

# West Ashtead Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125026
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	328267
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Merchant

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	316
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Debra Beer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Douglass
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Taleworth Road Ashtead KT21 2PX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01372 272 082
<b>Fax number</b>	01372 279 477

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 November 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	328267

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is larger in size than other primary schools and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low. Most pupils are of White British heritage and the number of pupils whose first language is other than English is much lower than is typically found. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties, mainly behavioural or emotional, is lower than average, as is the percentage with a statement of educational need. The school has one Reception class in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

## 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 and pupils are right to be proud of it. They confirm that they are very happy and well cared for, saying, 'We are all one family here'. The majority of parents have great confidence in the school and its headteacher. One parent said, 'My children are doing very well at the school because they are very happy there.'

The headteacher, with strong support from her senior team, provides the school with clear direction. Good, and often outstanding, teaching leads to many examples of excellent learning. Standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 6 have been significantly above average for the past five years and continue to rise. When children start in the EYFS, their skills are just above those expected. They make outstanding progress because there is a very strong focus on developing children's social skills and their ability to communicate with each other. This results in standards that are well above those expected at the end of the EYFS. These high standards are maintained throughout the school and this represents good progress by all groups of pupils.

Pupils achieve well not just because teaching and learning are good, but also because they are encouraged to see their potential and are given the self-confidence to work hard and aim high. Learning is occasionally slowed when teachers do not plan well enough to meet the range of needs in their classes. Consequently, in a few lessons, pupils are not challenged as much as they should be.

Pupils' personal development is good, especially their social, moral and cultural development. Very good relationships and good care, guidance and support result in happy learners. A carefully planned and varied curriculum inspires pupils to work hard and gain a very wide range of skills. Although teachers mark books and set targets for improvement carefully and regularly, there is some variation in the quality of this marking and target setting. As a result, the advice teachers give to pupils as to how to improve their work is sometimes too general and some pupils are unclear as to the next steps in their learning. Pupils come to school ready to learn and are eager to contribute to lessons. The above average attendance rate reflects pupils' strong enjoyment of school. There have been very few exclusions in the last two years as a consequence of outstanding behaviour. Pupils' knowledge of different cultures in the diverse society in which they live is secure because the school ensures that all pupils have an appreciation and awareness of their place in their local and national communities. Pupils consistently make valuable contributions to life in school and the wider community. Staff have created a school in which all pupils get on well together. Pupils take part in a good range of sports and they adopt healthy lifestyles.

Governors involve themselves well in the life of the school and are supportive as well as challenging when they need to be. The enthusiastic curriculum leaders are developing into their roles well. The school has good capacity to improve further, as improvement since the previous inspection has been good and the school accurately assesses and evaluates its work.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Children love coming to school and parents are very appreciative of the excellent start that their children receive in the EYFS. They particularly commend the way their children are helped to settle into school. One parent said, 'My son has had a fantastic start to school life.' Staff have created a safe, attractive environment in which the needs of all children are met

exceptionally well. Children make outstanding progress because the teaching is excellent. A team of well-qualified adults supports the children skilfully by asking focused questions to develop their understanding. There is a very good balance of activities led by adults and those from which children can choose. Very good use is made of the well-equipped outdoor area for learning as well as for developing physical skills. Children are developing excellent social skills because they are making choices and fostering independence through working with others. All adults make observations of children and assess their learning so that next steps are sharply focused. By the end of the Reception Year, standards in most areas are well above those expected for their age.

The Leader of the EYFS provides outstanding leadership to her team. She has an excellent understanding of the Early Years Curriculum and constantly reviews her practice to ensure that all children receive high quality care, education and support. She has a clear understanding of the strengths of provision and has identified appropriate priorities for further improvement.

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

- Make better use of marking and target setting to help pupils understand how to improve their work.
- Ensure that teachers in all classes plan work carefully in all lessons to match pupils' abilities and their specific needs.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards by the time they leave. Results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2007 were significantly above average and were particularly high in English. Standards have been consistently well above average for the past five years and are rising faster than the national trend. The unvalidated 2008 results show a likely continuation of these high standards. Pupils' work and classroom observations confirm this improvement and, currently, standards remain well above average.

