

Ash Grange Primary School

Ash Church Road, Aldershot, Surrey, GU12 6LX

Inspection dates 27–28 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Require improvement	3
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement is not consistently good across the school. Although improving, pupils' attainment is low by the end of Year 6 because of a legacy of underachievement, especially in mathematics and spelling.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils are given hard enough work or that they take notice of the advice given through teachers' marking.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because pupils tend not to take enough care with their work.
- Subject leaders and governors do not make a big enough contribution to ensuring that teaching and pupils' achievement are consistently good or better.

The school has the following strengths

- Children learn quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and become confident and keen to learn.
- Pupils in Year 1 make good progress in learning about phonics (the sounds letters make) and this helps them to improve their reading.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well. Pupils enjoy school and feel very safe.
- The headteacher leads the school well and has driven forward the recent improvements. Senior leaders know what to do next to make the school good. As a result, achievement and teaching are improving.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching in 16 lessons, half jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection took into account 24 responses to the online Parent View survey. Informal discussions were held with a random sample of parents.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in survey responses from 29 members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance and safeguarding procedures.
- The children's centre on the same site as the school did not form part of this inspection.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Keith Homewood

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ash Grange is smaller than the average-sized primary school but numbers are rising.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and those from service families) is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at school action is above average, and the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school has well-above-average proportions of pupils of Gypsy Roma and Irish Traveller heritage. The proportions of these groups of pupils are uneven across the school, rising to just over half the pupils in the current Year 6.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- A high number of governors and teachers have joined the school in the last two years. The headteacher has been at the school just over two years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality teaching, so that it is usually good across the school, and improve pupils' behaviour, by:
 - making sure that teachers expect pupils to complete hard enough work
 - ensuring pupils follow advice given through teachers' marking and that they consistently push themselves to do their best work.
- Raise attainment, especially in mathematics and spelling, by:
 - building pupils' confidence and speed in carrying out mental calculations and providing greater opportunities for pupils to extend their mathematical skills and knowledge when working in other subjects
 - making sure that pupils use their knowledge of the sounds letters make to help with their spelling and check their own work for spelling mistakes.
- Strengthen leadership, by:
 - making sure that subject leaders can demonstrate the impact they are having in improving teaching and learning
 - conducting an external review of governance to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved and taking consequent action.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires an increase in the rate of improvement, because while it is improving, progress is not consistently good enough in all classes. Attainment is low by the end of Year 6 in mathematics and spelling, mainly because there is a legacy of underachievement and recent progress has not raised attainment in this year group. Nevertheless, attainment is rising elsewhere in the school and it is now broadly average by the end of Year 2.
- In mathematics, some older pupils lack confidence and consequently they are slow at making mental calculations. In addition, pupils are sometimes given too few chances to practise and extend what they have learned in mathematics when they are working in other subjects.
- In spelling, not all pupils make good use of their knowledge of the sounds letters make to help them spell unfamiliar words or check their work thoroughly for mistakes.
- Most children start in the Nursery with levels of attainment that are lower than those typical for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in developing confidence and a willingness to learn. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to extend children's learning when they are working on activities they have chosen for themselves.
- Pupils in Year 1 did well in the national phonics screening check in 2013, representing a considerable improvement on previous years. This followed a successful development priority to improve reading across the school.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is increasing, with some successful additional activities supporting learning. It is not yet good because not all pupils do as well as they should from their starting points.
- The most able pupils are not consistently given hard enough work so that they can make rapid progress in all lessons. For example, at times they complete the same work as other pupils when they are ready to tackle something more challenging.
- The attainment gap for pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding is closing for pupils currently in the school. The gap is closing more quickly than in the past. In national assessments at the end of Year 6 in 2013, eligible pupils were over a year behind other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in national assessments but the gap is already much smaller in the current year. This is because the school has developed a much more accurate picture of the precise gaps in their knowledge and skills, and support is now being targeted more sharply to speed up progress.
- The attainment of Gypsy-Roma and Irish Traveller pupils is higher than that of similar groups of pupils nationally. Improved rates of attendance are helping to support the progress of these pupils across the school.
- Pupils reach the standards of which they are capable in physical education. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 demonstrated new skills learned in lessons following on from staff training and in the new gymnastics club run by a specialist coach.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good. While teachers plan work for pupils' differing abilities, they sometimes underestimate what pupils can do, asking simple questions and giving pupils work that is too easy. In addition, they do not insist that pupils should always try their best and take notice of the helpful advice they have been given through teachers' marking.
- Pupils' learning in mathematics and spelling is too uneven because pupils are not expected to carry out mental calculations quickly. Opportunities are missed for them to use and extend their numeracy skills when working in other subjects and they are not encouraged enough to use their phonics knowledge to help with their spelling.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and focused questioning helps children to learn to think for themselves. For example, in the Nursery, children were encouraged to solve the problem of where to place their clocks once the display was full.
- There are good relationships between members of staff and pupils. These have helped to ensure that pupils are keen to learn most of the time. Teaching assistants are a valuable asset to each class and support groups of pupils in their learning skilfully and sensitively. As one pupil said, 'If you struggle you get help.'
- Teachers make good use of recently improved resources to help support the pupils' learning. For example in Year 6, pupils find that the new sheets explaining various aspects of mathematics help them to gain confidence when they are unsure about certain mathematical facts.

