

Ascot Heath Church of England Junior School

Rhododendron Walk, Ascot, Berkshire SL5 8PN

Inspection dates

11–12 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses.
- Leaders’ monitoring and evaluations of the quality of teaching are not sufficiently focused on the progress that pupils are making.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good. This has resulted in varying rates of progress, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils’ behaviour. As a result, pupils’ behaviour is not consistently good.
- Pupils are not consistently challenged sufficiently to enable them to achieve as well as they can, especially the most able pupils.
- Governors do not yet hold leaders to account sufficiently and ensure that all of their statutory responsibilities are fully met.
- In mathematics, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to solve problems, apply their knowledge and deepen their learning.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make consistently good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher’s kind and caring approach ensures that pupils and staff feel valued.
- Pupils feel safe and are confident that they can speak to a trusted adult in school if they have a concern.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils achieve the expected standard at the end of key stage 2.
- The school’s well-established Christian ethos supports pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The curriculum is well planned and interesting. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities.
- Attendance is above the national average and few pupils are late for school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - strengthening leaders’ monitoring of the quality of teaching so that this is more closely linked to how well pupils are learning
 - strengthening the school’s self-evaluation so that it is more accurate
 - strengthening arrangements for teachers’ performance management to enable leaders to hold staff to account sufficiently
 - strengthening the work of the governing body to ensure that governors hold leaders to account more fully
 - ensuring that the school’s website meets all statutory requirements for the publication of information about the curriculum, pupils’ average progress and average scores in their key stage 2 tests, and the school’s accessibility plan.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to improve outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils’ learning and achievement, including the most able pupils, to enable them to achieve highly
 - teachers set work for all groups of pupils and provide appropriate guidance so that they are able to make the progress that they are capable of
 - pupils have sufficient opportunities to deepen their understanding in mathematics and to solve problems
 - pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the most appropriate support to enable them to make better progress in reading.
- Improve pupils’ behaviour by ensuring that:
 - leaders set clearer and higher expectations of pupils’ behaviour, which are adopted and enforced consistently by all staff, both in class and around the school.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching and pupils' behaviour are consistently good across the school. While leaders are aware of some of the weaknesses in aspects of the school's work, their self-evaluation is inaccurate and overgenerous. As a result, leaders have not recognised shortcomings, for example in pupils' behaviour, and have not taken effective action to improve this.
- Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching at the school and look at pupils' work in books. However, at present this does not yet focus sufficiently on the progress that pupils are making and how teaching is helping pupils to learn. As a result, teachers are not given precise enough guidance about how to improve aspects of their teaching to enable pupils to learn consistently well.
- Performance management is in place for teaching staff. However, some targets are not sufficiently focused to enable leaders to evaluate how well these have been met. This means that leaders are not able to hold teachers to account sufficiently, including for the progress that pupils are making.
- The headteacher models kindness, respect and compassion to others and ensures that pupils and staff feel valued. She has ensured that staff are given opportunities to grow professionally and to take on, where appropriate, leadership responsibilities. This has contributed effectively to the development of subject leaders in the school. Teachers have also appreciated opportunities to work collaboratively and to learn from other teachers across the school's cluster.
- Leaders use information well from the school's system for keeping track of pupils' progress. They see how well pupils are progressing in reading, writing and mathematics, and identify any dips in progress. Leaders have already established that some groups of pupils are not making enough progress and have plans to address this.
- The English and mathematics leaders contribute well to the school and they are beginning to play an increasing role in leading these subjects. Their effective leadership has led to improvements in pupils' learning. As a result of adjustments to teaching arrangements in mathematics, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are now making better progress. Pupils are encouraged to use more practical equipment, which is enabling them to improve their understanding of different aspects of mathematics, such as fractions. However, leaders acknowledge that pupils do not yet have enough opportunities to apply their skills to solve problems and deepen their learning.
- Leaders acknowledge that, until recently, the school's identification of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was inaccurate. This is because some pupils had previously underachieved and there was a lack of rigour in the school's procedures. Leaders have now reduced the number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register so that the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is now similar to the national average. Leaders ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are given support in class to help them learn. However, this support is not consistently as effective as it could be. In addition, the gap between these pupils' achievement and

that of other pupils is continuing to widen in reading.

