

# Ashby Fields Primary School

Wimborne Place, Ashby Fields, Daventry, NN11 0YP

**Inspection dates** 29–30 April 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders, including governors, have successfully improved teaching since the last inspection, so that it is now good. As a result, pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and their attainment is rising rapidly.
- Children achieve well in the early years because of effective teaching and an exciting and inviting environment. They enter Year 1 as confident learners.
- Teaching is good. Marking is a strength, as pupils act on the advice about next steps to further their learning and improve their work.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils work hard in lessons and are keen to do well. They are happy and well looked after.
- The school's procedures to ensure pupils are safe and secure are good. Pupils feel safe.
- Attendance is well above average.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Governors know the school very well. They are, therefore, able to provide very effective support and challenge to school leaders. Governors are rigorous in holding the school to account for pupils' achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes, work is too easy or too difficult for pupils, which means they do not learn as well as they could.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in writing further at length and across different subjects.
- The school does not always communicate clearly enough with parents to keep them well informed, particularly about how well their children are doing.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 22 lessons, three of which were seen jointly with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors took account of the 65 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, and the school's leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents including: the school's own information on pupils' current and recent progress; planning of work in different subjects; leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning; and records relating to behaviour, attendance, and the safeguarding of pupils.

## Inspection team

Steve Nelson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jatinder Virk	Additional Inspector
Lynda Townsend	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- Early years provision is full time in the Reception Year.
- The school has about 30 pupils in each of the Reception classes.
- The governing body manages before- and after-school care.
- Leadership has been disrupted due to illness. The substantive headteacher was appointed in September 2014.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected nationally for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding, so that all pupils make consistently rapid progress by ensuring that teachers:
  - set the work at the right level of difficulty to challenge all groups of pupils
  - give pupils more opportunities to practice their writing in different subjects.
- Work more closely with all parents, so that they are well informed about the developments taking place in school and that they have full information about how well their children are doing.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has brought about a sense of urgency to school improvement and is creating a culture in which effective teaching, learning and good behaviour flourish. Together with the talented acting deputy headteacher and determined governing body, her astute decisions are transforming the school. The systems for tracking pupils' progress are robust and, together with the work in pupils' books, show that achievement is improving rapidly.
- Staff have reacted positively to disruptions in leadership since the previous inspection and are working well to raise achievement further. Senior leaders check regularly on the individual performance of teachers and identify areas for improvement which develop their skills and improve teaching. Staff are held to account for the achievement of the pupils in their class.
- Responsibilities are shared well between staff. The leaders managing literacy and numeracy are driving improvement forward effectively. Plans to raise standards further have clear actions designed to secure further improvement.
- The subjects taught in the school give pupils a rich and varied experience. The school offers a range of extra-curricular clubs, visits and visitors to provide variety and excitement. Special activities, such as 'Natural Disasters' and 'The First World War', are enjoyed and improve learning and pupils' progress. Pupils do not, however, have sufficient opportunities to write extensively in subjects other than English.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils are thoughtful and respectful during assemblies. They respond eagerly to questions such as 'why am I unique?' and regularly consider issues such as diversity, respect, and friendships through the eleven school values for every month at school. As a result, they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils is used well. For example, the eligible pupils benefit from the additional small group teaching and one-to-one support and assistance to ensure they can participate in school activities such as class visits. The progress of these pupils is speeding up and any gaps in achievement compared with their classmates are closing.
- The additional primary sports funding is used effectively, so that it widens the experience and skills of pupils in a variety of sports, such as tennis and trampolining, as well as extending the skills of staff. The way the funding has been used has increased the number of pupils participating in sports and promotes their health and well being well.
- The school has a range of methods to keep in touch with parents. However, the school has not taken enough recent formal steps to keep parents informed about school developments, or provided sufficient information about the progress their children make.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that effective systems are in place to meet statutory requirements, including those for the recruitment of staff and the safeguarding of children. They promote equal opportunities well and do not tolerate any discrimination.
- Leaders value the support and challenge they have been given during the regular visits by local authority advisors. This has helped the school to improve since the last inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is effective. Governors are well trained and have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, including how it compares with other schools, how well different groups of pupils achieve, and of the quality of teaching.
  - The Chair of the Governing Body attends school meetings regularly, where the progress of pupils is discussed. Governors are supportive, while ensuring the school does all it can to improve pupils' achievement further.

