

# Ashby Fields Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131671
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	328632
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 February 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christine Millett

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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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 (total)	414
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robert Trippett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Neil Balliston
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 February 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Wimborne Place Ashby Fields Daventry NN11 0YP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01327 310068
<b>Fax number</b>	01327 310232

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 February 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Ashby Fields Primary School is a larger than average primary school situated in a residential area of Daventry. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is made available in two Reception classes. The majority of pupils are White British. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The school has received many awards such as Basic Skills Quality Mark, National Healthy Schools Award, FA Football Charter and Eco-Schools Award. Within the school premises there is a breakfast club which is managed by the governing body of the school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Ashby Fields Primary School provides a good quality of education. It is a popular and successful school where great emphasis is placed upon core values. At the heart of the school's success is outstanding leadership and management, especially that of the headteacher, who provides a very clear vision and direction for the school. The headteacher is well supported by a hardworking and dedicated staff and committed governing body. Parents are overwhelming in their praise of the school. 'I can't speak highly enough of Ashby Fields,' and 'I am proud my daughter goes to Ashby Fields,' are typical of the many positive comments from parents. The school's self-evaluation is extremely thorough and paints an accurate picture of the school. Far-reaching improvements have been made since the last inspection and the school has outstanding capacity to improve further. Community cohesion is well established, with very strong links with groups and organisations locally, nationally and internationally.

Children get off to an excellent start in their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter this stage with skills which are below national expectations and make outstanding progress. By the time pupils leave in Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. The consistently good teaching that takes place throughout the school results in pupils' good achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and make similar good progress to their peers. Provision in Year 1, however, does not always meet the needs of the lower attaining pupils.

Lessons are well planned and teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to aid learning and maintain pupils' interests. The school provides an outstanding curriculum which links different subjects together well in order to ensure learning is relevant, purposeful and enjoyable for pupils. Themed days and visits play a vital part in enriching pupils' learning.

The care, guidance and support given to all pupils are good. Procedures for the safeguarding of pupils meet current government requirements. Academic guidance in mathematics is not always as clear as that in English and next steps in learning are not always evident. Because of the dedication of all staff, every pupil is valued and pastoral care and support are often outstanding. This is a truly inclusive school, with the needs of each pupil being central to all new developments and everyone is included in all that the school does.

As a result of the emphasis placed on pupils' care and support, their personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are very happy and enjoy coming to school. They are very polite, their behaviour is excellent and they demonstrate very good attitudes to learning. All pupils have an excellent understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle and are aware of how to stay safe. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally good. Pupils work together well and make an exceptional contribution to the school and wider community. Awareness of the different beliefs, customs and traditions of our multicultural society are very well developed.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Children get off to a flying start when they arrive in Reception and make outstanding progress. They enter school with skills below those expected for their age, particularly in calculation and writing. A wide range of interesting and stimulating activities, both indoors and outdoors, ensures that a significant number of children exceed national expectations in all areas of learning

by the time they enter Year 1. Children make excellent progress because of outstanding teaching which caters exceptionally well for the needs of all children, regardless of their abilities, in a good caring and nurturing environment. Personal, social and emotional development is a very strong area and parents appreciate the care and support their children receive. 'School and staff have been sensitive to my son's needs,' commented one parent. Strong partnerships exist between the Early Years Foundation Stage and home. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding and this is reflected in the excellent quality of provision. Teachers work very well with teaching assistants to ensure that lessons effectively blend opportunities for children to learn both independently and with adult direction. Lessons often make excellent use of role play and real-life situations such as taking a train ride, in order to capture children's imaginations and so add to their enjoyment of learning. Other learning experiences build on skills in literacy and mathematics, providing a high level of challenge. Effective questioning by adults has resulted in the children questioning themselves and each other as they work and play. The recording of children's progress is very thorough and is used exceptionally well to plan future work.

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

- Manage the transition between Reception and Year 1 for all pupils so they can continue to make rapid progress.
- Ensure that marking and target setting provide pupils with a clear understanding about how to improve their work in all subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Attainment on entry to Reception is below national expectations. Children progress extremely well and the majority have reached above national average levels at the start of Year 1. Standards at the end Year 2 have fluctuated over the years. In 2008, pupils who were well below national expectations on entry to Reception made good progress to reach standards broadly in line with national averages. According to the school's tracking system, a similar picture is true of the current Year 2 pupils who are on target to maintain good levels of progress and reach the challenging targets the school has set.

