



# Ash Green Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 107534  
**Local Authority** Calderdale  
**Inspection number** 287843  
**Inspection date** 16 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Philip Cole

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Mixenden Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Mixenden, Halifax
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11		West Yorkshire HX2 8QD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01422 244613
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	419	<b>Fax number</b>	01422 231199
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr B Collins
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr D Kirk
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 September 2001		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a large village school that serves an area of local authority built housing. Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage. Over half are entitled to free school meals and movement in and out of the school is much higher than usual. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that in most other schools. In 2005, a neighbouring school closed and was then incorporated into Ash Green. The school now operates on the three sites.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Ash Green is an outstanding school. There is a driving determination to ensure that pupils and adults in the school reach their full potential. This commitment is reflected in the renewal of the nationally recognised Investors in People award. The school works tirelessly to support the families of vulnerable pupils and to improve the community it serves. Its holistic approach to education pays impressive dividends by underpinning the outstanding personal development and progress made by all pupils. Parents are kept very well informed and are rightly proud of their school. They are delighted by the 'amazing' way all the new pupils have settled in and have been helped to succeed. Staff who work at the school describe the enlarged Ash Green as 'one in a million', where 'All children matter, learning is fun and it is a pleasure to come to work'. Pupils clearly love coming to school: their attendance is above average despite the difficulties faced by many of their families. They feel safe, well looked after and increasingly self-assured because the school values what they have to say and goes that extra mile to make their lives better.

Children come into the recently developed Foundation Stage units with levels of attainment well below those expected for their age. They make good progress but they are still below expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils make consistently excellent progress year on year so that, by Year 6, standards are in line with national averages. Prior to the enlargement of the school, standards had edged above national averages. Many of the children who entered Ash Green from the neighbouring school did so with low standards, particularly in science. In Ash Green, these children have flourished and made extremely impressive gains in their learning but, inevitably, their achievement overall is weaker than the other pupils in the school. This caused dips in standards in the school's national test results in 2005 and 2006, particularly in science. Nevertheless, achievement overall has been significantly better than in schools nationally. Given the starting points of the pupils, achievement is outstanding.

Outstanding teaching makes a major contribution to the excellent progress that pupils make. There is great consistency in the quality of teaching across the school. Teaching is purposeful and delivered skilfully. It is enjoyed by pupils, who often show delight in what they are doing. Tasks are well matched to their different needs. An outstanding curriculum meets pupils' learning and personal development needs extremely well because it is regularly reviewed and fine tuned in light of what analysis of assessments show. It is enriched through carefully chosen visits and a wide range of well attended clubs.

Teachers provide excellent feedback to pupils when they mark their work and agree targets with them. These targets are based on regular and rigorous assessments, and are well matched to what each pupil needs to learn next. As a result, pupils have a very good understanding of what they need to do to improve. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early, closely monitored and given well focused help which ensures that they make excellent progress. Overall, the care, guidance and support given to pupils are outstanding. All benefit from the excellent

management of behaviour and safeguarding of pupils, which enables them to enjoy learning in a calm, stable and safe environment. The home and school liaison team works tirelessly to support and resolve the problems faced by vulnerable pupils and their families. The extended provision, before school and well into the evening, is very popular, enriches learning and makes a significant contribution to the well-being of pupils and the community.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher strives for excellence, skilfully involves everyone in this quest and is not averse to taking considered risks in order to find the best solutions to problems. Very effective teams keep a consistently strong focus on driving up standards and achievement and they ensure that the school runs smoothly, uses its resources efficiently to achieve its aims and always has the welfare of pupils at its heart. The school rigorously monitors and evaluates its performance and this underpins extremely effective planning and implementation of improvements. Governors know the school exceptionally well and confidently fulfil their role in holding it to account. The school provides excellent value for money and its capacity to improve is outstanding.