- The governing body makes sure that national safeguarding requirements are met. It ensures that the pupil premium is spent well on extra support and understands how it is helping pupils to achieve better. It manages the school finances effectively.
- The governing body ensures that leaders take action in the event that any teaching is weak and makes sure pay and promotion are linked to the achievement of pupils.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. Their positive attitudes and good behaviour contribute to good learning and achievement. Only occasionally are pupils' attitudes less than good, when they are not given work that keeps them concentrating.
- Pupils are proud of their school and keenly take on responsibilities, for example as school councillors, buddies, and monitors. The school buildings and grounds are litter-free, bright and filled with stimulating resources. The good relationships between all pupils and adults contribute to the positive values and sense of belonging in the school.
- A small number of pupils joins the school with behavioural problems. Those pupils benefit from individual attention and support, so that their behaviour improves as they move through the school.
- Pupils and parents appreciate the well-run before- and after-school club greatly, which provides a calm and sociable start and end to the school day.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils are made aware of risks, particularly when using the internet and mobile devices. Pupils say they feel safe in school because the atmosphere is calm and orderly.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms bullying can take, including those relating to race and gender. They say that bullying is rare, but if they ever have any concerns, there is always an adult on hand to help them.
- The school works closely with outside agencies to support pupils and their families whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Attendance is consistently high, when compared to the national average.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- The quality of teaching is now good in all year groups, resulting in pupils making good and sometimes rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because the staff have improved teaching practice across the school.
- Mathematics is taught well. Good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' mathematical vocabulary. Pupils have good opportunities to apply numeracy skills to solve mathematical problems. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils demonstrated good use of the language of symmetry, when accurately transforming shapes using rotation or reflection.
- Teachers ensure that pupils master the basic skills of spelling punctuation and grammar. Pupils use those skills well, when writing for different purposes. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils demonstrated good skills and enjoyment in writing an account of the key features of a police report.

- Good teaching of reading has ensured that pupils can build words effectively and understand what they are reading well. Pupils took pride in demonstrating their reading skills to the inspectors and showed they understood the text effectively.
- Other adults make a positive contribution to pupils' learning in lessons, particularly for those who find learning difficult. They work well to help less-able pupils keep up, using teaching resources and asking questions effectively to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Teachers mark pupils' work frequently and provide detailed advice on the next steps needed, as well as praising what they have done well. Pupils value the advice and act upon it promptly, which helps them to improve their work.
- Occasionally, the work is not set at the right level of difficulty for pupils. Pupils are given work that is either too easy, or too difficult for them. That means they do not do as well as they could.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Pupils' achievement has improved since the last inspection and is now good. In 2014, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was above average overall and in writing and broadly average in reading and mathematics. Attainment in Key Stage 2 rose to be broadly that typical of pupils' ages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Information provided by the school shows that the proportion of pupils making the progress they should in all key subjects has increased this year. In 2014, pupils' progress was above that of all pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, although it was not as strong in writing.
- Reading is promoted successfully throughout the school, helped by regular use of the library and visits from authors. As a consequence, pupils' show interest and enjoyment in reading; for example, younger pupils are able to name the types of books they like reading. Older pupils are enthusiastic readers, have favourite authors and recognise the features of a good story.
- In mathematics, pupils acquire essential calculation skills well. They have a good understanding of mathematical operations and apply them effectively to solve practical problems.
- Standards in the quality of pupils' writing have improved and pupils are making good progress across the school. Pupils write for different purposes and in different styles effectively. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are being developed well. Pupils, however, do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their skills in long pieces of written work across all subjects and topics.
- The most-able pupils make good progress. Higher proportions are exceeding the expected standards for their age this year in reading, writing and mathematics compared to last year, when their progress was lower than the national figure in mathematics.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. This is because the school ensures that teaching responds to their individual needs well.
- In the past, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have not always made as much progress as they should have done, because of weak provision for these pupils over a period of time. That weakness has been addressed and the school now meets this group of pupils' needs well. As a result, these pupils now make good progress that is in line with other pupils.
- The gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils in the school and of other pupils nationally is closing, because the school uses the extra funding to support individuals and groups of pupils effectively. Last year's disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were half a term behind their classmates in reading, almost two terms behind in mathematics, and three in writing. They were almost a term behind in reading and over two terms behind other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics.

- Disadvantaged pupils made more progress in reading than, broadly similar progress in mathematics to and less progress in writing than their classmates and other pupils nationally. The school's work to improve achievement in writing has also paid off for disadvantaged pupils and gaps in attainment and progress between different groups are closing rapidly this year.

### The early years provision

is good

- The early years is led and managed well. The early years leader has established effective links with parents and pre-schools. As a result, children settle quickly into the Reception classes and grow in confidence and independence.
- A majority of children joins the Reception Year with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. Good teaching makes sure that children get used to routines and expectations quickly. By the end of the Reception Year, all children have made good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for their work in Year 1.
- Staff are knowledgeable and well trained. They work closely together, meeting regularly in order to discuss what is taught. Consequently, the activities and learning opportunities provided help the children to extend their knowledge and understanding well.
- Children enjoy a wide range of exciting indoor and outdoor experiences. Learning activities are particularly well thought out and closely follow the interests of children, inspiring them to learn more. Staff encourage children to develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills well, including through exploring and experimenting. Sometimes, however, tasks are too easy for the most-able children.
- Children work and play in a happy, safe, secure environment. Staff ensure that children have many opportunities to develop good social skills. Consequently, children's behaviour is good. They learn to follow instructions and to concentrate on activities, happily sharing equipment and discussing what they are learning with their friends.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131671
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	461994

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

<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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	406
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Angela Ward
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jacqueline Johnson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 May 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01327 310068
<b>Fax number</b>	01327 310232
<b>Email address</b>	head@ashby.northants-ecl.gov.uk

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