

# Ascot Heath Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109867
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bracknell Forest
<b>Inspection number</b>	356645
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rob Crompton

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Fiona Biglin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine Bates
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Rhododendron Walk Ascot SL5 8PN
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who visited 14 lessons taught by eight teachers. Inspectors spoke with staff, parents and carers, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work, the analysis of the tracking of pupils' progress, attendance records, school policies and procedures, school leaders' monitoring records, notes of governing body meetings and school development planning. They also analysed the questionnaires received from 30 staff and 104 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The attainment of current pupils to see whether the recent above-average levels of attainment are on course to be sustained.
- Pupils' rate of progress, and their personal development and well-being, to explore the school's judgement that overall outcomes are outstanding.

## Information about the school

Ascot Heath Infant School is smaller than the average size for a primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, but none is at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Most of this small number of pupils have social or emotional difficulties and others have speech and communication problems. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is organised as a Reception unit with 70 children. The school has the Basic Skills Quality Mark, and the Active School, Healthy School and Eco-School awards.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

This is an outstanding school where leaders, the staff team and governing body succeed admirably in fulfilling their vision to make 'learning a become fun and an exciting adventure'. The excellent curriculum provides pupils with many memorable experiences that promote their academic and personal development. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and this contributes to the purposeful atmosphere in lessons and around the school. Good teaching, underpinned by excellent relationships, capitalises on their enthusiasm for learning. As a result, pupils achieve well and reach above-average standards.

The outstanding care, guidance and support are much appreciated by parents and carers. Within this caring environment, pupils feel extremely safe and develop an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Their outstanding spiritual, moral and social development is reflected in their enthusiasm in contributing to school life, their self-esteem and mutual support for one another, and their developing sense of cultural diversity.

The school is highly successful in engaging parents and carers, the overwhelming majority of whom hold the school in high regard. Their typical comments included, 'Our daughter loves school and has developed a real enthusiasm for learning which staff have created by their innovative teaching'; 'The school provides a happy and stimulating learning environment'; and 'My children progress well, are nurtured and inspired.' Excellent partnerships with other schools and local universities help to keep the school at the forefront of curriculum development. Close relationships with support agencies help staff to meet the needs of pupils who require specialist help, such as speech therapy.

Rigorous self-review and sharply focused strategic planning have led to very good headway on several fronts since the last inspection, particularly in improving assessment systems. These are now good overall, but the school has rightly identified the need to consolidate the existing range of effective methods being used across the school to further improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in establishing children's level of development as they start school, improving feedback to pupils and in honing planning for the most able.

The headteacher, in close partnership with the deputy headteacher, plays a pivotal role in establishing a common determination among the staff to build on current success and drive improvements. Very good headway has been made, for example, in improving the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school's track record and continuing success demonstrates an outstanding capacity for sustaining current strengths and moving even further forward.

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

- Improve further the quality of teaching by refining the use made of assessment information to:
  - provide pupils with more specific guidance about how to improve
  - sharpen the planning for the most-able pupils
  - gain a more accurate picture of children's starting points as they start Reception.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Pupils enjoy lessons, are eager to learn and they work hard. As a result, from a broadly average starting point, they achieve well and their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. The proportion reaching the higher levels is often twice the national average. Current Year 2 pupils are on course to reach similar standards as those in previous years. Pupils read very well. Good progress in writing is evident in pupils' workbooks, which include good quality written work, such as pupils' imaginative stories and sequences of instructions. In her retelling of a familiar story, for example, one pupil demonstrated a secure grasp of sentence construction as she wrote,

'The bad pirates are grinning and keeping their swords where they are at the moment and, like the crocodiles, they are coming closer and closer.'

Most pupils write neatly in joined script. Year 2 pupils are confident in number work. When asked to add numbers such as 54 and 33, many did the calculations mentally, without resort to a number line or counting grids. Pupils also develop good skills when using modern technology. Through practical surveys, they learn how to record by tallying, and to create bar graphs to display their findings. Year 1 pupils confidently program a floor robot and older pupils are skilled in inserting graphics into text, for example, when producing information booklets. Good work was also seen in science. Pupils in Year 1, for example, showed a very good knowledge of how seeds grew into plants and confidently described the function of seeds, roots, stems and petals.

