

# Ash Green Community Primary School

Mixenden Road, Mixenden, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX2 8QD

## Inspection dates

15–16 November 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher inspires an ethos where all staff are focused upon pupils' well-being and their wider personal development. This is a school that is truly at the centre of the community and that is held in extremely high regard by parents.
- Senior leaders have worked successfully to overcome a decline in performance in recent years. As a result of effective teaching and well-planned support, pupils make good and improving progress.
- Subject leaders have introduced new approaches in mathematics that are being successfully implemented across year groups. As a result, pupils achieve well in mathematics.
- Leaders and teachers have worked assiduously to improve pupils' progress in reading. Through a sustained focus in lessons and in additional interventions, pupils make good progress.
- Leaders secure high levels of engagement and support from pupils and parents. As a result, standards of behaviour are high and pupils attend well.
- Governors know the community and their school extremely well. Their expertise and experience provide leaders with an effective balance of support and challenge.
- Close attention to the needs of vulnerable pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), enables them to make good progress.
- Pupils access rich experiences in the wider curriculum that builds their knowledge and widens their horizons.
- Middle leaders are becoming increasingly effective in leading school improvement. They are less experienced in monitoring the effect of new strategies on classroom practice.
- Although improving, pupils' progress in writing is not consistently strong across classes. On occasions, pupils do not develop their handwriting skills or abilities to write at length thoroughly enough.
- Provision in the early years requires improvement. Teaching in Reception class does not develop children's emerging reading and writing skills strongly enough.
- Although increasing proportions of pupils are working at greater depths of understanding, teaching does not provide consistent challenge for pupils. They do not develop subject-specific knowledge in science, history and geography in sufficient depth.

## Full report

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

- Further develop the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that the best teachers share their expertise with their peers
  - closely monitoring the impact of improvement strategies on practice in the classroom.
- Improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - improving the quality of pupils' handwriting and increasing their opportunities to write confidently at length
  - providing more regular opportunities for pupils to work at greater depths of understanding
  - providing regular opportunities for pupils to develop greater subject-specific knowledge and skills in subjects such as science, history and geography.
- Improve the quality of early years' provision, by:
  - providing more opportunities for children in Reception class to develop their emerging reading and writing skills
  - enabling children in Reception class to interact effectively with adults so that they are encouraged to question their environment, their play and their learning more productively
  - enhancing the learning environment so that children in Reception class learn more productively and are better prepared for Year 1.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher leads by example in his total commitment to the pupils and the wider community. He and his wider team have established a culture which has placed the school at the heart of the community. Pupils and their parents are welcomed each day by name. This personal ethos enables the academic and personal needs of pupils to be carefully addressed.
- Senior leaders have worked assiduously to respond more purposefully to the demands of the new national curriculum. Pupils' progress, particularly in reading, declined in the face of more rigorous assessments in 2016 and 2017. However, leaders have worked with teachers to improve the curriculum and the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils make good progress that is in line with, or better than, that of their peers nationally.
- Leaders show considerable moral purpose. There are many instances where they have welcomed pupils to the school who have been disaffected by their previous school experience. Teachers at Ash Green have met the needs of these pupils extremely well, securing good attendance and positive progress.
- Leaders have a clear awareness of school priorities. They have narrowed the school improvement plan to focus on specific priorities. These approaches have accelerated the pace of improvement in the past year.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school's overall strengths and areas for improvement is largely accurate. They have worked with local schools to check the quality of pupils' work. Standards of assessment are accurate.
- Middle leaders are becoming increasingly responsible for leading improvement. Their actions are enabling pupils to make good progress in mathematics, improving progress in reading and leading to better provision for pupils with SEND. On occasions, middle leaders are not closely aware of the effect of improvement strategies on classroom practice.
- Senior leaders monitor pupils' progress at regular intervals. They accurately identify gaps in curriculum coverage and pupils' progress. Areas of need for individual pupils are shared with staff. These thorough checks on pupils' progress have led to changes to teaching and to additional interventions that are supporting good and improving progress.
- Performance management arrangements are generally effective. The headteacher works with the governing body to set targets that respond to school priorities. The process has supported improvements in teaching and pupils' progress over the past year.
- Leaders use additional funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium to provide support for pupils' academic and personal needs and to provide wider support for families. Leaders use funding to pay for additional support and specific interventions, such as work to support speech and language development. Leaders have also used funding to promote wider involvement in school life by subsidising clubs, trips and before and after-school clubs. These actions are supporting pupils in making good progress in most areas, although their overall attainment remains lower than that of their peers.

- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Leaders encourage a culture of respect and pupils develop an awareness of other faiths and cultures. Leaders ensure that pupils access a wide variety of trips and visits to expand their horizons and develop their self-confidence. Pupils do experience breadth in the curriculum through the study of appropriate content in science, geography and history, although they do not develop subject-specific skills in sufficient detail.
- Funding from the government to promote sport and increase physical activity is being used to increase pupils' participation in a wider variety of competitive sports. Funding has also been used to purchase sporting equipment to provide more purposeful sporting activity in the school yard.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors have considerable expertise and experience and know the school and the community extremely well. They use their expertise as faith leaders, council leaders, parents and childcare providers to provide the right balance of support and challenge and effectively hold leaders to account.
- Governors have a strong understanding of school performance. They are able to unpack performance information to gain a clear picture of the progress that pupils make. They were aware of the decline in reading progress two years ago and have closely monitored the improvements leaders have secured in this area.
- Governors are highly supportive of the headteacher and the local community. However, they do not shy away from difficult decisions and have supported the headteacher in insisting upon high standards of conduct for parents and visitors to the school site.
- Governors share the headteacher's sense of moral purpose. They have supported the headteacher in welcoming pupils to the school who have previously experienced disaffection, despite the effect this has, sometimes, had on outcomes. They hold the headteacher effectively to account for the effect of additional funding.
- Governors have a strong understanding of the school budget and provide effective financial oversight. They work with the headteacher to check that important aspects of the school's provision are sustained in a more challenging financial climate.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have developed a strong ethos of safeguarding and ensure that all staff are continually mindful of pupils' welfare. A number of staff are trained to a high level to ensure that safeguarding expertise is distributed across both school sites.
- Leaders carry out thorough checks to ensure the suitability of adults working on site. They also ensure that staff and governors receive up-to-date training on a range of safeguarding issues. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of safeguarding policies and practices.
- Leaders are proactive in taking action to promote pupils' welfare. Through the work of the family support worker and the home-school link manager, the school actively reaches out to the local community to provide care and support for pupils and families.

In many cases, the school acts as a crucial link between families and other support services.

- Concerns over pupils' welfare are swiftly addressed. Leaders ensure that welfare concerns are documented in a timely and thorough manner. This helps them to keep a watchful eye on any emerging concerns.
- Children feel safe in school and value the support of teachers and other adults. Leaders provide a suitable programme of activities to make children aware of the actions they can take to keep themselves safe on the roads, online and from the possible threats posed by strangers.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Over time, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment supports good and improving progress for the large majority of pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants help pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning.
- Teachers have successfully introduced new strategies to improve pupils' reading. Pupils are reading a wider range of texts in class and have more regular opportunities to read independently. Additional interventions with teaching assistants are helping pupils to develop their inference and deduction skills. At key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils used effective reading strategies to read clearly to inspectors.
- At key stage 1, teachers effectively model the links between letters and sounds. This high-quality phonics teaching has enabled increasing proportions of pupils to achieve the required standard in the phonics screening check.
- Teachers are placing increasing emphasis upon building pupils' understanding of new vocabulary. Teachers provide visual prompts to enable pupils to visualise the links between new words and their meaning. Pupils used these strategies to develop an understanding of unfamiliar vocabulary in William Blake's 'The Tyger'.
- Teachers have successfully developed a range of strategies to develop pupils' mathematical understanding. Teachers help pupils to acquire an awareness of different methods that enable them to complete a number of calculations. Over time, teachers have refined their approaches to provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical reasoning. As a result, pupils make good progress in mathematics.
- Teaching is complemented by a range of support and additional interventions that helps pupils to make better progress. Recent actions, to diagnose needs and monitor progress, are leading to improving provision and progress for pupils with SEND.
- Assessment systems regularly assess what pupils know, and can do, and enable leaders and teachers to track pupils' progress. As a result, teachers identify any underachievement swiftly. Teachers provide effective feedback in line with the school's policy that helps pupils to improve the quality of their work.
- Teachers use inspirational trips and visits to set a meaningful context for writing. A recent trip to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park prompted some effective biographical writing on Barbara Hepworth. Teachers provide scaffolds to help pupils to plan their writing and build vocabulary. While these approaches contributed to good progress at the end of key stage 2 in 2018, variance remains in other year groups. Teachers do not

