



# Ashford CofE Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 125228  
**Local Authority** Surrey  
**Inspection number** 293231  
**Inspection dates** 12–13 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** George Rayner

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	School Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Ashford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		TW15 2BW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01784 253310
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	405	<b>Fax number</b>	01784 240381
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Amanda Brown
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Gavin Wilson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 February 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 12–13 September 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 293231
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Larger than most, this school is situated in a densely populated area in that part of Surrey that lies on the edge of London. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average and few are at an early stage of speaking English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average. Children enter the Foundation Stage with a wide range of pre-school experiences. While their standards are close to expectations in most respects, many arrive in the school with weak literacy skills.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. Its particular nature as a denominational school, with close links to two local parish churches, is helpful in ensuring that it is a caring place in which its pupils learn and develop. The mainly positive views of parents and carers show that they value this. As one said, the school is 'a lovely, warm, environment'.

Pupils' personal development and well being are good. They respond well to the caring ethos of the school by showing enjoyment through their willing participation in activities and co-operation in working together. They react sensibly to the good guidance that they are given about how to be safe and healthy.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good, so that children make good progress there. In particular, literacy skills are developed well because children's needs are effectively identified and met. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards at expected levels, and they are average in Years 1 and 6. Achievement is satisfactory overall. The school is succeeding in raising the standards of pupils of lower and middle ability by improving the way in which reading and writing skills are taught and encouraging them to become investigative scientists. Consequently, many are starting to achieve well in English and science by Year 6. This is reflected in the improved proportion reaching middle levels in the 2006 National Tests. Achievement is satisfactory rather than good for the most able pupils because expectation and challenge for them are not as consistently high as they could be.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good relationships encourage children to be willing workers. Some teachers succeed well in securing good progress by ensuring that all pupils are actively involved and their individual needs well provided for. However, this sort of practice is not found widely enough for teaching to be judged as good overall. The curriculum is satisfactory. It includes good enrichment through extra curricular clubs, trips and visitors to the school. The school is aware that links between curriculum areas could be better and is currently working towards this. The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory. Pastoral care is good, with all policies and procedures in place and requirements for child protection effectively met. Academic guidance and support is satisfactory. Procedures to track and guide pupils' progress are not fully consistent in all years.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership team provides committed and helpful support to the headteacher. The school's satisfactory self-evaluation gives it an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. There has been good improvement in the environment and resources for pupils' learning and development, so that achievement is now better in the Foundation Stage, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). The monitoring of teaching has not been systematic enough to ensure effective sharing of the best practice that exists in the school. Strategic planning has not been effective enough in providing clear priorities for the most rapid improvement. Therefore, progress in raising standards has not been

as fast as it could have been. This track record shows that the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

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

- Ensure that expectation and challenge is consistently high enough for the most able pupils to achieve well.
- Improve the quality of teaching through more systematic monitoring and sharing of good practice.
- Improve the way in which strategic planning identifies priorities, so that it is a more useful tool for rapid improvement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

In the Foundation Stage children make particularly good progress in reading skills, working with numbers and measurements, and in their personal development. Recent improvements in accommodation and resources are beginning to contribute well to achievement by providing good opportunities for children to learn by exploration and play.

In Years 1 to 6 no groups of pupils achieve less than satisfactorily. Effective individual support for those with learning difficulties ensures that they do as well as other pupils. The school has improved the teaching scheme for mathematics, so that the situation at the last inspection, where there was some underachievement in that subject, no longer exists. Although teachers plan work for different abilities, they do not consistently ensure that this gets the very best out of the most able pupils. Therefore the recent improvement in standards by lower and middle ability pupils has not been matched by them.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' moral and social development is good. They have very positive attitudes to learning and want to achieve as well as they possibly can. They cooperate willingly with teachers and make good use of opportunities to explore and discuss together. The vast majority of pupils behave well. However, a very small minority display some boisterous behaviour and do not show sufficient consideration for others. Pupils have sound understanding of different cultures and religions and develop satisfactory spiritual awareness. There are good individual opportunities to develop spirituality, such as an assembly in which pupils reflected upon the need to be kind and helpful. Opportunities to explore spiritual and cultural issues through the curriculum are limited however, because they are not systematically planned in all subjects.