- The pupil premium grant is used well. Judicious use of financial support enables disadvantaged pupils to be fully included in school activities, for example by taking part in school visits. The family support worker provides disadvantaged pupils with appropriate additional support, especially with their social and emotional development.
- The school's Christian ethos and values contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through their religious education, pupils learn about a diversity of faiths, including Christianity, Islam and Sikhism. Pupils learn about different places of worship and the significance of special days such as Shrove Tuesday. Pupils learn about important values such as democracy through voting for the school council. They learn about other important British values such as liberty and tolerance through assemblies.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and interesting. Curriculum overviews and plans ensure that there is appropriate coverage and progression of skills. Leaders have designed a curriculum that enables appropriate links between different subjects to be made. This provides a meaningful context for pupils' learning. In addition, the school organises a wide range of visits to spark pupils' interest and promote their enjoyment and understanding. For example, pupils visited Kew Gardens to learn about the features of a rainforest. An Egyptian day gave pupils an exciting opportunity to 'become ancient Egyptians' and learn about many different Egyptian customs.
- School leaders ensure that pupils have many opportunities to take part in and enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as netball, golf, French and drama. Leaders make effective use of the sports funding. Various sports coaches have been employed to widen the range of sports available to pupils and to increase teachers' knowledge and expertise. In Years 5 and 6, pupils enjoy the opportunity to take part in residential visits. These visits are used effectively to promote pupils' learning across the curriculum and to develop their writing skills.

Governance of the school

- In recent years there has been a number of changes to the governing body, and a new chair of governors was appointed in September 2016. However, the current structure has prevented governors from meeting their responsibilities fully. For example, the current governance structure does not enable governors to fully discuss personnel matters, such as those relating to teachers' performance, in a timely manner.
- Governors visit the school regularly and receive regular reports and information about pupils' progress from the headteacher. Governors understand where there are dips in pupils' progress and are now beginning to hold leaders to account more fully by asking questions in meetings. However, this work is at an early stage.
- Governors have increased their understanding of their roles and responsibilities by attending specific courses. However, there are some gaps in governors' knowledge, including safer recruitment processes. In addition, governors have not ensured that performance management arrangements are sufficiently robust and that all the required statutory information is published on the school's website.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff and leaders know pupils and their families very well and are therefore alert and responsive to any changes in pupils' behaviour. Appropriate training has ensured that staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding. Staff are confident about the procedure to follow and refer concerns promptly to the headteacher. Concerns about pupils are suitably logged, although record-keeping is not always as systematic as it could be. Nevertheless, concerns are referred on quickly to outside agencies when needed. The school works effectively with other agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support they need.
- In 2016, school leaders and governors commissioned a local authority review of safeguarding. However, this review did not embrace all of the checks that need to be carried out when staff are appointed to the school. As a result, there was a gap in the school's procedures which school leaders have now swiftly addressed.
- School leaders and governors are aware of the potential risks posed by the pedestrian access to the school site. Governors have sensible plans underway to improve the security of the perimeter fencing.
- Staff are unanimous in their view that pupils are safe at Ascot Heath. The vast majority of parents report that their children feel safe at school. As one parent commented, 'I find the school to be a safe and nurturing environment.'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching across the school is not consistently good. While there is some very strong teaching in the school, the quality of teaching across the school is variable. As a result, pupils' progress in the school is uneven. In addition, leaders acknowledge that the progress of some pupils has been held back by historic weak teaching.
- In some classes, teachers' expectations are not high enough, especially of the most able pupils. As a result, the quality of some pupils' work and presentation is not good enough. On occasion it is of poor quality. In some lessons, teachers set tasks at different levels for pupils to choose from. While this gives pupils a level of choice, some pupils select levels that are well within their capabilities and their learning is therefore constrained.
- Where teaching is strong, teachers ask pupils challenging questions and give pupils appropriate prompts to move their learning on. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to plan interesting lessons which build effectively on pupils' previous learning. Teachers' lively, enthusiastic delivery captures pupils' interests and harnesses their thirst for learning. Teachers explain things well to pupils and help pupils to learn by modelling examples and setting tasks which challenge pupils' thinking. Teachers also set appropriate practical tasks to support pupils' learning. For example, in mathematics, pupils learned about mathematical shapes by designing nets for different packages.
- In many classes, teachers' high expectations have established a very positive climate for learning. In these classes, pupils settle well to learning and are attentive. However,

