding links are made between subjects such as, for example, in a history lesson on Ancient Greeks in which pupils used English and ICT when researching information. The curriculum is enriched by an excellent range of clubs, visits and visitors to the school.

The school provides pupils with outstanding care, support and guidance. This is evident in the challenging and supportive ethos found throughout the school. All statutory requirements regarding pupils' welfare are met and appropriate risk assessments, child protection and first aid arrangements are in place. The school checks thoroughly all adults who have contact with

pupils to ensure their suitability. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well cared for and supported to ensure their excellent progress. The school is at an early stage of providing consistent support for the gifted and talented pupils but this is developing well. These pupils clearly enjoy opportunities to work together outside their day-to-day work. The major strength in this aspect of the school's work is the detailed assessment of pupils' progress. This includes excellent opportunities for pupils to assess their own progress and to develop their assessment skills by sharing their constructive thoughts on each other's work. The school has recently developed excellent monitoring systems and teachers are now able to see clearly, on a regular basis, how much progress pupils are making, especially in English and mathematics.

Leadership and management are outstanding and are the driving force behind the very effective provision and excellent achievement of pupils. The governing body is extremely knowledgeable and closely involved in the work of the school. Governors provide the school with a good level of challenge as well as support, and are very effective as 'critical friends'. They are especially successful in leading and seeing through major projects, such as the creation of after-school care and the Nursery building. The senior management team has continued to build successfully on the strengths evident during the previous inspection. The headteacher provides excellent leadership that is focused on maintaining and further improving high standards in basic skills and the core subjects. The senior staff work very well together, complementing each others' strengths, and provide excellent role models. The subject leadership is very effective. The school has detailed monitoring and evaluation systems that have a positive impact on classroom practice and the standards achieved. There are outstanding links with outside agencies through which the school further extends the expertise and experience of staff. The school knows itself well, although is overly modest when evaluating aspects of its work. Even so, this leads to the appropriate priorities for future development. Improvements made since the previous inspection show that, although currently successful, the school is not complacent and has an excellent capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has recently started to update Foundation Stage provision, the curriculum planning and delivery to bring it more in line with national guidelines. This work is appropriate in order to make sure that the most recent expectations for the early years are met. Although these changes are at an early stage, improvements are already evident and the provision is now good. The curriculum currently provided is satisfactory but not always sufficiently appropriate given the ages of the children. Even so, most children make good progress. The governing body has been very active in funding and securing the Nursery on the school site. However, the links between Nursery and the Reception class are not yet strong enough to impact sufficiently on provision and children's progress. The Reception class is well resourced and the good teaching is appropriately focused on developing good learning skills and addressing the children's weaknesses when they start school.

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

- Develop the Foundation Stage provision by building closer links with the nursery and by ensuring the classroom experiences are better matched to the needs of children of this age.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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

<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>	1
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

9 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Ashover Primary School, Ashover, Derbyshire, S45 0AU

I am writing to thank you for making me welcome when I visited you recently and for telling me about your school. I really enjoyed meeting you and sharing some of your lessons and work. It helped me to see how hard you work and how well you are doing. I think you have a wonderful site for your school and excellent outdoor facilities.

I think you are very lucky to be at Ashover School because it is an outstanding school. You all make excellent progress and learn many new things. You achieve excellent standards especially in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The reason your school is so good is that the teachers work very hard to give you interesting lessons and activities. They also help you to develop very good skills such as those you use when assessing each other's work. This sort of activity helps you grow and develop as people, as well as helping you learn basic writing, reading and number skills.

The school is excellently led by Mr Hadley. The governing body is very good at using money in the best way so you have enough resources and many other adults as well as teachers to help you learn. You help the teachers as well by your excellent behaviour. This means they can give you more interesting things to do. I think the main thing the school needs to do next is to keep improving the links between the Nursery and Reception classes, and make sure the youngest children are given the right sort of things to do to help them learn.

Thank you once again for your help and good luck with Joseph at Christmas. Enjoy your time at Ashover and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead inspector