

New Ash Green Primary School

North Square, New Ash Green, Longfield, DA3 8JT

Inspection dates 27–28 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school is well led and managed. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders and governing body have made significant improvements over the last two years in all areas of school life and are committed to continuing this further.
- Pupils are making good progress from their starting points and attainment is rising steadily at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well and the majority make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils in the Reception classes make good progress from starting points that are generally below those expected for their age.
- Teaching has improved considerably over the past two years as a result of good leadership and the majority is consistently good across all key stages and continuing to improve rapidly.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are polite and friendly to their friends and adults. Their attitude to learning is good and they are keen to improve their knowledge and understanding.
- Senior leaders are rigorous in their monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress so they know exactly how well the school is doing and what needs to be done to improve even further

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally teachers do not adapt their lessons quickly enough to challenge more-able pupils, allowing them to work independently and so make even better progress.
- The next steps for pupils are not always clearly indicated in teachers' marking, to enable pupils to respond and improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors saw 13 lessons or parts of lessons, some of which were observed together with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also looked at some special group work sessions, attended assemblies and listened to a sample of pupils read.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, leaders responsible for different subjects, including pupils with special educational needs, the family liaison officer, members of the governing body, parents and carers from the parent forum, pupils, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took into account the 28 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke informally to some parents and carers at the start of the day. Views of staff were also considered from the questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at: the school's records on pupils' progress and standards; the school's self-evaluation and development plans; school records on behaviour and bullying; policies for safety and child protection; local authority reports of visits; minutes of governing body meetings; and standards in reading and pupils' workbooks.

Inspection team

Penny Spencer, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Barbara Saltmarsh	Additional inspector
Roger Parry	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly larger than the average primary school.
- Since the last inspection a new deputy headteacher has been appointed and there have been several staff changes in different key stages.
- Most pupils are White British but there is a significant minority of Gypsy/Roma pupils in all year groups.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium (the extra money provided by the government to support children in care, those eligible for free school meals and service children) is lower than average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, supported at school action plus or with a statement of educational needs, is in line with other schools nationally.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which set the minimum standards for attainment and progress.
- The governing body provides a daily breakfast club which was observed by inspectors.
- A private provider offers nursery provision in part of the school building. This provision has a separate inspection and report.
- No pupils in the school receive any alternative provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and so further raise achievement, by:
 - making sure all teachers effectively check pupils' understanding in order to quickly adapt tasks to fully meet the needs of all pupils, especially the more able, and enable them to work more independently
 - ensuring pupils are given consistent opportunities to correct and improve their work following marking and feedback.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils start in the Reception classes with a range of skills that are generally at below the levels typical for their age. They make good progress because they benefit from good teaching and have plenty of opportunities to develop their understanding and become independent learners. As a result their achievement is broadly average in all areas of learning by the time they move into Year 1.
- Pupils who read to inspectors showed a good understanding of the skills needed to link letters to sounds and were confident when tackling unfamiliar words. They all expressed a love of reading and could choose their own books at the correct level.
- By the end of Year 2 standards are rising steadily and are just above the national average in all subjects.
- Progress overall in Years 3 to 6 is good and improving rapidly. Progress in mathematics for some groups was less good in 2012 which led to a dip in attainment from previous years. Rigorous evaluation by senior leaders to discover the cause of the dip has led to current pupils making accelerated progress towards challenging targets.
- In some classes more-able pupils are not always able to move on quickly enough in their independent tasks. This slows their progress and prevents them from working at the higher levels they are capable of.
- By Year 6 pupils are confident readers and enjoy a wide range of books. Strong partnerships with parents and carers support reading at home which contributes to pupils' good progress.
- Pupils of Gypsy/Roma heritage make good progress because work is set precisely to their needs and the school provides activities for them to complete when they are travelling.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress in line with their peers because they are well supported in their learning and have comprehensive individual learning plans where necessary. Those pupils who are supported by the pupil premium are swiftly closing the gap between their achievement and that of pupils who do not receive additional funding.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Most teaching is good. Planning is precise and tasks are well planned at different levels of difficulty. However some more-able pupils are not stretched fully because teachers do not let them work independently quickly enough.
- Pupils work well together and support each other to improve their understanding. This was seen in an excellent science lesson in Year 1 where pupils collaborated well to make boats from a variety of materials to test whether they would float or sink. Their concerted efforts plus skilful direction from the teacher led to considerable success and rapid progress in their understanding.
- In the Reception classes good teaching provides many opportunities for pupils to plan and review their experiences. These opportunities are built in to the day and pupils are confident to discuss these choices. Independent activities both inside and out are interesting and varied and pupils show high levels of concentration when tackling them. All the adults working in these classes know how to intervene to move learning forward. This was very evident during one session where the teacher worked effectively alongside a small group, building with wooden bricks, to encourage talk and develop specific vocabulary.
- Marking is comprehensive and regular. However in some classes the opportunity for pupils to respond and improve their work is not as consistent as it might be.
- Small-group sessions for pupils who find learning difficult or who may have fallen behind are well planned and tailored carefully to individual need. Excellent evaluation of the impact on learning ensures that these pupils make good progress towards catching up with their peers.