The behaviour and safety of pupils require improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. While pupils are rarely disruptive in class, they do not always push themselves hard enough in their written work and consequently some work is shoddy and of a lower standard than it should be. Pupils know what skills are needed to be a good learner and can explain that they get 'learning stars' for good behaviour such as 'not giving up' or 'concentrating on work'.
- Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about taking responsibility. For example, they are keen to explain how they run the healthy snack bar and tend for plants as school gardeners.
- Pupils behave well on the playground and when moving around the school. They are polite and very friendly. They wear their new school uniform with pride and make sure that the school is kept tidy.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe at school and they know how to stay safe. For example, they are quick to check that strangers have a right to be at school and pupils use the internet responsibly.
- Parents, staff and pupils all agree that behaviour has improved since the previous inspection and that instances of unacceptable behaviour or bullying are rare and dealt with effectively by members of staff.
- The school's agreed set of values such as respect and care ensure that pupils are given equal opportunities. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils feel that they are treated very fairly.
- Rates of attendance have improved to broadly average levels because the school discourages term-time holidays and has helped families of Gypsy-Roma and Irish Traveller children to understand the value of not missing school needlessly.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The school is moving in the right direction, but subject leaders are not all ensuring that teaching and learning are consistently good. Their role in securing improvement is not strong enough so that responsibility for dealing with weaknesses is shared more widely.
- The headteacher is a strong driving force for improvement and her high aspirations for the school are shared with other members of staff and the governors. There is a clear sense of purpose that is supported by more rigorous ways of checking up on how well teachers and their pupils are doing. This information is being used to pinpoint where support is needed most and remaining weaknesses are now being tackled robustly.
- The school's capacity to improve is shown in the development of the roles of senior leaders and their positive impact on aspects of pupils' achievement, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, where attainment is rising quickly.
- Senior leaders check up on how well members of staff are doing and provide support and training to help them to improve their work. Consequently, there is more good teaching than in the past, but subject leaders cannot demonstrate well enough the impact they are having on

improving teaching and learning to raise attainment across the school.

- The school's partnership with parents has been greatly strengthened since the previous inspection and parents are more involved with their children's education. All the parents who responded to the parent view questionnaire would recommend the school to others. Parents are quick to make comments such as, 'the school is much better than it used to be' and 'the school needed direction in the past'.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Members of staff are checked for suitability for working in school and are trained in how to care for the pupils.
- The curriculum (topics and subjects taught) covers all subjects, but opportunities are missed for pupils to extend their numeracy skills when they are working in subjects other than mathematics. Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength in the curriculum. Pupils are enthusiastic about how they can work to earn life skills badges; they show respect for cultural differences and are keen to celebrate each other's successes.
- The new funding provided by the government to enhance sport is being used well to provide coaching, clubs and staff training. Pupils are keen to attend the new sports clubs such as swimming and gymnastics and these and more skilful teaching have already had a positive effect on provision and are contributing well to pupils' healthy lifestyles and physical well-being.
- Appropriate support is being given to pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding. Leaders are clear about what each pupil needs to help close the attainment gap and relevant support is provided, such as extra help with speech and language through small-group work or individual tuition. As a result, the pupils' rates of progress are increasing and they are learning more quickly than other pupils.
- The local authority provides the right level of support for this improving school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the steps needed to make it better but the impact of their work is not strong enough. They are realistic about how well pupils' achievement at Ash Grange compares with the achievement of pupils in other schools. They know about the general standard of teaching, how leaders check up on its effectiveness and provide support and reward as appropriate. New governors are keen to play a greater part in improving the school and know that this still needs strengthening. Governors have correctly identified the need to request an external review of their work to identify ways to increase the impact they are having.

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	125116
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	430609

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	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Catherine Frost
Headteacher	Marie Curtis
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 June 2012
Telephone number	01252 328589
Fax number	01252 333228
Email address	head@ash-grange.surrey.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