this is not consistent across the school. In some classes, and at other times of the day, teachers do not set high enough standards for pupils' behaviour or attention. As a result, pupils are not as focused on their learning as they could be and there is a less purposeful environment for learning.

- Teachers set interesting homework tasks which pupils enjoy. Parents support pupils' learning at home very well. A number of parents and pupils commented positively about homework tasks and appreciate the element of choice that teachers give them.
- In most classes, pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities are supported well. However, in some classes pupils are not encouraged to work as independently as they can. As a result, some pupils are over-reliant on adult support. Leaders acknowledge this and are already addressing this issue.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their writing across the wider curriculum. Pupils' writing is generally promoted well and this has resulted in most pupils making strong progress and achieving well in writing. Teachers effectively include aspects of grammar and spelling in pupils' writing tasks and give pupils helpful prompt cards to support their learning.
- Reading is suitably encouraged, and teachers plan many topics around narrative texts. However, in some classes, teachers do not give sufficient guidance to enable pupils to develop a deeper level of understanding, for example how specific word choices, literary techniques or phrases convey meaning or feeling.
- In mathematics, teachers ensure that pupils have plentiful opportunities to develop their calculation skills and understanding of number, including fractions. However, problem-solving is less evident in pupils' learning in mathematics. In many classes, pupils typically repeat multiple calculations of a similar level of difficulty when they are capable and ready to move on to harder work and apply their skills.
- Leaders also recognise that pupils often spend a relatively short time on some aspects of mathematics before moving on to something different. This practice results in pupils having insufficient opportunities to develop a deeper level of understanding. Leaders acknowledge this and have plans to address this through further staff training.
- Where teaching is strong, teachers provide effective feedback to pupils to help them understand how well they are doing and how they can improve their work. However, this is not consistent across the school and many pupils are unclear about their next learning steps. Leaders acknowledge that in some classes, teachers do not follow the school's approach to marking and feedback.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are confident and enjoy speaking to visitors about their learning and achievements. They wear their uniform with pride and they speak positively about the many different extra-curricular activities they take part in. Pupils have a growing understanding about the importance of learning at school and how this will help them in the future. As one pupil explained, 'You need to focus so you can be successful and have a career.'

- Pupils enjoy school, are happy and feel safe. They are confident that there is always an adult they can speak to if they have a concern or a worry. The school's work about online safety ensures that pupils know how to keep themselves safe when accessing the internet. The family support worker provides appropriate guidance and support to pupils who have emotional difficulties and who find learning challenging.
- Pupils report that on the rare occasions that bullying happens, teachers resolve this quickly. However, some parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, expressed concerns about bullying at the school. The school's records show that there are very few incidents of bullying or other discriminatory behaviour and that any incidents are recorded and followed up appropriately. Pupils willingly act as 'peer mediators', to help resolve any bullying or friendship issues.
- Pupils speak confidently about the importance of valuing different beliefs. For example, pupils know that in assembly, while many of them join in with prayers, it is also not a problem if some pupils don't wish to pray because they hold different beliefs.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is not consistently good. In some classes, learning is interrupted when teachers need to correct pupils' behaviour frequently. However, in some other classes pupils behave well, are courteous and there is a positive climate for learning.
- Pupils do not consistently comply with adults' requests, for example to stop talking when the teacher is explaining something, or to walk and not run when entering the school. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour or challenge pupils when they behave inappropriately.
- Pupils can name and explain the school values of love, hope, joy, strength and service, and can explain that it is important to show these values in their behaviour. However, while pupils understand the school's values and expectations of behaviour, especially when there is not an adult present, many pupils do not uphold these expectations.
- Pupils report that their toilet facilities are sometimes spoiled by the behaviour of other pupils, for example, because some pupils choose to throw wet toilet paper around. In addition, some pupils play roughly during playtimes. While most pupils behave well and are respectful of each other, some pupils are openly disrespectful to other pupils.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average and very few pupils are late for school. The school has worked effectively with families to improve the attendance of the few pupils who previously have not attended well. As a result of the school's effective work, the proportion of pupils who are persistently late has continued to decline.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes are not good because across the school, pupils' progress is uneven. Over time, some pupils have not made consistently good progress, particularly the most able pupils. Some pupils have not sustained the high standards they had achieved when they entered the school, especially in reading. This is due to inconsistencies in the