Due to the outstanding quality of leadership and management, standards at the end of Year 6 have improved well in recent years, with pupils making good progress and standards being above average. Unconfirmed data for 2008 indicates that this upward trend is continuing. The school is confident that standards will continue to rise and this is borne out by recent assessment data. The school has been successful in increasing the number of pupils who reach the higher levels. The progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good because their specific needs are addressed effectively and they receive good quality support.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils develop into confident young people and say they really enjoy school. One pupil remarked after the school had been closed due to snow, 'I feel sad when I cannot come.' This positive attitude can be found throughout the school and is reflected in the much improved attendance and punctuality which are now consistently outstanding. Pupils are conscientious in their learning and keen to do extra research at home. They are sensible and mature and listen well to each other as well as adults. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils have high aspirations for their

future careers. Not surprisingly, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They learn about different faiths and cultural traditions and enjoy raising money to benefit a school in Uganda with which they have strong links. Pupils are developing a very good understanding of a healthy lifestyle. They say they feel safe in school because they know adult support is readily available. Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking responsibility, for example by manning the phone at lunchtimes or being fruit monitors. They are a credit to the school and proud of their contributions to the community. The extremely good grounding pupils receive in their social and basic skills, prepares them well for the next stages of learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are eager to learn and work hard. Teaching is good overall, with examples of outstanding features that contribute to some excellent lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and vary their teaching styles well to ensure purposeful and stimulating experiences that capture pupils' interests. The planning of lessons is thorough as work is generally well differentiated. For example, a class of higher achievers were provided with group work that had been fine-tuned to best suit their needs. Lower down the school, however, some pupils in Year 1 are not always sufficiently challenged. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by effective teaching assistants and make the same progress as other groups. Information and communication technology is well used to support learning. Relationships are excellent; consequently, behaviour in lessons is exemplary.

Pupils' work is marked regularly, though pupils do not always receive clear instruction as to how they can improve. Self-assessment and peer assessment is not used consistently throughout the school.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

A very well planned curriculum meets the needs of learners and promotes outstanding personal development. It also results in pupils making good progress in their academic work. Under the guidance of enthusiastic subject managers, a new imaginative and inspiring curriculum has been introduced. This has been successful in capturing pupils' enthusiasm for learning through a cross-curricular topic approach. An example of this is the topic around the Great Fire of London where pupils were able to learn a great deal through history and geography as well as writing for a real purpose. Pupils learnt about the dangers of fire as they watched, under the supervision of the Fire Service, model houses they had made burn. The curriculum is also enhanced by an extensive programme of visits and visitors to the school. Art is a great strength and there are many examples of excellent work on display around the school, including sculpture and other three-dimensional work. Other enrichment activities include instrument tuition, a number of clubs and sports and the chance to perform in school productions. French is taught effectively throughout the school. Pupils' motivation for this subject is enhanced by visits to France.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

The school has a very strong commitment to caring, which is reflected in comprehensive arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare. Staff know the pupils very well, every child is known by name, and relationships are extremely good. This creates a climate in which pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem. This is a happy school where pupils say they feel safe and secure because adults take care of them. The very high quality of support they receive is a key factor in pupils' outstanding personal development. Vulnerable pupils and those with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities are extremely well supported and the school works effectively with a wide range of agencies to meet their needs. Academic guidance is good, although pupils are not always sure of their targets. Individual targets are better established in English but are not yet fully developed in other subjects such as mathematics and science.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

There is a great sense of unity and purpose amongst the leadership team at Ashby Fields School. Senior staff are passionate about the school and what can be achieved. Subject managers are equally enthusiastic, working well together to ensure standards continue to rise. This sense of purpose stems from the outstanding headteacher who has communicated his vision with great clarity. The challenging targets set for pupils have been achieved well and have contributed effectively to the raised achievement. Staff, parents and pupils understand what the school stands for and are fully supportive. The school has been transformed since the last inspection. Many new initiatives have been successfully implemented, not least of these being the values-based education that has had a huge impact on behaviour and attitudes to learning. Governors have an effective committee structure which is utilised well to monitor the work of the school and plan for the future. Excellent self-evaluation clearly identifies what needs to be done to bring about further improvement and capacity to improve is outstanding. Community cohesion is promoted well through strong links with a school in Uganda as well as with more local communities.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	2

## 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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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	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**

16 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ashby Fields Primary School, Daventry, NN11 0YP

Thank you for giving us such a warm welcome when we visited your school. My fellow inspectors and I enjoyed meeting you and finding out about your school. Special thanks to the group of pupils who gave up some of their lunchtime to tell us what you think makes your school so special. We think you go to a good school.

What we liked most about your school.

- You work hard in all your lessons and make good progress.
- You reach above average standards.
- You are very friendly, polite and helpful to visitors and each other.
- You know a lot about values and how important they are.
- Your behaviour is excellent, both in the classroom and around school.
- You can explain how to live healthy lives, keep safe and look after our planet.
- You enjoy many clubs at lunchtime and after school that teach you important skills like sport, drama and music.
- The headteacher and other school leaders do an excellent job and know how to improve things.
- Your teachers are good at their work. They work hard to plan interesting lessons and make learning fun.
- All staff at the school take excellent care of you and keep you safe.

In order to improve further, this is what we would like the school to do now.

- We would like your teachers to give you more information when they mark your work so that you know how you can make it even better.
- We would also like teachers to make sure all the pupils in Year 1 make good progress by planning challenging activities for them.

We wish you all well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Christine Millett

Lead inspector