provide regular opportunities for pupils to write at length. As a consequence, standards of handwriting vary, with some pupils lacking confidence in writing in pen.

- Teaching does not consistently provide opportunities for pupils to work at greater depths of understanding. While teachers are seeking to build increasing challenge into the curriculum, opportunities for pupils to work at greater depth are still sometimes overlooked.
- Teaching helps pupils to develop appropriate subject knowledge in subjects such as science, history and geography. However, the range of curriculum coverage is not sufficiently broad and pupils do not develop their skills in these subjects in sufficient depth.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Staff demonstrate a close awareness of the needs of each child. The headteacher welcomes each child and parent by name each day. This understanding of pupils' needs makes personal welfare so effective. As one parent wrote: 'I think it is brilliant how the head teacher and other members of staff know each child individually and know their needs.'
- The headteacher has established a culture that is founded on mutual support and respect. Teachers develop pupils' self-esteem in weekly reward assemblies where they celebrate their accomplishments. Pupils are encouraged to participate and share their views as they know that their contributions will be valued.
- Pupils are given a range of responsibilities as school council leaders and in managing sporting activities in the playground. They develop their social confidence and resilience through regular trips and opportunities to interact with visitors.
- Pupils feel that bullying is rare and are very confident that adults would address any unacceptable behaviour.
- Leaders are aware of the need to develop healthy lifestyles. They provide pupils with healthy food and snacks and encourage pupils to participate in physical activities. They do much to promote pupils' emotional and social welfare.
- The school has long-established systems to support the welfare of pupils and families. Leaders appointed their own trained social worker to work with pupils and families 10 years ago. This provides help to address concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- Leaders work with pupils to develop an awareness of personal safety. In discussion, pupils showed an awareness of the actions they could take to stay safe on the roads and online and how to avoid the potential threats posed by strangers.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Teachers encourage positive behaviours and routines from the early years onwards. Pupils enter assemblies in an orderly manner and move around the school site respectfully.

- Pupils are proud of their school and their community. Displays around the school reflect their wide range of accomplishments and their regular contributions to a range of charities.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and the vast majority of pupils display positive attitudes to learning. Pastoral support for pupils with additional behavioural needs is used well to overcome barriers and secure productive involvement in school life.
- A number of pupils have joined the school from other schools where they previously experienced problems with aspects of their behaviour management. These pupils have thrived at Ash Green, where their progress and attendance has increased as a result of effective support. Exclusion is very rare.
- Pupils value their education and attendance is in line with that seen nationally. The home-school link manager works with parents to secure good levels of attendance. Through successful intervention and support, pupils with previously high rates of absence are attending more regularly.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Current pupils are making good progress in English and mathematics. Books show that pupils make good progress from their starting points that accelerates over time. They achieve progress that is now better than, or in line with, their peers nationally, although differences remain in the proportions working at greater depths of understanding.
- At key stage 2 in 2018, pupils made very good progress in mathematics. This is further reflected in the quality of pupils' work in books in other year groups. Pupils develop confidence in mathematical operations and show increasing success in responding to more challenging problems.
- Leaders have worked with staff successfully to counteract a decline in reading progress. They have introduced a number of strategies to build pupils' knowledge of vocabulary and their inference and deduction skills. As a result, pupils made much better progress in 2018, achieving progress that is now broadly in line with that of their peers nationally.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have supported pupils' reading development at key stage 1 through the effective teaching of phonics. Increasing proportions of pupils achieved the required outcomes in the 2018 phonics screening check. Pupils used their understanding of the links between letters and sounds to read effectively to inspectors.
- Pupils made good progress in writing at the end of key stage 2 in 2018. It was better than that of their peers nationally. Local authority moderation processes confirmed that teachers have an accurate understanding of standards. However, standards of writing are more variable in other year groups as pupils do not develop confidence writing at length and insufficient care is taken with handwriting.
- In 2018, pupils achieved better outcomes at key stage 1 in reading and mathematics. This represented good progress from their starting points at the end of Reception. Although attainment remained below that seen nationally, differences are diminishing. Evidence in books, and in school progress information, shows that pupils are continuing to make better progress at key stage 1.

