



# Pond Meadow School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 125467  
**LEA** Surrey LEA  
**Inspection number** 281939  
**Inspection dates** 21 March 2006 to 22 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mike Smith AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special	<b>School address</b>	Pond Meadow
<b>School category</b>	Community		Guildford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 19		GU2 8YG
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01483532239
<b>Number on roll</b>	68	<b>Fax number</b>	01483537049
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Margaret Taylor
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Monk

<b>Age group</b> 2 to 19	<b>Inspection dates</b> 21 March 2006 - 22 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 281939
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional inspector.

## Description of the school

Pond Meadow is a split-site community special school in Surrey for girls and boys between the ages of 2 and 19. All pupils have statements of educational need as a result of their severe, complex and profound learning difficulties, autism or acute medical conditions. Pre-school and primary aged pupils are based at the main site and there are three class bases at the local secondary school one mile away, for pupils aged between 14 and 19. The school runs a specialist nursery class for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder managed through a joint school, LEA, health, social services and parent group. A very small number of pupils are eligible for free school meals and a similarly small number are from minority ethnic backgrounds or at an early stage of English language acquisition. These proportions are lower than is found nationally. The school is involved in a number of innovative developments, including being a founder member of the local Confederation of Primary, Secondary and Special Schools, a member of the 14 to 19 Guildford Partnership and the Surrey SLD/ASD Network Learning Community.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 1**

Pond Meadow is an inclusive school that provides an excellent education for all its pupils. The school identified many strengths before the inspection and judged its own effectiveness as good. The inspection judges the school to be better than this. One parent wrote to say that, 'the work done at the school has not only helped my son, but has had a positive effect on our family life'. The headteacher has an excellent vision for school improvement which is always centred on pupil development, progress and achievement. All staff ensure pupils achieve their best and are happy and confident. Teaching is good overall with examples of excellence across all age groups. Therapists and support and nursing staff work very effectively together to ensure pupils' needs are fully met. The very best practice is not yet sufficiently shared across the school to help improve the consistency of learning opportunities. The effective curriculum meets the needs and interests of all the pupils and is well supported by additional activities. Some parents would like more information about what is to be covered in lessons each term.

The school has developed very good monitoring and evaluating processes and has a very good capacity to improve further. There have been enormous transformations since the last inspection, with all areas being effectively improved. The accommodation has improved, although specialist areas for practical work are still not available on the main site. This will be resolved when the school moves to its new building in January 2008. Parents are extremely supportive of all the school does and are grateful for the support they themselves receive. The school provides very good value for money.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils in the 16 to 19 age range continue to work to individual programmes and have good access to appropriate life skill activities, work related opportunities and accredited courses. They are very well prepared for life after school and their achievement and progress is very good.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- \* Develop strategies for sharing the best teaching across the school.
- \* Supply parents with advance information on the curriculum to be covered each term.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Across the school pupils make very good progress overall in relation to their individual targets and many make outstanding progress as they move through the school. The gains they make are closely linked to the severity of their learning difficulties. Many pupils move from low levels of pre-national curriculum achievement levels (P-levels)

when they enter the school to much higher levels when they leave, having also gained success in nationally accredited awards, at levels appropriate to their needs and ability. Other pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) and those with multiple and complex learning needs make very good progress in communicating and in developing their social skills so that they become as independent as possible before they leave school. The school increasingly looks to use what comparative data is available to plot the progress of their pupils. The data available shows that many pupils with severe learning difficulties make progress in advance of their peers nationally and those pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties make progress in line with national expectations.

Pupils in the ASD nursery and school nursery make excellent progress in communicating and developing their self-awareness and enjoyment for learning. As a result of effective planning and support, pupils in the 14 to 19 group acquire skills that equip them very well for the next stage in their learning and for life after school. The school makes effective use of its knowledge of how pupils are doing to ensure they progress in their learning through setting challenging targets. Individual pupil tracking is very good and the rigorous monitoring and recording of pupil progress is a strength of the school. Parents are very pleased with the progress their children are making and one parent's comment was typical of many, 'The school has enabled my daughter to mature, learn, make progress and express herself in a happy and structured environment'.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils' personal development plays a central role in the school's work and has a very positive impact on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is excellent. Pupils behave very well and any challenging behaviour which occurs because of their difficulties is excellently managed by staff, minimising any disruption. Pupils of all ages clearly show their pleasure at being in school and parents report that their children are very happy coming to school. One parent said 'my daughter gets very excited every time we arrive at school, so she is obviously very happy to be there'. Pupils' attendance is good and the school maintains close supportive links with families. Pupils participate enthusiastically in lessons and show a good level of independence even in the youngest classes. Despite their difficulties, pupils are actively involved in making a contribution to the life of the school and are involved in 'Pupil Voice' activities both within the curriculum and with the Network Learning Community. The school council considers matters that are important to pupils, such as choosing new play equipment for break-time activities. Older pupils design and produce weekly newsletters and successfully engage in work related learning, enterprise projects and charity fund raising.

