



Ascot Heath Church of England Junior School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 109986
LEA Bracknell Forest LEA
Inspection number 278331
Inspection dates 4 July 2006 to 5 July 2006
Reporting inspector John Earish AI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Rhododendron Walk
School category	Voluntary controlled		Ascot
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		SL5 8PN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01344 883353
Number on roll	239	Fax number	01344 882521
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs H Quillish
Date of previous inspection	8 May 2000	Headteacher	Mrs J Graham

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Ascot Heath is a very popular junior school in North Ascot. The school serves families from a variety of social backgrounds, with many pupils from relatively advantaged homes. Almost all are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above that found nationally. Two children have statements of special educational need.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. This is a good and effective school with some outstanding features. It gives good value for money.

Almost all of parents and pupils hold their school in very high regard. Their views are fully justified. The quality of education, including teaching, is good. The teachers know how well their pupils are doing and are good at using what they know to ensure that they make good progress. Standards are high in English, mathematics and science. In information and communication technology (ICT) standards have improved since the last inspection but are not quite as high as in other subjects. The pupils' good behaviour and the high standard of their personal development contribute strongly to the very good climate for learning in all classes. Pupils are extremely well cared for and feel safe and happy. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. A highly committed staff team and the governing body give her very good support. Together, they have developed an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and have devised a clear plan for the further improvement of the school. For example, the school has identified the need to upgrade the already satisfactory provision for ICT in order to raise standards further. The school has made good progress since its last inspection, and is well placed to develop further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in ICT by improving provision and giving pupils more opportunities to extend their skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are high in all classes. The school's performance in the national tests at the end of Year 6 is well above the national averages. Throughout the school, most pupils make good progress and are sustaining high levels of performance. This occurs because they are taught well, they are given challenging targets to achieve, and their rates of progress in meeting these targets are rigorously checked. This year's results, as yet unconfirmed, show a further increase in the proportion achieving the higher Level 5 in English and science.

All groups of pupils are achieving well, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. At the time of the last inspection, standards in ICT were satisfactory and pupils were making satisfactory progress. Standards have improved, although they are not quite as high as those achieved in English, mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Opportunities for reflection are built into the day and pupils develop a remarkable understanding of spirituality because of the sensitive support they are given by their teachers. Pupils are confident and happy. They value their school greatly and enjoy the many opportunities that it offers. Children say they, 'love school because teachers make learning fun'. They attend very regularly, enjoy being at school, show very positive attitudes to learning and behave well, which is further evidence that they are very happy at school.

Pupils think of school as a safe place to be and have confidence in knowing that they can ask an adult for help if they need it. They are well aware of the importance of healthy eating and staying fit. Pupils participate fully in games, physical education lessons and the good range of sports clubs the school offers. They contribute extremely well to community decisions through the school council. The pupils are very aware of how important it is to help others both in school and the wider community. For example, older pupils act as peer mediators at playtimes and buddies to the youngest children. The youngest children commented that, 'It was great to have a buddy to go to when we first started school'. They raise money for charities such as the Tsunami appeal, Heart Foundation and Child Brains Injury Trust. The high standards achieved in English, mathematics and science prepares them very well for future citizenship and life-long learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is effective because teachers know pupils well, have high expectations of them and plan work that matches their individual needs and capabilities. Teachers have strong classroom management skills and are adept at creating a climate which is very conducive to learning. In most classes, teachers make lessons interesting and enjoyable through a variety of teaching styles and methods. Consequently, pupils achieve well.

Where teaching is particularly good, lessons are briskly paced and skilful questioning challenges pupils' understanding. The enjoyment of learning was plainly evident when one pupil exclaimed, 'Science is the best lesson'. However, occasionally teaching, although satisfactory, does not fully engage all pupils within the class because of the way learning is planned or managed, and then progress slows.