Pupils with speech and communication problems make good progress. This is due to the careful diagnosis of their underlying difficulties and the range of provision to help them, including specialist support. The few pupils with behavioural or emotional difficulties also benefit from skilful help which enables them, for the most part, to sustain their concentration.

Pupils are polite, tolerant of each other and appreciative of others' skills and efforts. Pupils' very secure knowledge about the importance of keeping safe and healthy is reflected in Healthy Schools status and the Activemark award. Over lunch, pupils discussed the pros and cons of different foods, showing an awareness of vitamins and 'five-a-day'. Their strong ecological awareness is evident as they follow the advice of the 'eco team' in using the recycling bins. This team and the school council, whose members rotate each term, write newsletters to parents and carers and their ideas contribute to the school's strategic planning.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

A wealth of opportunities, including a wide range of visits, visitors and clubs, make learning fun. At the beginning of each topic, pupils identify what they already know and what they would like to find out. This helps teachers to avoid going over old ground and generates pupils' enthusiasm and sense of purpose. Teachers frequently organise special events at the start of a topic. For example, following the visit of a puppeteer, pupils were eager to make their own puppets in design and technology. In literacy lessons, they wrote play scripts and later performed for parents and carers. When learning about the Great Fire of London, pupils visited Windsor Castle and watched films of the devastation caused by the more recent fire. This imaginative approach to curriculum planning is appreciated by parents and carers, one of whom wrote, 'We really like the topic approach and creative opportunities that are on offer across the curriculum.' Music and drama are also strong and contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual development and understanding of cultural diversity.

Teachers successfully motivate pupils so that, in most lessons, pupils are highly enthusiastic and keen to learn. This is especially evident where they confidently create opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in role play and other practical activities. Using tracking information and 'on the spot' assessment, teachers generally pitch work at the right level for each group. When learning to add money, for example, Year 1 pupils were set different tasks based on their wide-ranging prior attainment. For the most part,

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assessment information is used to ensure work for the more-able pupils is demanding. Occasionally, however, teachers miss opportunities to offer further challenge by setting even more demanding tasks in order to gain insights into their full potential. Teachers routinely make the objectives for each lesson clear and engage pupils in reflecting on their learning. Pupils have individual target cards and their work is marked regularly. Although teachers' comments rightly praise good work, guidance about the next steps pupils might take to improve is inconsistent.

The knowledge staff have about their pupils ensures they pay close attention to all aspects of care and guidance, working collaboratively with families when required. The experienced and well-qualified support staff play a significant part in ensuring pupils are sympathetically helped when necessary. Pupils greatly appreciate 'bubble time', which gives them opportunities to confidentially share concerns. Induction procedures ensure a smooth transition into Reception and onto the adjacent junior school. They are particularly effective for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school works hard to sustain good attendance, working closely with parents and carers, and liaising with the family support adviser. This has resulted in year-on-year improvement.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

There is an excellent team spirit and shared determination to ensure all children get the best start possible to their education. The headteacher plays a pivotal role in encouraging and empowering staff to try out new ideas, at the same time closely monitoring their work, sharing effective methods and facilitating further training when appropriate. Senior staff provide an excellent role model for colleagues in their curriculum leadership and teaching.

The governing body keeps a sharp eye on assessment information and members are quick to question any fluctuations or explore any emerging trends, reflecting the school's strong commitment to equal opportunities and determination to quickly spot and eradicate any discrepancy in the achievement of different groups. Several members of the governing body are recently appointed and finding their feet, but they are building up their understanding through regular visits with more experienced colleagues which focus on current development priorities. The governing body consults parents and invites staff members to its meetings. It ensures that policies for the safeguarding of pupils are implemented effectively by regularly reviewing the compliance with regulations, undertaking risk assessments and ensuring that child protection policies are implemented. Some documents need updating, however.