quality of teaching over time.

- The most able pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Pupils enter the school with standards beyond what is expected at their age at key stage 1. However, progress is uneven and not sustained over time. In some year groups, pupils with high prior attainment are not progressing as well as they could. Currently, too few pupils are working at a greater depth of learning in reading.
- Leaders acknowledge that while pupils' spelling is not as accurate as it could be, and they are taking steps to address this issue, it is too soon to see the impact of leaders' actions. In subjects across the wider curriculum, pupils make reasonable progress. However, the quality of their work and presentation is too variable.
- By the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils at the expected standard in writing is well above the national average. The many opportunities pupils have to write in a range of genres enable them to develop their writing well. As a result, pupils achieve well and their punctuation, sentence construction and quality of writing improves well over time.
- In mathematics, pupils become more fluent and confident when calculating. Pupils set out their work clearly and use appropriate, efficient written calculations. However, pupils' problem-solving skills and reasoning are not as well developed.
- In previous years, there have been some variations in boys' and girls' progress. Leaders are fully aware of this and have taken steps to promote boys' reading and enable boys to achieve as well as girls. However, the gap between boys and girls persists, particularly in reading, although it is beginning to diminish.
- In 2016, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made much slower progress than other pupils, especially in reading and mathematics. This group of pupils are now making better progress in writing and mathematics. However, their progress in reading is not as strong. As a result, the gap in their achievement in reading and that of other pupils is widening. Disadvantaged pupils are making similar progress to other pupils. However, the very small numbers in each cohort do not make for meaningful comparison.

School details

Unique reference number	109986
Local authority	Bracknell Forest
Inspection number	10019418

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Benneyworth
Headteacher	Sarah Theaker
Telephone number	01344 883353
Website	www.ascotheathcejuniorschool.co.uk
Email address	admin@office.ascot-jun.bracknell-forest.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 November 2011

Information about this school

- Ascot Heath Junior School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are currently eight classes in the school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to the national average.
- The current headteacher was in post at the school at the time of the previous inspection in 2011. There have been many other changes of staff and governors since this time.
- Very few pupils join or leave the school at times other than at the normal point of transfer.

- The school meets the floor standards, which set out the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the curriculum, pupils' average progress and scaled scores in the key stage 2 tests and the school's accessibility plan.
- There is a holiday club which operates during the school holidays. This is run by a private company which has separate Ofsted registration.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classrooms and conducted two learning walks with the headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings and discussed pupils' progress with senior leaders. Inspectors also met with six members of the governing body and held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in books and discussed pupils' progress and achievement with leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally during lessons, asked them about their learning and listened to them read. Inspectors observed and spoke to pupils during playtime and lunchtime. Inspectors also met pupils from the school council and took account of pupils' views from the 202 pupil survey responses.
- Parents' views were taken into account through discussions held before school, the 89 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and parents' free-text comments.
- Inspectors also took account of the views of staff in meetings and through the 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors checked records and documentation relating to: safeguarding; behaviour; attendance; governors' meetings; staff performance management; leaders' evaluation of the school's work and monitoring records; as well as a wide range of other school documentation.
- Inspectors reviewed the checks made on staff about their suitability to work with children.

Inspection team

Sue Cox, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
James Munt	Ofsted Inspector
Kevin Burrell	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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