A healthy lifestyle is actively promoted and the school has achieved the Healthy School Award. Overall, through good teaching, excellent guidance and targeted support, pupils are being effectively equipped with the skills they will need in their future lives.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

Pupils do very well in their lessons because all staff work very effectively together to ensure that work is well matched to their challenging individual targets. This ensures there is good progression in their learning. Relationships are excellent, as is the management of pupils which enables them to be confident and happy in their learning. Teaching is good overall with examples of excellence across all age groups. Support staff ensure that all pupils get full access to the curriculum and can maximise their individual learning. Pupil assessment is used very well to inform teacher's planning and ensure work is carefully matched to pupils' needs. There is regular monitoring of lessons by senior staff and supportive feedback is given to help teachers further improve. The very good teaching that is evident in some lessons could be shared more widely across the school in order to increase consistency. In the very best lessons, teachers provide a wide range of stimulating and motivating activities with effective use of signing and visual aids. All pupils' needs are carefully considered. There is effective and continuous monitoring and recording of pupil activity, progress and achievement which is integrated into further planning and it is made very clear to pupils how they may improve. There is a positive reward and celebration ethos in lessons and the strong teamwork between teachers, support staff, school nurse and therapists ensures that all pupils make good and often very good progress.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The curriculum is effectively meeting the wide range of pupils' needs. Personal, social and health education, together with citizenship, is at the heart of its development. It concentrates on personal development, individual health and care and helps pupils of all ages develop a sense of self-awareness and a sense of community. School life and experiences are enhanced by visitors coming to the school and visits by pupils into the community. During the inspection a group of musicians from the Yehudi Menuhin School entertained the pupils who were thrilled and mesmerised by the performances. A football coach also visited the school to take a lunchtime activity on the playground; again this was greatly appreciated by those pupils involved. There are very good links with adult education, leisure facilities, the Community Centre and University that all provide a range of learning experiences that enhance the curriculum. Pupils in the 14 to 19 group benefit from accessing mainstream lessons in design and technology and food technology and attending the 'cyber' cafe; for their lunch. Older pupils are well prepared for the future through vocational studies, work related learning and work experience placements. One parent said 'the varied and challenging curriculum has provided our daughter with a series of activities and learning opportunities that can only be beneficial to her as she grows into a young adult'. Some parents said they would like more information about what is to be covered each term so they can support their children more effectively.

Pupils receive very effective advice and support when decisions have to be made about their future life after school. Currently the school still suffers from a lack of specialist accommodation in terms of practical activities. They are greatly looking forward to January 2008 when the school moves to its brand new building on a secondary school site that will have excellent facilities to support the full curriculum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school provides a very high level of care, guidance and support. It places the individual pupil at the heart of everything it does. Education, medical and support staff work very closely together to meet the individual needs of all pupils who have a personalised plan of activities and targets precisely matched to their needs and interests. Academic, personal and social progress is continuously monitored and assessed. Parents are very complimentary about the service the school provides. One parent said, 'the staff always show concern and are helpful regarding the whole child as well as for his academic progress'. Parents greatly appreciate the school/home book, their 'Bible' that enables them to prompt discussions with their child when they return from school.

The school has created a warm, friendly, learning environment in which pupils are kept safe and can flourish. Staff give generously of their time to ensure any pupil anxieties are comforted and there is effective access to any medical or other support that may be required. The arrangements for child protection are very well managed and pupils who can, say they feel safe in school and 'teachers care about us'. Careers education and guidance for pupils is relevant and courses at local colleges enable pupils to experience a range of vocational options, for example, animal husbandry. Pupils have well planned opportunities to learn about the world of work which enhances and develops their confidence and independence and prepares them for life after school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are excellent. The headteacher has a dynamic, inspirational and supportive leadership style and a clear vision of improvement that has pupils' achievement at the heart of all school development. Together the headteacher, governors and senior staff have led significant improvements since the last inspection. There are effective systems for self-evaluation within the school and the views of the parents, pupils, community and support services are taken into account. Morale is high and the staff have very good and regular professional development opportunities linked to school needs. The support staff in particular are very well trained and supported by the school nurse to meet the physical and medical needs of all pupils.

The school has developed very effective systems of monitoring, recording and assessing pupils' progress and it uses the data very well at pupil level to identify rates of progress across the different groups of pupils. Monitoring procedures for improving the quality of education are well established and performance management for teachers is now

in place, although not as yet for support staff. Governance of the school is good. Although currently a lot of time is taken up with the necessary planning for the new school, supporting committees keep themselves well informed about school developments. All statutory requirements are met and governors provide a good level of challenge to ensure developments are driven forward. The school is very well placed to improve further and provides excellent value for money.



**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	1

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

### Pupils

Thank you all for talking to me and helping me to do my job. I really enjoyed my time in your school and looking at your work. A special thanks to those on the school council who I met and who explained to me what was good about the school (other than the biscuits).

This is what I thought about your school: \* You all receive an excellent education and you are cared for extremely well. \* You are very well behaved, friendly and get on very well with all the staff. \* You enjoy coming to school, are happy in your lessons and make good progress, particularly with your communication. \* Your mums and dads really appreciate what the school does for you. \* Your headteacher and all the staff do their best to make sure you are happy and have everything you need to succeed. They listen to you carefully. \* Your school knows what it is good at and how it can improve even more. \* Your progress is recorded very carefully and staff let you know how you can get even better. You are well prepared for life after school.

There are a few things the school can do to make it even better: \* The good and very good teaching in your lessons can be shared between teachers more effectively. \* The school could give your mums and dads more information about what you are about to learn each term, so they can help you at home. Once again, thank you for your help and making my visit such a pleasant one.

Yours sincerely,

M.J. Smith

Lead Inspector