- Through better teaching and more focused support, disadvantaged pupils made good and improving progress in writing and mathematics and much-improved progress in reading. However, differences in attainment remain.
- Effective teaching and better-quality support are helping pupils with SEND to make good progress and catch up with their peers.
- Pupils' knowledge and cultural understanding is enriched by the wider curriculum. They experience trips to galleries and places of interest that develop their understanding of the arts, the environment and different faiths. However, pupils do not develop their subject-specific knowledge in science, history and geography in sufficient depth.

## Early years provision

## Requires improvement

- The overall provision in the early years requires improvement. The good start that children receive in Nursery class is not built upon with sufficient pace and purpose in Reception class.
- Children arrive at school with skills and abilities that are well below those typical for their age. Aspects of numeracy and speech and language are particularly low. In Nursery class, effective nurture and support helps to develop children's physical development and their moving and handling skills. Teachers and teaching assistants talk effectively with children to develop their confidence.
- In Reception class, children are not consistently engaged in productive learning activities. This creates variability in their progress and development. The learning environment does not stimulate children in the manner that is seen elsewhere in the school.
- In Reception class, children do not have regular opportunities to develop their understanding of letters and numbers. While some opportunities are available for emergent writing, children are not encouraged to develop these skills regularly. Teachers and teaching assistants do not address gaps in learning with the urgency that is seen at key stages 1 and 2.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception is below that seen nationally. Although there are some signs of improvement, progress is weaker than is seen in other phases as expectations are not as high.
- Leaders are working with parents to heighten their involvement in their children's learning. They share examples of children's learning to encourage better learning at home.
- Leaders develop the curriculum to provide children with experiences that widen children's knowledge of the world. The expansive experiences and trips that support learning at key stages 1 and 2 are also an important aspect of the curriculum in the early years.
- Leaders use additional funding to provide additional support for children and families and to provide specific interventions, such as speech and language support.
- Teachers monitor children's progress closely and record this appropriately. Children's work and progress is captured through a variety of tasks and activities. On occasions, assessment does not inform the next steps in children's learning.



- Safeguarding practices in the early years are largely effective. There are no breaches of statutory welfare requirements. The high levels of care and support that define much of the school's work extend to the early years.

## School details

Unique reference number	107534
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10042193

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	453
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Barry Collins
Headteacher	Mr Mungo Sheppard
Telephone number	01422 244613
Website	<a href="http://www.ashgreen.info">www.ashgreen.info</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@ashgreen.calderdale.sch.uk">admin@ashgreen.calderdale.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	4–5 December 2013

## Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND support is broadly average.
- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club that is run by school staff.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in a wide range of lessons across both school sites. The headteacher joined inspectors on a number of these observations.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and middle leaders.
- Inspectors met with five members of the governing body, including the chair and the vice-chair.
- The inspectors met the school improvement partner and a senior representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors met groups of pupils across both sites and talked to pupils about their learning and experiences at the school in lessons and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in different year groups.
- The inspectors carried out an extensive review of pupils' books.
- Inspectors looked at the school's development plans and information on pupils' progress. They also considered arrangements for safeguarding and scrutinised records relating to attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors took into account 54 responses to Ofsted's parent view questionnaire and 34 free-text responses from parents. They also considered 62 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 32 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Malcolm Kirtley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Tracey Ralph	Her Majesty's Inspector

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