

Inspection of a good school: Ash Grange Primary School

Ash Church Road, Ash, Aldershot, Hampshire GU12 6LX

Inspection dates:

11–12 February 2020

Outcome

Ash Grange Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school that celebrates the successes of all pupils. The school's values of 'we care, we learn, we shine' are at the heart of all the school does. Pupils feel safe and valued because the staff team are ambitious and dedicated to doing their very best for all the pupils.

Leaders have worked tirelessly to create a strong sense of community that includes all pupils, parents and staff. Parents know that the school will do all it can to help pupils and their families to succeed.

Pupils are proud of the responsibilities they are given as they progress through the school. They feel listened to and play a significant role in the running of the school. Pupils take on a variety of leadership roles. For example, the head gardeners in Year 6 are responsible for maintaining the nature area and ensuring that the school site is tidy and well looked after.

Pupils are polite and friendly to each other. Teachers set clear expectations for behaviour and pupils rise to these. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that teachers always help them resolve any problems they have.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to do well. The curriculum for English and mathematics is well planned and sequenced. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to provide clear explanations and address misconceptions that pupils may have. As a result, pupils achieve well in English and mathematics.

Leaders have ensured that the teaching of reading is given a high priority. Phonics is taught systematically to help pupils learn new sounds. Children practise new sounds through reading books that match these sounds. The majority of pupils develop a love of reading because their teachers read them interesting books. Pupils enjoy choosing books

to read themselves from the extensive library at school. As pupils progress with their reading they are given books by the school to take home and keep. Pupils value these personal libraries and speak enthusiastically about the books they have chosen. Children who fall behind with their reading are given help to catch up, but this is not always helping them catch up quickly enough. Staff do not always have the skills they need to help pupils who are struggling to read well enough.

Leaders have ensured that pupils experience a broad and interesting curriculum. Teachers adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have improved the curriculum by developing learning certificates that identify the most important knowledge pupils need to remember each year. These have been in place for all subjects since September 2019. Teachers use the certificates to check what pupils already know about a subject and what they need to learn next. This is helping pupils to know and remember more. However, sometimes teachers do not make clear enough the links between what is currently being taught and what pupils have learned before. As a result, some pupils do not build new knowledge securely enough to help them move on to the next part of the curriculum.

Children in the pre-school, Nursery Year and Reception Year classes get off to a great start. The curriculum has been carefully designed to help children develop their speech and language skills. The inviting early years classrooms are carefully organised and children enjoy playing and learning together. Children in early years achieve well.

Pupils enjoy the wide range of learning opportunities on offer to them. Teachers design lessons that interest pupils. For example, pupils in Year 5 enthusiastically took part in a science lesson where they had to choose the best way to separate different materials. Too many pupils miss out on these interesting lessons because their attendance is not good enough. Leaders know this and are working hard to improve attendance further.

Leaders have ensured that pupils' personal development is given a high priority. This has resulted in pupils having a good understanding of equalities. They respect the similarities and differences they share. Each class is linked to a charity through fund raising. This provides pupils with the opportunity to reflect on local and global issues. During the inspection, pupils were keen to share their plans to make chocolate to sell to help raise money for their chosen charities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The headteacher and governors make sure that staff are well trained in safeguarding. Any concerns are responded to quickly and external support is requested when needed. This extra help supports pupils' well-being. Governors and leaders make sure that the appropriate checks are carried out on new staff.

Pupils are taught well about how to keep themselves safe. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online and are also aware of local risks such as the nearby railway track.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Work to strengthen the teaching of reading and pupils' love of books has been effective overall. Most pupils achieve well with their reading, but the weakest readers do not catch up quickly enough. Leaders need to ensure that training for staff in the teaching of reading equips them with the skills they need to help the weakest pupils become fluent readers.
- Leaders have recently made improvements to the curriculum and identified the key knowledge they want pupils to learn in different year groups. This is beginning to have a positive impact, but some pupils have not remembered important knowledge and skills well enough. Leaders should ensure that all teachers provide opportunities for pupils to understand how new learning links to what has previously been taught and that they can apply what they know confidently before moving on.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve rates of attendance. There are signs that attendance is improving but it remains below the national average and persistent absence is too high. Leaders need to redouble their efforts to improve attendance so that attendance rises, and persistent absence falls.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 14–15 June 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	125116
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10122293
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Vicky Hallewell
Headteacher	Mrs Marie Curtis
Website	www.new.ash-grange.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 June 2016

Information about this school

- The school has provision for children aged two and over. These are taught in the pre-school and Nursery classes before moving into the Reception class.

Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with senior leaders, curriculum leaders and teachers.
- I evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. I reviewed the school's single central record. I met with the school's safeguarding leads and reviewed documentation relating to safeguarding.
- I met with pupils to hear their views about school.
- I scrutinised the 49 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and free-text responses.
- I met with representatives of the governing body.
- I did deep dives in: reading, mathematics and science. I discussed the way the curriculum was designed with leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils and reviewed their workbooks, and spoke with teachers.

Inspection team

James Freeston, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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