

# Ascot Heath Church of England Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109986
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bracknell Forest
<b>Inspection number</b>	325073
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lily Evans

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	241
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Gill Dickson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Sarah Theaker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 July 2006
<b>School address</b>	Rhododendron Walk Ascot SL5 8PN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01344 883353
<b>Fax number</b>	01344 882521

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This popular school situated in North Ascot is supported by the Diocese of Oxford. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, a significant proportion having learning or social and emotional difficulties. As part of an extended services cluster, the school is used by a variety of groups from the local community, including after school and holiday care. This provision is not managed by the governing body so it is inspected separately.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school that is led and managed well. It provides a good quality of education, a wide curriculum, and high standards of pastoral care. Many parents share the views of one who said that the school is 'a nurturing, caring community with a stimulating educational environment'. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in attendance levels that are consistently above average and in their good behaviour, attitudes and enjoyment of lessons and school. As one pupil remarked, 'Lessons are fun and the teachers are friendly'.

Pupils are confident, mature and articulate communicators by the end of Year 6. They reflect on their actions and care for others. They make a valuable contribution to their community because of the many opportunities they are given to take responsibilities. For instance, they act as mediators, peer mentors, members of the school council and help at lunchtime. They raise funds for charities chosen by the school council and have a link with a school in Nepal, which helps to raise their awareness of life in other cultures.

Standards are above average and achievement is good. In the current year, the school's tracking indicates that standards in Year 6 are well above average levels in English. Although standards have risen in mathematics and science, the proportion of pupils likely to reach the highest levels in these subjects is lower than in English. The school is aware that higher attainers have not yet reached their full potential. The recent focus on gifted and talented pupils is beginning to raise their aspirations and achievement, through activities such as a science day at a local college. Teachers use assessment well to group pupils at similar stages of learning and to set targets for improvement. In the current year, the school has successfully addressed differences in the achievement of boys and girls and the achievement of lower-attaining pupils. As a result, the gap between boys and girls has decreased and lower attainers are now making at least satisfactory progress.

Good teaching and a well-planned curriculum combine knowledge and understanding effectively with a good focus on developing skills in English and information and communication technology (ICT). Teachers use ICT to good effect in lesson planning so that learning is interesting. The school has started to provide more opportunities for active learning and is making its curriculum more creative. Where this approach is used, all pupils, including those with behavioural difficulties, are fully engaged in their learning and the challenge is high. An example of this approach was observed in a well-planned Year 4 Tudor day when pupils 'became' historical characters. Where pupils have too few opportunities for interactions with each other and the teachers, there is a tendency for less engagement in learning, which affects progress adversely, for example in some science lessons.

Governors provide consistent, committed support to the school. They are fully involved in its work and, consequently, well equipped to challenge standards and support changes. Good leadership ensures that pupils make good progress, there is a sharper focus on using data, ICT has improved over the last two years and the school is moving forward well. It has a good capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that higher-ability pupils reach their full potential, especially in mathematics and science.

