



Ashley CofE Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131052
Local Authority Surrey
Inspection number 293697
Inspection date 9 January 2007
Reporting inspector Sue Vale

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ashley Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Walton-on-Thames
Age range of pupils	4-11		KT12 1HX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	019322 27695
Number on roll (school)	213	Fax number	019322 23410
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr A Klimaytys
		Headteacher	Mr R Dunne
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a one-form entry primary school. Most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is exceptionally low. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties or disabilities is much lower than usual. Pupils' attainment on entry is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Ashley Church of England Primary School is an outstanding school. 'A truly excellent home of all round education....we could not wish for a better educational start in life for our children,' is a sentiment reflected by many parents.

Led by an outstanding headteacher, all those involved in the school put the pupils' learning and development of new skills and understanding at the centre of all that they do. The headteacher's clear vision and passion, along with the stimulating learning environment, ensures that pupils make very good progress and achieve exceptionally well. This results in them reaching well above average standards by Year 6. As many parents commented, 'the school continues to go from strength to strength ...we are extremely proud that our children attend Ashley'.

Very good teaching with some outstanding elements and a highly stimulating curriculum enable pupils of all abilities to make very good progress in their learning. Assessment of what pupils are learning and how they are doing is good. The information the teachers collect is used to provide carefully targeted support for small groups. Marking that was seen in pupils' books is satisfactory but does not consistently tell pupils how they can improve their work. Likewise targets for individual pupils are not consistently or specifically set.

Leadership and management are outstanding and a paramount reason as to why the school is so successful. The care and welfare and the personal development of pupils so that they become independent confident learners is also outstanding. The spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is excellent. Particular strengths at Ashley are the involvement of parents, the strong learning ethos and the way that the pupils are involved in the development of the school towards wholly renewable energy technology. This is unique to Ashley and is a major reason in fostering the sense of belonging to a caring school community which so many pupils and parents appreciate. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection and provides very good value for money. It has outstanding capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Engage pupils in setting their own targets so that they are consistently evaluating and articulating the next steps of their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards reached by pupils by the time they leave school in Year 6 are well above average and are in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. The achievement of pupils is excellent. Children start in Reception with broadly expected skills in most areas of learning. Their social, speaking and numeracy skills often exceed expectations. They make very good progress and build on this very good start so that by the time they reach Year 2 the majority of pupils are reaching national averages in all subjects

with around half reaching the higher levels. They continue to achieve very well as they progress through the older years, due to an exciting, stimulating curriculum, a strong learning ethos and some very good and outstanding teaching.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well being are outstanding because this is central to all that the school does. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is also outstanding, as can be seen in the 'time for reflection' opportunities and school assemblies. As one parent comments, 'there is a very strong emphasis on enriching the children, building spiritual and moral fibre and running varied inclusive activities'. Pupils say that they really enjoy their time at school, know the importance of a healthy life style and keeping safe and in lessons show a keen interest in learning. Their behaviour is excellent. Pupils make a strong contribution to their community. They are proud of their school and feel that they have a say in what goes on in it through the school council. For example, the school council listens to pupils' opinions and uses them very effectively to make the school a better place for everyone. This can be seen in the way they re-designed the playground so that there was the opportunity to hold performances outside.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is very effective because teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They are clear about what they want pupils to learn and how to help them achieve to the best of their ability. Teachers are adept at developing and increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding, by making lessons interesting and fun. All pupils make huge gains in their learning because of the broad and interesting curriculum which encourages them to ask questions and to find out more. Thinking skills and time for reflection are built in so that pupils' clearly understand what it is they are learning and the relevance of it to their every day lives. This results in pupils at this school wanting to learn. They are fortunate to have very supportive and engaged parents who are encouraged by the school to be actively involved in their children's learning.

Effective systems are in place to track pupils' progress. Teachers use assessment information well to match work to pupils' abilities, providing good support for those with learning difficulties where it is needed. Marking is satisfactory but does not always explain how pupils can improve their work. More able pupils are challenged to do as well as they can, which is why so many reach high standards. Targets for individual pupils however are not consistently or specifically set throughout the school to help pupils to achieve even higher standards, or to take more responsibility for their own learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is excellent. Key issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Pupils enjoy a well planned, broad and interesting range of activities that promote effective learning. It is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular and other activities. The learning ethos is strong. The school has rightly placed an emphasis in the curriculum on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and this is helping pupils to understand what they are learning and to make good progress and raise standards. Pupils say that they find the curriculum interesting because 'learning is fun'. The development of the school as a centre for sustainable development is an excellent way for the pupils to understand their actions and how it affects the future of the planet. They are developing an exceptional understanding of environmental issues, through this 'eco-friendly school' curriculum, for their future well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care and guidance in the school is outstanding and extends beyond the pupils. Parents feel strongly that they are welcomed and an integral part of the school community. This can be seen in the working parties set up to support the school in particular the development of the grounds and in other strategies such as the encouragement of the 'working parents support group' and in social activities such as the annual 'Ashstock' weekend. The care pupils receive is outstanding. The school is safe and secure and staff work very closely with parents to ensure their children's well being. Risk assessments are carried out regularly. Individual and small group work, are planned extremely well to meet the individual interests of children. This enhances significantly their personal, social and emotional development so that they become confident and happy learners, who reach high standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. There is a strong commitment from all involved with the school to put the pupils' learning at the heart of all that they do. Leadership by the headteacher is outstanding. He has a clear vision for the development of the school and in the words of one of the governors, and a number of parents, it is his, 'drive and passion' which is at the centre of the pupils' success and achievement. High aspirations by the leadership, of how the school can support and be involved in the community and in the wider global context of the development of an eco-friendly school, is greatly appreciated by pupils and parents. Many parents commented about 'the strong sense of community'. The school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is extremely accurate and well focused. The school improvement plan is strong and the areas identified for development are being consistently implemented across the school. The governing body is fully committed to the development of the

school. They ask relevant and searching questions, are fully aware of the strengths and areas for development and are very supportive of all that the school does.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	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	1
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

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	1
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

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

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

It was lovely to meet some of you when I came to visit your school.

I agree with you that Ashley Church of England School is an outstanding school. There are lots of things which you do very well, and you are fortunate to go to this school.

- You work hard and achieve very well.
- You reach very high standards in your work.
- You are kind to each other and look after others.
- The work you are doing to develop the school ground and to make the school a source of renewable energy is outstanding.
- Your teachers plan interesting lessons for you and help you to make very good progress in your learning.
- The curriculum which you follow is fun and you do lots of interesting things. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- Your headteacher is outstanding and leads and manages your school very well.
- Your personal development and well being are outstanding.
- You are cared for very well by your teachers and other adults.

I have asked your headteacher and teachers to help you to achieve even more. I have asked them to help you to find ways of setting your own targets so that you are able to talk about the next steps of your learning and evaluate your progress.

With best wishes

Sue Vale

Lead inspector