

# Ashby Hill Top Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120051
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313491
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Arnalena Bee

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	278
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jane Whittle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Diane Mullan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 November 2004
<b>School address</b>	Beaumont Avenue Ashby-de-la-Zouch LE65 2NF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01530 415736
<b>Fax number</b>	01530 414283

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Ashby Hill Top is a large primary school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Children enter the school with attainment that is broadly average. A very low proportion are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The headteacher has been in post for two terms.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Ashby Top Hill is a good school where pupils achieve well. Pupils are polite and confident and build very good relationships with each other and the adults who help them learn. Most parents are very happy and supportive of the school. 'This is a school that encourages children to reach their full potential because staff are enthusiastic and dedicated,' is a typical comment received from parents, summing up their satisfaction of the school. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their above-average attendance. They particularly like the fact that everyone gets on well with each other. They thoroughly enjoy all the sporting activities they are offered. Older pupils talk very confidently about the importance of taking regular exercise and the positive effects of exercise on their bodies. Almost all recognise the need to eat healthily and show a good awareness of this in their diet in school. However, a very small minority of pupils' packed lunches do not show this. By the time they leave school, pupils develop a good range of skills to equip them well for the future, including the skills necessary to work as team members and by themselves. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards that are above average.

The headteacher provides strong leadership and is very effectively supported by an outstanding governing body. The governors provide the school with a high degree of challenge. They are highly professional and well organised. Their monitoring and evaluating role is very effective and has driven recent improvements, such as improving writing, in Year 6. Shortly after taking up post, the headteacher, in consultation with governors and all leaders and managers, led a full review of the school's aims, procedures and systems. As a result, everyone is fully committed to further improving opportunities for pupils. Previous monitoring systems did not identify all inconsistencies in teaching and learning and some remain. Despite this, teaching and learning are good overall. As a result, standards are above average and pupils achieve well. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to learn a musical instrument and Spanish. The outstanding range of visits and visitors enhances it further and is used well to reinforce and enrich pupils' learning. The children in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start and achieve well.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and, as they get older, are able to talk very sensibly about potential dangers that they may encounter such as smoking and drugs. They knowledgeably identify good drugs and those that are bad. Good, detailed records are kept on all pupils which show how well they are doing and whether they are on monitor to reach their targets.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Provision is good and enables children to achieve well. Very detailed information is kept on each child that shows exactly how well they are doing. Children learn effectively because teaching is good. As a result, most of them exceed the expected levels by the time they start in Year 1. The children are well cared for and supported effectively both personally and academically. Parents are very pleased with how quickly and easily their children settle into school. This is because induction procedures are outstanding. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Use monitoring and evaluation systems more effectively to identify and eradicate inconsistencies in teaching and learning, including assessment, so that pupils make consistently good progress as they move through the school.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. School information shows that a few pupils achieve very well as they move through Key Stage 2. By the time they leave school, standards are above average. The proportion of pupils who reach Level 5 is higher than average. A recent focus on writing, in Key Stage 2, has resulted in standards in writing improving in Year 6. The school reached its realistic and challenging targets in 2007. As pupils move through Years 1 and 2, they build on the good start that they receive in Reception. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been above average for the last few years, with an above-average proportion of pupils reaching Level 3. Pupils make good progress overall between starting and leaving school, but on the few occasions where teaching is satisfactory, the rate of progress slows a little. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support and this enables them to achieve well.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Almost all pupils are polite, kind and thoughtful towards each other. Behaviour is good but some older pupils say that 'sometimes it could be better'. On very rare occasions, they are right. Pupils are confident in voicing their feelings and opinions. They value the responses from staff; for example, one pupil said, 'As you get older the teachers treat you more as an adult.' Pupils are appreciative and proud of their own school community. They talk knowledgeably about passing on their concerns to their school council representatives. Pupils enthusiastically support activities that link them with their local town community and further a field when they raise money for worldwide charities. As a result, they show a very good awareness of the local community and the wider world. However, pupils show a more limited understanding when they speak about life in multi-cultural Britain.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Adults develop good relationships with the pupils and this contributes well to the good progress pupils make as they move through the school. Most classes are managed well and lessons are lively and interesting. Lessons are generally very well planned, which results in pupils enjoying their learning and working hard. Despite this, there are some inconsistencies in teaching and pupils learn better in some classes than others. These inconsistencies in teaching have not all been fully identified from systems used previously. Occasionally teachers do not clearly explain what pupils have to do and then learning slows down because they are confused with the activities they are given. At other times, teachers do not have high enough expectations about the need to listen carefully and respond promptly to instructions. Teachers keep detailed records of how well pupils are doing and this enables them to match work accurately to the needs of