- Teaching assistants are very effective in the classroom and their quick actions support the good progress made by pupils. They are very skilful when dealing with pupils with specific additional needs, leading to their successful inclusion in lessons.
- Good use is made of the school's rural location to support learning with the creation of a woodland walk and cookery and jam making sessions, using fruit from the school's orchard.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say they love coming to school. They are polite, friendly and were keen to talk to inspectors about things they enjoy at school.
- The breakfast club provides a great start to the day. Pupils have a healthy breakfast and play in a safe, happy environment. Parents and carers whose children use the club were unanimous in their praise for the good start it gave them every morning.
- The behaviour policy is consistently applied and well understood by everyone. Rewards successfully encourage hard work and good conduct. Pupils love receiving the headteacher's certificates or attending her special lunch once a week.
- Older pupils take on considerable responsibility as peer mediators in the playground or in running clubs at lunchtimes. Inspectors were impressed with the way in which the Lego and chess clubs were organised and run for younger pupils, with skills being taught in a very mature way. Pupils also represent their class on the school council, running charitable events and suggesting improvements for learning.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Whole-school events to promote tolerance and friendship are effective in ensuring bullying is uncommon. Records show any rare occurrence of poor behaviour is clearly followed through with parents and carers and pupils involved.
- An analysis of the responses to the online parent and carer survey and discussions with parents and carers from the parent and carer forum, show a high level of satisfaction with the way the school looks after their children and keeps them safe.
- Attendance has improved and is now broadly average. The school is working closely with parents and carers in order to raise the levels of attendance further. The significant group of Traveller families who attend the school have good attendance when they are in the area.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior leaders provide strong leadership which is continually bringing about improvements in the outcomes for all pupils. The vision for achieving success is evident in all aspects of the school's work and is clearly communicated to the wider community.
- Improvements to teaching have been achieved by thorough and precise monitoring of teachers' performance, using clear measures for success. This is followed through with detailed support and training opportunities for teachers who need to improve their practice.
- Performance management is closely linked to pupils' progress and all leaders and teachers are held accountable for improvements in achievement.
- Self-assessment is accurate and there is a clear plan for improvement indicating the school has good potential for continued success.
- The curriculum is interesting and relevant and gives pupils access to exciting opportunities they might not otherwise enjoy. It provides good opportunities to celebrate the school's strong position within the community.
- Partnerships with parents and carers are effective. The parent forum is seen as an excellent way for parents and carers to give a collective view on the way the school is run and parents and carers were full of praise for the open way in which the school seeks its views and acts on them.

- Relationships with the Traveller community are well established and several generations of pupils have attended the school over many years.
- The pupil premium is allocated extremely carefully to provide extra staff to support individual pupils or to ensure interventions are effective in raising achievement. The employment of a family support worker has been invaluable in raising levels of attendance and in supporting the Traveller families to become more involved in their children's learning.
- The local authority has worked closely with the school on its road to improvement and is committed to continuing this support if needed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. Governors are experienced, thoroughly understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are actively involved in maintaining school improvement. Governors check the quality of teaching and performance management. They have not shied away from making difficult decisions to ensure teaching continues to improve, including decisions about increasing pay thresholds. Governors are effective in holding the school to account for the use of pupil premium resources. They continue to increase their knowledge and skills and so become even more effective, by attending training and working closely with the local authority and other nearby schools. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties to ensure pupils are kept safe.

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

Unique reference number	130938
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	406394

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	304
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Brown
Headteacher	Caroline Cain
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 June 2011
Telephone number	01474 873858
Fax number	01474 874921
Email address	office@new-ash.kent.sch.uk

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