Assessment and the analysis of data are strong and the information is used well to identify individual pupil's targets for improvement. As a result pupils know what they need to do to improve. The termly assessment books, which provide examples of pupils'

work, are a valuable monitoring tool; not least for the pupils themselves who enjoy looking back over their own achievements.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides an interesting and stimulating curriculum, which is enriched by a good number and range of out-of-class activities. The planned curriculum provides effectively for the needs of all pupils, ranging from those with learning difficulties and disabilities to those who are high attainers. They have many opportunities to visit places of interest that support their learning. Pupils in Year 6 are given very good opportunities for independent research during their residential visit to Derbyshire. Annual theme weeks provide highlights that the pupils remember for a long time. For instance, a V.E. (Victory in Europe) Day street party allowed elderly people to talk with pupils about their war memories, the results of which have been archived as a resource for when pupils study 'Britain Since the 1930s' in the future.

Pupils' personal development is very well planned for through the school's personal, social and health education programme which effectively raises pupils' awareness of staying safe and keeping healthily. There is very good provision for the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The pupils make use of ICT across the curriculum but there is scope to create more opportunities to extend their skills and raise standards further to match those achieved in English, mathematics and science. Interactive whiteboards are used effectively to enliven classroom discussions. The school has prioritised the upgrading of existing satisfactory provision in ICT in order to give pupils more opportunities to extend their skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The very high level of care and support given to pupils throughout the school contributes significantly to their enjoyment of school and their eagerness to learn. The most significant factors are the exceptionally high degree of teamwork, the professionalism of staff and the very good communications between the school, parents, governors and other agencies. The school has robust procedures for child protection and for assessing and dealing with risks. The importance the school gives to promoting a healthy lifestyle for pupils effectively shapes their attitudes to health, including food and physical activities. Parents are confident that pupils are safe and well cared for while in school. They were particularly complimentary of the way in which the school helped pupils following the recent death of a popular young teacher. The care for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is exceptionally strong. The parents speak highly of this, as one parent said, 'A true partnership exists between home and school'.

Assessment information is used very well by the school to set challenging personal targets for improvements. Teachers measure pupils' progress and the school keeps full records of the levels they have reached and those they should aim for.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher is a very effective leader, and is supported well by her senior management team. She shows a strong determination to ensure that all pupils reach their potential. She has high expectations of what can be achieved, and these are consistently realised. The senior management team know the school very well and make very good use of information gathered through their regular monitoring to guide its development. The school self evaluation is of good quality, although judgements about personal development and care are too modest. Parents', carers' and pupils' views are sought and acted upon. The monitoring of teaching is equally robust. The outcomes are shared with teachers and used to inform staff training and curriculum development. Subject coordinators monitor their areas of responsibility well and use the information which they gather to make useful contributions to the school's improvement. The school is developing the skills of less experienced coordinators so they are able to monitor and promote good practice in their subjects.

The governing body is extremely good at supporting and challenging the school and in meeting its statutory responsibilities. It is very well organised and fulfils its responsibilities by means of an effective committee structure. Governors are very aware of the shortcomings of the accommodation and are discussing ways of extending the building within the limitations of the school budget. Staffing and resources for learning are well considered and their effectiveness appropriately evaluated. The many improvements since the last inspection provide ample evidence that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

Following our visit to inspect your school we would like to tell you what we think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn. We enjoyed being with you, seeing you work and listening to your experiences and views.

There are lots of things that we liked about your school. Some of them are: * you are able to learn in a very friendly and caring school; you behave well and you get on very well with each other * the headteacher and all the adults are very good at helping you to do your best * you listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and try very hard in your lessons * the school council represents your views very well and you all help the school to run smoothly * your teachers spend a lot of time looking at what you have done in class and working out how to help you to make your work even better * you like all the clubs, visits and after school activities the school has organised for you; you especially like the theme weeks and residential visit * we were particular impressed with the diaries kept by Year 6 pupils during the residential visit to Derbyshire.

We think your school is already good. To make it even better, however, we are asking teachers to give you even more opportunities to improve your computer skills.

Yours sincerely,

John Earish

Lead Inspector