- Extend each pupil's opportunities for active and creative learning within the planned curriculum.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards have remained above average over the last three years. Data show that achievement in English is now very good, and is good and improving in mathematics. Challenging targets have been exceeded each year. Strategies to promote the reading and writing skills of boys have proved successful in engaging them and promoting their higher achievement. The targeting of pupils who struggle with academic work has also been successful in accelerating their progress in English and mathematics.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils reflect thoughtfully about a variety of issues in many activities, including assembly. Older pupils think maturely about their work and willingly accept responsibilities to help others, particularly at lunchtimes, making an outstanding contribution to the school community. In the wider community, they participate enthusiastically in local events and festivals. Through the curriculum, they gain a good knowledge of other cultures and give good support to charities both at home and abroad. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is good. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. They demonstrate a positive commitment to living a healthy lifestyle by choosing to be involved in sporting activities and clubs. They know what comprises a healthy diet even though they do not always make healthy choices with the food they eat. Pupils appreciate what the school does to help them 'say no to bullying'; they also appreciate the systems available for support, should they have any worries. Although the school council provides a voice for all the pupils, it is underused as a means of modelling citizenship and democratic processes.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good and, as a result, pupils make good progress. Teachers and pupils have positive relationships as the staff model high levels of respect, courtesy and care. In a few lessons, when teachers' lesson introductions are overlong and there are too few opportunities for interaction, a few pupils can become restless and inattentive. Although teachers plan good challenge for higher attainers in English, work does not always extend the more able pupils sufficiently in mathematics and science. Pupils who have learning or behavioural difficulties receive well-directed support individually or in groups from knowledgeable teaching assistants. This builds their confidence effectively and enables them to make good progress. Marking comments are informative and helpful but evidence of following up advice is frequently missing in pupils' work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum promotes good achievement in literacy and numeracy and plans effectively for ICT in a range of subjects. The school has recently successfully introduced French and German, popular with pupils, and activities that are beginning to address the needs of gifted and talented pupils. In conjunction with the establishment of a more creative and active approach to planning learning, the school is beginning to review non-core subjects (those other than English, mathematics and science), to ensure consistency in assessment and tracking of the progression of skills. Geography planning has clear pathways for the development of skills. Effective modifications to meet the needs of the pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well established. There are good links between subjects such as the journal that pupils in Year 6 make of their residential visit to Derbyshire; these links help them to reflect upon their experiences. There is good enrichment through visits and visitors, the many well-attended clubs such as 'Thinking Skills' and a good range of sporting, music and interest clubs at lunchtime and after school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Parents are appreciative of the school's high level of commitment to the care and support for all of its pupils. Secure systems ensure that pupils are safeguarded and protected. The school premises are welcoming, safe and well maintained. The special educational needs coordinator ensures that pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their learning and emotional welfare needs met very well. The most vulnerable pupils are aided as much as is practicable. The school has recently employed a family support worker to extend help for its pupils and parents. The support systems for pupils when they transfer to secondary school are good.

Through clear marking advice, pupils know how to improve their work. Pupils often decide on their own targets for learning and are fully aware of what they need to do to reach the next level. There are missed opportunities, however, to relate marking in books to pupils' individual targets for learning, and this means pupils do not make progress towards achieving their targets as quickly as they could.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher has clear vision and strong determination to move the school forward with the good support of her school team, governors and parents. The headteacher's systems for monitoring the work of the school are methodical and thorough which is spreading good practice throughout the school. There is good support for newly qualified teachers and new coordinators, such as those for gifted and talented pupils, assessment and mathematics. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well. It monitors interventions carefully and measures the effectiveness of their outcomes. Since the last inspection, resources, support and the planning of ICT across the curriculum have improved. Governors have strong involvement in the evaluation processes and have distinctive roles linked to their strengths. This enables them to challenge and support the school well. The promotion of community cohesion is good. The school has good links with faith groups in the wider community and is sensitive to the needs of the local

community. It hosts a summer holiday club for pupils from its own school and from other local schools, and community groups use the school hall. In addition to the Nepalese school link, the school is carefully considering further school partnerships within the wider community.

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## Annex A

**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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
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?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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	2
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

**Annex B**

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

01 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ascot Heath Church of England Junior School, Ascot, SL5 8PN

Thank you for making our visit to your school so enjoyable. You were very helpful to us and we enjoyed talking with you. The school is giving you a good education. You make good progress from your starting points in Year 3 to the end of Year 6.

Most of you enjoy school and behave well, especially when you are actively involved in your lessons. Your teachers are helpful and kind and this is reflected in your good attitudes and behaviour towards others. By Year 6, you act maturely and have good self-confidence. You take your responsibilities seriously and are caring towards others in the school and the wider community.

There are some things that the school should improve so that more of you reach higher levels in mathematics and science in particular. To do this, we have asked the headteacher and teachers to make even better use of the information they collect about how well you are doing. They should also plan more of your lessons so that you can work together in practical and creative ways such as when you had the Tudor day. Some of you are involved in deciding your targets so that you know them well and what to do to improve. We have asked teachers to make sure their marking helps you towards reaching your individual targets and that they always help you to review your learning at the end of lessons.

You can help your teachers by working hard to achieve the next steps in your learning. As you know which foods are healthy, you could try to make sure that you make healthy choices.

Please accept our best wishes for your future success.

Yours faithfully

Lily Evans

Lead Inspector