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

- Enable all pupils with deficits in their learning in science to reach their full potential.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Children in the Foundation Stage make impressive progress in their personal, social and emotional development and good progress in the other areas of learning. Progress has not been as strong in language and mathematical development and the school has made changes to the way these are taught. These changes are beginning to make a positive impact. Until the reorganisation in 2005, standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science had been consistently in line with national averages at Key Stage 1 and had been rising from below average to just above average in Key Stage 2. When pupils transferred to Ash Green, they had considerable deficits in their learning. Since then, they have made exceptional progress; the gains made by many have been in excess of twice those usually expected. Test results show that pupils whose entire school careers were in Ash Green continued to achieve exceptionally well. All groups of pupils are on track to meet the challenging targets that have been set for them.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The school has worked hard and very successfully to ensure that pupils in this virtually all-White British community have positive attitudes to cultural and religious diversity. Pupils respond extremely well to the excellent arrangements made for their personal development, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

They have good understanding of what they have to do to stay healthy. Pupils are eager to accept responsibility both in and out of school, for example, as junior community wardens. They work well in teams and have very good self-awareness because they are used to evaluating their own performance and setting personal targets. They are very well prepared for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Lessons are always very purposeful because teachers take great care to ensure that pupils understand what they will be learning and what is expected of them, and actively encourage pupils to evaluate how well they have learned. Teachers are enthusiastic and deliver lessons at a cracking pace and this captures pupils' interest and ensures high levels of involvement. Great care is taken to provide work that meets the needs of the different groups and skilful teaching assistants provide very good support to those who require extra help. Marking is used very effectively to show pupils how they can improve and what they need to do to achieve the next step in their learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is very tightly focused on what pupils need to learn and places a strong emphasis on developing basic skills, but not at the expense of other subjects or opportunities to enrich pupils' experiences. For example, three modern foreign languages are taught from Year 1 onwards. Specialist provision is made for music, physical education and information and communication technology and often results in high standards being achieved. Of particular note is the excellent and joyful singing in assembly. A strong programme for personal, social and health education very successfully promotes pupils' personal development.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school provides extended services for pupils and their parents through its children's centre, pre- and after-school care and evening activities between 17.30 and 19.30. These, together with its excellent work with families, place the school firmly in the heart of the community; pupils' well-being and learning benefit enormously from this. The academic progress and pastoral needs of all pupils are rigorously monitored and prompt action is taken to support pupils who may be at risk. There are very effective arrangements to support pupils who are new to the school, and this is helping to ensure that they settle quickly with the least possible disruption to their learning. The exceptional care, guidance and support provided ensure that pupils thrive in this school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The effectiveness of the leadership and management is demonstrated by the excellent way the leadership has managed change to incorporate staff and pupils from another school to form an outstanding school. Now all sites provide the same excellent quality of provision and enjoy the same wholehearted support of the community. The low attainment and achievement of the pupils from the school that closed has been transformed without any significant adverse impact on the performance of the children already in Ash Green. Imaginative structures have been created that ensure extremely effective leadership and management and consistency in provision across the school, on all sites. All issues from the previous inspection have been tackled.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### 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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

We really enjoyed our visit to your wonderful school. We think that you all try very hard in lessons and do really good work.

Your behaviour is excellent and you all get on very well together. Many of you said how much you enjoy coming to school because of the interesting things you do and because you like your teachers so much. You are lucky that you come to a school where all the grown-ups care so well for you and listen to what you have to say. We think the ideas you have had to make your school better, such as making the hall larger so that all the children from both sites can sometimes come together, are really good. We agree with you about the great clubs that you can go to after school on a Wednesday and in the evenings during the week.

Your headteacher, all the other grown-ups and the governors want you to have the best school possible. They are doing all they can to make this happen. We think that your teachers and their assistants do an excellent job. They work very hard to make your lessons exciting and give you work that helps all of you to learn so well. We know that you appreciate the really helpful comments they make in your books and the useful targets they give you. We are sure that these help you to improve what you do.

The results in the Year 6 science test last year were a little disappointing and we want your teachers to make sure that this year's results are as good as they usually are.

Your parents think you come to an excellent school. We agree with them and we are sure you will continue to be very happy there.