

South Ascot Village Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109843
Local Authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	288509
Inspection dates	12–13 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Vanessa Ward

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Nicola Gardiner
Headteacher	Mrs Gillian Cocklin
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2001
School address	All Souls Road South Ascot SL5 9EA
Telephone number	01344 622118
Fax number	01344 876030

Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

South Ascot Primary school is smaller than average, although its numbers are increasing significantly. It is federated with South Ascot Nursery School and the headteacher and governing body manage both schools. A large majority of its pupils are White British. Other pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Fewer pupils than usual speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. The pupils come from a broad mix of social backgrounds. More pupils than is usual join the school between Years 3 and 6. The school provides extended care for pupils before and after school, and during school holidays, and this provision is available to pupils who attend other local schools. Extensive building work has just been completed, to enable the school shortly to become a children's centre.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and has some particular strengths. The curriculum is good, as are the pupils' personal development and well-being. The headteacher and staff have worked hard to make the curriculum interesting for the pupils and to make links between different subjects. Pupils greatly enjoy their lessons and say, 'we are always learning interesting things'. Additional activities, such as a range of clubs, educational visits and visitors, help to enrich pupils' learning. Their understanding of healthy lifestyles is outstanding and they take part enthusiastically in healthy eating and sports activities. Pupils particularly enjoyed the Promotion of Healthy Food Day which took place during the inspection.

Children are given a good start in the Foundation Stage. Good teaching and learning enable them to make good progress. Through Years 1 to 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, standards are average. The school has already identified that more pupils could achieve the higher levels in science and mathematics, and initiatives in these areas are having a positive effect. The school is also aware that standards in reading and writing could be higher and is taking steps to raise achievement. In recent years, standards in Year 2 have fallen, particularly in reading and writing. The school has begun to take action, and the moderated test results for 2007 show improvement. However, standards need to rise further in Years 1 and 2, and to be built on through Years 3 to 6.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good features, and this is helping to improve pupils' achievement. There are some inconsistencies in teaching which prevent it being consistently good. These include how pupils' work is marked and the accuracy of the challenge which is given to different groups of pupils. Good practice in teaching is not routinely shared and monitored among staff.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher is clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses and, with the support of her deputy and staff, has been very successful in improving pupils' personal development. Recent initiatives to improve achievement are beginning to take effect. Frequent staffing changes mean that the influence of subject leaders over developments in their subjects has been inconsistent. The school acknowledges that these leadership roles need to be developed in order to contribute to raising standards.

The majority of parents are supportive of the school. As one parent commented, 'the school has taught our child the value of care and understanding of others'. Several parents commented on the school's effective management of behaviour. A few parents expressed some concerns, but pupils are well aware of the school's procedures for rewards and sanctions and feel that if anyone is bullied or upset the teachers listen and quickly sort it out. Behaviour is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading and writing, paying particular attention to Years 1 and 2.
- Ensure that best practice in teaching is identified and shared with all staff in order to raise the quality of teaching to at least good.
- Increase the skills of subject leaders in leading and managing their subjects.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

When children enter the school, their skills are slightly below those usually found in four-year-olds. By the end of the Foundation Stage their skills are average, being slightly lower in early reading and writing and higher in personal development. Through Years 1 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards have recently improved so that, by the end of Year 6, standards are average. The number of pupils who join the school between Years 3 and 6 presents a particular challenge in terms of enabling pupils to make good progress. Increased numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and behavioural difficulties have contributed to a recent fall in standards at Year 2. The school has introduced a new method for teaching letter sounds and names and this is beginning to have a positive effect on standards in reading and writing. Initiatives to increase the profile of science and to improve provision for mathematics are helping to raise the achievement of higher attaining pupils. Tracking information shows that all groups of pupils make satisfactory progress. This includes those with learning difficulties and disabilities, those who join the school between Years 3 and 6, and those who are learning English as an additional language.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils become confident and keen learners. They are fully involved in all that happens and, as a result, enjoy school. 'Learning is enjoyable, it's been perfect' reported a Year 6 boy. Personal development skills start very well in the Foundation Stage, with children quickly learning to work with others, concentrate and persevere. As they move through the school, pupils become more socially aware. They talk freely about their opinions and explore their emotions.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They gain a good understanding of other cultures through the curriculum. Pupils feel very safe in school. They behave well and develop a sense of care for one another. They are especially proud of their peer mediator roles. Such experiences help them to learn valuable skills for later life. The school's current focus on improving reading and writing is aiming to improve pupils' basic skills. The school council takes its responsibilities very seriously and seeks to take an active role in improving conditions for all pupils. They rightly view the eradication of litter around the school as an area for improvement.