all pupils. The best marking clearly reflects how well pupils are working towards the targets they have been given. However, marking is sometimes inconsistent and the school is currently focusing on improving this situation.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has recently revised its curriculum planning to ensure very good links between subjects. This makes learning more relevant and enjoyable for pupils but has not been in place long enough to impact on achievement and standards. A good programme to support personal, social and health education (PSHE) ensures pupils develop a good understanding of keeping safe, fit and healthy. In addition, there is a good range of out-of-school clubs that extends pupils' learning experiences and further develops their skills in many subject areas. The curriculum offers an outstanding range of enrichment activities that develop pupils' talents, in particular, through music, art and drama. The rich and broad curriculum is reflected well in attractive displays of pupils' work around the school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils learn and play in a caring, safe and supportive environment. They are well cared for and their parents and carers agree. Pupils say that they feel very confident in being able to approach staff with any concerns. There are clear procedures in place for keeping all pupils safe and secure. Attention to pupils' health and safety arrangements is good. Governors are regularly involved in reviewing these processes. There are also good links with specialists to ensure that pupils with specific needs are well catered for. The good support that pupils receive enables most of them to reach and sometimes exceed the challenging targets they are given. Procedures to monitor progress and systems to develop individual targets have been improved recently. These now identify, more quickly, any pupils who are having difficulty in reaching their targets. Older pupils say that targets help them improve but some younger pupils are unsure of what theirs are.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Recent action taken by the headteacher and her team, including the governors, has provided a clear sense of direction for the future. This has included a revision of the school's mission statement and identifying key objectives for the future. The full involvement of staff and governors ensures that there is a strong sense of commitment to a shared vision. In addition, there is a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Monitoring systems have been improved this year to ensure that all managers and governors are fully involved in the work of the school. Each subject co-ordinator is now involved in a cycle of development. As a result, there have been improvements in science and in writing in Key Stage 2. There is a good capacity to improve further. Some strategies, including the use of challenging targets, professional development and the sharing of good practice, have been effective. Governors perform an outstanding role in fulfilling their duties. They are extremely effective in performing their monitoring and evaluating role. All governors are highly committed, as demonstrated in the frequency and range of training they undergo.



## 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 <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

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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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	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	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

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

19 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ashby Hill Top Primary School, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, LE65 2NF

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We especially enjoyed talking to you about the exciting things you do as you learn. Most of you behave well, are kind to each other and know that if you have a problem any adult will help you. We think you go to a good school.

I am writing to let you know what we liked best about your school.

- ?
- You learn well because most teaching is good.
- ?
- Your school is well led and managed.
- ?
- The teachers plan interesting trips out and lots of visitors come in and work with you. Lots of you said you really liked it when the Life Education Bus comes to school.
- ?
- You are all well cared for during your time in school and those who look after you at home agree.
- ?
- By the time you leave school in Year 6, you reach standards that are above average.

We have asked the school to do one thing to make it even better:

- Check carefully that teaching and learning are at least good in all lessons.

Keep working hard and having fun as you learn.

Best wishes

Nina Bee Lead inspector



19 September 2007

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Ashby Hill Top Primary School, Ashby-de-la-Zouch,  
LE65 2NF**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We especially enjoyed talking to you about the exciting things you do as you learn. Most of you behave well, are kind to each other and know that if you have a problem any adult will help you. We think you go to a good school.

I am writing to let you know what we liked best about your school.

- ☺ You learn well because most teaching is good.
- ☺ Your school is well led and managed.
- ☺ The teachers plan interesting trips out and lots of visitors come in and work with you. Lots of you said you really liked it when the Life Education Bus comes to school.
- ☺ You are all well cared for during your time in school and those who look after you at home agree.
- ☺ By the time you leave school in Year 6, you reach standards that are above average.

We have asked the school to do one thing to make it even better:

- Check carefully that teaching and learning are at least good in all lessons.

Keep working hard and having fun as you learn.

Best wishes

Nina Bee  
Lead inspector