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Notice boards, newsletters and bulk text messaging keep parents and carers informed of what is going on in school and identify opportunities for them to help and be helped. Many parents and carers volunteer to help during the school day. Strong partnerships with the junior school and other neighbouring schools enable shared training. The school often shares its good practice, hosting visits from teachers from further afield and contributing to educational publications.

The school promotes community cohesion well. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own locality and different countries and cultures are developed well through topics, celebrating religious festivals, and by performances, such as those by African drummers and Indonesian gamelan players. Pupils have recently started to exchange information with pupils in a contrasting area through multimedia presentations, with the intention of helping them to gain a broader understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children thoroughly enjoy their learning. The vast majority collaborate well and emulate the learning behaviours modelled by adults. Children enjoy role play, such as selling flowers in the 'garden centre', and play purposefully with minimum adult supervision. They make good progress across all areas of learning, particularly in personal and social development, communication and language, and numeracy. Children make particularly good headway in linking sounds and letters through the daily phonics sessions with small groups.

Children's welfare is given a high priority. The environment is safe and welcoming. Children learn, for example, how to use resources such as the climbing apparatus and scissors safely and the importance of washing hands. They willingly contribute to lessons by offering answers and explanations, tidying up and doing small jobs.



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Staff recognise the uniqueness of every child. The environment is set up to meet the needs of individual children and different groups. Small groups led by 'key workers' provide a secure base for children and enable staff to closely monitor their progress and respond to their emerging needs. Joint planning across the Reception unit and the day-to-day adult interaction with all children mean staff gain a good awareness of each child's level of development and respond accordingly.

An effective balance is achieved between focused sessions led by adults and activities initiated by children. Teachers use the good range of indoor and outdoor resources well. Interactive whiteboards figure prominently in children's learning. When teaching a group about the life cycle of a butterfly, for example, the teacher skilfully used a sequence of illustrations to reinforce children's understanding. One child corrected a classmate as she said, 'No, it's not a cocoon, it's a chrysalis; moths come from cocoons, not butterflies!' Outdoors, children were hunting for plastic 'minibeasts' in soil trays while others delighted in showing their symmetrical models and paintings of butterflies.

The early years leader communicates effectively and ensures all members of the Reception team have opportunities to contribute to reviewing and developing the provision. This has led to greater involvement of parents and carers through open mornings, and improved planning for the transition to Year 1. Children's levels of development are assessed early in their first term to establish their starting points. Plans are in hand to ensure the accuracy of these judgements through external moderation in partnership with a similar school. The school is aware that some parts of the outdoor space are not as stimulating as others and that staff do not always encourage children's language development when they are learning outdoors.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

The proportion of questionnaires returned was above average. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers were entirely positive in their views of the school. Almost all felt their children enjoyed school and were happy with their children's overall experience. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour management, progress and whether the school fully meets their children's needs. During the inspection, evidence showed that teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well and very effectively meet their academic and personal needs. The evidence shows that all groups of pupils make good academic progress.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ascot Heath Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 104 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 205 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	63	38	37	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	69	66	35	34	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	38	58	56	6	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	45	48	46	6	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	45	43	56	54	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	40	53	51	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	52	50	48	46	3	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	27	26	53	51	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	45	48	46	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	26	65	63	6	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	33	62	60	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	46	44	55	53	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	53	46	44	2	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



13 May 2011

◆ Dear Pupils

◆ Inspection of Ascot Heath Infant School, Ascot SL5 8PN

◆ Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed watching you work and play happily together. You get on well with one another and with all the adults.

The school is providing you with an outstanding education. You told us that you really enjoy learning because your teachers make sure you have many exciting things to do. Inspectors agree that this is the case. It was great to see some of you making bread and others looking for flowers and butterflies in the wild area. We were impressed by your lovely singing in assemblies and how confident you were in talking about your work.

The adults care for you extremely well and help you if you have problems. Those in charge of the school are working hard to make it even better. They have some good ideas that they share with other schools. In order to make your school even better, we have suggested that teachers could improve the way they find out about how well you are doing. ◆ We think this will mean they can let you know exactly what to do to improve and plan ways to help you make even better progress.

You can all play your part by continuing to try your best and work hard.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton

Lead inspector

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