Pupils have good understanding of healthy lifestyles, as shown in a Year 5 physical education lesson, when they answered questions on the importance of warming up. They appreciate the healthy diet at lunch and participate in a wide range of sports

and physical activities. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and develop a clear sense of community through activities such as raising funds for charities and delivering newsletters to the local residents. By the time they leave, their good social skills together with competency in literacy, numeracy and ICT skills prepare them well for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and manage their classes well. Although teaching is satisfactory overall, many lessons are good and a few are outstanding. In these lessons, pace of learning is good and there is a variety of useful work, which boosts pupils' enjoyment and endeavour. Not all teachers are equally successful in encouraging pupils to be actively involved in their learning, even though they are keen to be. Marking is not used as well as it could be to inform future planning. The result of this is that the needs of all learners, particularly the higher attainers are not always met and this is reflected in their achievement. Teachers and learning assistants work well together. Because of this pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and achieve as well as the others.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a curriculum of appropriate breadth, enhanced by French for Year 6 pupils. ICT provision has improved well since the last inspection, and pupils benefit from better resources such as laptop computers and interactive whiteboards. The school is aware that links between subjects could be better and is currently identifying opportunities for this. There is a wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities. The curriculum is enriched well by trips and visitors to the school and by special events such as Art Week. Pupils enjoy these activities and they contribute to the development of their self-esteem and self confidence. One parent commented, 'The school offers lots of interesting activities for both children and parents to take part in, such as harvest festival and Mothers' Day assemblies'.

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

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils feel safe in a secure, supportive environment and their teachers know them well. The school works effectively with outside agencies and involves parents in helping pupils to achieve their potential. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties are identified at an early stage and good measures are undertaken to meet their needs. Policies and procedures to protect pupils and ensure their health and safety are made clear to all staff and are carefully implemented. The anti-bullying policy is about to be updated in response to concerns about a small number of pupils who are not as

considerate to others as they could be. Although pupils' work is monitored on a regular basis and group targets are set, they are not set individual targets until the end of Year 6 and are not fully aware of what they need to do in order to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Since the last inspection satisfactory improvement has been secured. The school has succeeded well in dealing with some issues. Achievement is now at least satisfactory for all pupils in mathematics. Larger classrooms and a better outdoor area for Reception children to learn through play and exploration have contributed to the improvement in progress there. ICT resources provide better opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and enhance their work in other subjects. In other areas, improvement has been less strong. Achievement remains satisfactory, although there is recent evidence that many lower and middle ability pupils are starting to make good progress in English and science.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Good account has been taken of guidance from local authority consultants. The school's own procedures rely too much on informal observation. This is not rigorous enough and means that findings are not effectively recorded and followed up, and good practice is not shared. The involvement of all senior managers and subject co-ordinators is not planned systematically enough. Strategic planning accurately identifies most areas in which improvement is needed, but does not identify priorities well enough to ensure the most rapid progress in the key areas.

Provision for the Foundation Stage and for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is managed well. Governors provide satisfactory support and guidance. Many are relatively inexperienced, but are benefiting from training to improve their understanding of their roles and the schools' strengths and weaknesses. Resources are deployed well and used efficiently. For example, effective use of learning assistants is a key factor in the good support given in lessons to pupils who need it.

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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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2
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	2

### The quality of provision

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

<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>	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	2
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**

We enjoyed our recent visit to your school and would like to thank you all for making us feel welcome. We have decided that your school is satisfactory. This means that it is good at some things, but needs to be better at others. The Headteacher and staff already know many of the things they need to improve and have begun working on them.

Those of you in Reception do well. This is because things are well organised and the teachers know what you are not so good at when you come to the school. In years 1 to 6, you make satisfactory progress. You do quite well, but could do even better. Things are starting to get better though. Many of you are beginning to make good progress in English and science. The brightest of you, do not do as well as you could though. The adults know that this is because they do not always give you work that is difficult enough to bring the very best out of you. They need to get better at this.

Almost all of you behave well. You show that you enjoy school by your willingness to work together and take part in activities in lessons and clubs. You get on well with each other and with the teachers and other adults. This means you make good use of all the opportunities that you have to learn and do well. You are well cared for and some of you told us that you feel safe and know who to go to if you need help.

Your lessons are satisfactory. We saw things happening well in many lessons, but some teachers are better at getting you all involved than others. We think the school should become better at finding out where it could help teachers and sharing the best things, so that all lessons are as good as each other.

The senior staff know what to improve and have done well in some areas, such as providing better computers and interactive whiteboards. They need to become better at working out which are the most important things to improve, so that they can make faster progress in helping you all to do well.

With very best wishes to you all

George Rayner

Lead inspector