Sporting activities are extremely popular with all pupils, making a valuable contribution to their teamwork skills, fitness and co-operation. The development of the pupils' knowledge and understanding of healthy living is outstanding. They are well informed and keen participants in all activities. The Food Awareness Week proved to be a very successful learning experience for them, with a chef and NHS professionals providing a most interesting day. For Year 6 pupils the measurement of the nutritional value of some of their drinks was a very valuable experience.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and account for the pupils' satisfactory progress. Some good teaching was observed during the inspection and, in these lessons, pupils made good progress. However, this good teaching is not yet consistent enough to be reflected in pupils'

making good progress overall. Providing different tasks in a lesson so that pupils receive the right amount of challenge is not consistent in all lessons. There is considerable variation in the way in which teachers mark pupils' work. Such differences result in inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and, ultimately, have an impact on pupils' progress. There are some particular factors that enhance pupils' learning, such as the good relationships, which encourage positive attitudes and promote self-esteem. Teachers regularly assess pupils' progress and this helps them to identify those who may need extra help. Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning, particularly those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. In the Foundation Stage good teaching contributes to the children's good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum. It is well planned to balance basic skills, creativity, sport and social skills so as to encourage creative thinking and collaborative learning. One pupil, expressing their enjoyment of learning said, 'We are given creative things to do'. The school recognises the need to increase its focus on teaching basic skills across a range of subjects as part of its drive to raise standards. The school provides good opportunities for using information and communications technology to enhance pupils' learning. The good Foundation Stage curriculum meets the needs of the children effectively and enables them to enjoy their learning. It is interesting and practical and relates well to all six areas of learning. The pupils' learning is enriched by links with the community through visits and visitors. The many and varied sporting activities offered, using both school and outside expertise, contribute effectively to the pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. There are several strengths in the quality of care that the school provides. Robust child protection procedures are well established and fully understood by all adults in the school. Pupils are comfortable in sharing any personal worries they may have with adults in the school, knowing that they will be received kindly. As one pupil commented, 'Teachers are comforting and good listeners'. The school works well in partnership with outside professionals to promote pupils' personal development and well-being.

The academic guidance provided for pupils is satisfactory. They are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their targets but have limited understanding of how well they are doing. The marking of their work often does not give sufficient guidance on how further improvement can be achieved, nor does it make links with pupils' individual learning targets. The arrangements to support pupils when they join and leave the school are well considered and are much appreciated by the pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher works with strong vision and commitment to improve the school and place it at the heart of the community. Governors and staff are very supportive and share her commitment to school improvement. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. It leads to the identification of areas for development and the taking of subsequent action to bring about

improvement. Several initiatives, such as establishing a whole-school behaviour management system, have been successfully introduced. Recent action to raise standards is beginning to prove effective. The school acknowledges that sharing good practice in teaching will help to accelerate progress. Changes of staff have meant that subject leader roles have changed frequently. This has led to there being insufficient leadership in subjects. The school has identified this as a priority for improvement. The school's track record of improvement indicates that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve. Governors have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Recent training for governors in holding the school to account has helped them to improve how well they fulfil this role.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

26 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of South Ascot Village Primary School, South Ascot, SL5 9EA

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and especial thanks to those who talked to us. It was very useful to hear your views.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education and this helps you to do as well as other children in the country in the national tests in Year 6. Your school does some things particularly well. Here are some of the good things about your school.

- You have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and you enjoy eating healthily in school and taking part in lots of sports and exercise. Well done! Please keep it up!
- Your teachers give you interesting things to learn and this helps you to enjoy school. It was good to see you enjoying the healthy food activities so much during the inspection.
- You behave well and know how to keep yourselves safe. You told us that the grown-ups will help you if you have a problem.
- You carry out your responsibilities well, such as being peer mediators and in your work on the school council.
- Your headteacher and governors are good at thinking of ways to make your school better.
- Children in the Foundation Stage do well.

Your school could be even better if:

- the teachers help you do better in reading and writing, especially in Years 1 and 2
- the teachers share the good things that they do so that pupils in all classes can benefit from them
- the teachers who look after particular subjects check more often how well you are all doing in their subjects and decide how things could be improved.

We hope you will continue enjoying school and working hard.

Yours sincerely

Vanessa Ward Lead inspector