Given pupils' starting points when they join Year 1 they make good progress overall. Progress is faster in Years 1 and 2, where there is a higher proportion of good and outstanding teaching and a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. There is no difference in the progress made by the various groups of pupils in the school. This is because the school works effectively to support groups such as pupils with learning difficulties, especially those with behavioural and emotional difficulties and those who enter the school with particularly low levels of attainment.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils relate well to one another and are excited by all that the school has to offer. This is reflected in their enjoyment of learning, good attendance and keen involvement in a wide range of activities. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils respond well so that, by Year 6, they are mature, considerate, self-assured, and responsible young people. Whole school assemblies, theme weeks, such as the 'Courtesy Week' and focus days all support the children's personal development. The school, through strong links with a school in Uganda and support for various charities, helps to develop pupils' understanding of their national community and the part they play in it. Their contribution to and involvement in the life of their local community, however, is more limited. The school council is effective

and has made useful suggestions to bring about changes in the school, such as the provision of bicycle and scooter stores. They have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy life style. Pupils' are well prepared for the next stage of their education because of the high standards in basic skills allied to their positive attitudes to learning. A small minority of parents speak of concerns regarding a few incidents of inappropriate behaviour. However, inspectors' observations and school records show pupils' behaviour to be exemplary in lessons and around the school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils respond well to the good teaching, and they make good progress in lessons. Skilful questioning is used by the most effective teachers to draw out ideas from pupils. This was well seen in an outstanding Reception class lesson. Here, pupils were captivated and excited about learning about science. They eagerly searched for answers as to why some ice cubes melted faster than others did. In most lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and their planning ensures that a good range of activities keeps pupils' interest. Teachers make clear exactly what they want pupils to learn and why it is important. These are reinforced effectively throughout lessons. Good partnerships in classrooms between teachers and teaching assistants lead to effective support for pupils who find learning hard. Key features of the best lessons include a good pace of learning that challenges pupils of all abilities well. There is, however, variability in the way some teachers plan to meet the needs of all pupils in lessons. This results in a few pupils not being challenged well enough and so not making sufficient progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The carefully planned curriculum contributes strongly to pupils' learning. There is a strong focus on English and much discussion work is linked to helping pupils with their writing. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) across subjects is good and makes a big contribution to pupils' good achievement. A wide range of visitors and visits, including two residential trips, as well as an extensive variety of after school activities enrich the curriculum and promote and enhance pupils' personal and social development. The school provides pupils with a wide variety of sporting activities as part of the school day. These, together with well supported creative and educational activities outside normal lessons, make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, their levels of enjoyment and their personal development. The school recognises that whilst there is some good practice developing, whereby meaningful links are made between different subjects, it is reviewing the way this can be embedded in all classes.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

Child protection procedures are secure and sensitive. As a result, pupils are happy and feel secure. Very warm and supportive relationships between staff and pupils successfully support pupils and increase their independence. Pupils feel that their behaviour is managed fairly and consistently. Staff know the pupils very well and make effective use of assessment information to track and check pupils' progress, so that extra support can be provided if pupils need it. The

needs of pupils with learning difficulties are carefully identified and their individual learning plans are effectively based upon these, to ensure that they are given good support. There is, however, inconsistency in the way teachers mark pupils' books and set them targets for improvement. The best marking is carried out diligently and teachers provide helpful, supportive written or verbal comments. Too often, teacher's comments and the targets they set for pupils, are too general which means pupils sometimes do not know the best ways to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher's effective leadership gives the school a clear direction and ensures that it maintains its high standards. Well supported by the governing body and her leadership team, she has empowered staff and has encouraged and enabled them to take real responsibility for their respective areas. They have responded with enthusiasm and initiative. There is a very real sense of teamwork and collaboration in the school. The governing body scrutinises all aspects of the school's work, such as pupils' performance and the curriculum. It asks challenging questions of school leaders. Many middle managers are new to their responsibility but are beginning to grasp what they need to do to fulfil their roles effectively. Because the headteacher leads by example, this contributes to the developing confidence of subject and phase leaders. The school monitors and evaluates lessons rigorously and is beginning to link this to training so that good practice is increasingly being shared and celebrated. This results in improvements to teaching, learning and the standards achieved by learners. Leaders have created a school which is a harmonious environment, in which pupils of all backgrounds get on well together and so community cohesion is good.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
--	-----------------------

### 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>	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

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	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

---

<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	2
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	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	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**

10 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Ashtead Primary School, Ashtead, KT21 2PX

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to your inspectors when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed watching you learn. I would like to say a special thank you to the school council and those of you from Years 5 and 6 who gave up part of your lunchtime in order to meet us. West Ashtead is a good school and we know you are very proud of it. Here are some of the good things about your school.

- Your behaviour is excellent and you get on well with your fellow pupils. West Ashtead is a well-ordered school and you look after each other.
- You show a great enjoyment in your learning and know a lot about the importance of staying healthy and keeping safe. The care and support that the school offers you is good and it means that everyone can do well.
- You make good progress in your lessons and results in national tests are far higher than in most schools. This is because teaching is good and your teachers are skillful and concerned to make sure that you do as well as you can. Your headteacher and other senior staff know how to make West Ashtead School even better.

We have asked the school to:

- ensure that when teachers plan work for you it is not too easy or too hard, but just right for you
- make sure that all teachers mark your books carefully, set clear targets and give you lots of helpful advice to make clear to you how you can improve your work, understand your targets and reach them.

Thank you once again for making such a helpful contribution to the inspection. We enjoyed watching you learn.

Yours faithfully

Michael Merchant

Lead Inspector