

Inspection of Ashurst Wood Primary School

School Lane, Ashurst Wood, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 3QW

Inspection dates:	15 and 16 July 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are well looked after by caring staff in this nurturing school. They enjoy their learning and coming to school each day. Pupils take pride in looking after their school environment. They are eager to be awarded 'the golden broom' by having the tidiest classroom at the end of each week. Older pupils take their responsibility of acting as buddies to children in the early years seriously. Younger children appreciate having this support at playtimes.

The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they should behave. Pupils know and understand these. They demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning and achieve well. Pupils show respect to their peers and the staff who support them. They are kind and go out of their way to make sure 'everyone feels included'.

There are a wide range of enriching experiences for pupils to participate in. These include sports, computing, the school production and art club. Pupils are taught the importance of being compassionate young people. They develop positive character traits through their work in supporting elderly members of the local community.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has developed a broad and ambitious curriculum. It has clearly set out the important knowledge it wants pupils to know from the early years to Year 6. Previous weaknesses in the curriculum meant that some pupils previously had not learned as much as they should. This was reflected in previously low outcomes in national assessments at key stage 2. However, staff now regularly check what pupils know and can do to ensure pupils have the foundational knowledge they need to build new complex ideas. The school recognises this is an ongoing process to ensure all pupils are secure in their understanding and achieve well.

The majority of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. The needs of pupils with SEND are swiftly identified. This begins in the early years. Pupils with SEND are fully included in learning, following the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

The school has raised its expectations of what pupils can achieve in English through its renewed writing curriculum. There are now clear plans in place to support children in the early years with accurate letter formation. This complements their learning of phonics in a language-rich environment. Older pupils write well, using appropriate grammatical knowledge and language. However, this strength in writing is less evident in their work across the wider curriculum. Here, pupils do not always have a secure understanding of important knowledge or use their technical vocabulary with accuracy.

The school prioritises reading as soon as children start in Reception. Expert staff deliver the school's phonics programme with precision. Pupils are given regular opportunities to practise the sounds they are learning. If pupils struggle, the school provides effective additional support to help them catch up. This ensures pupils read with increasing fluency

and accuracy. Initiatives such as 'secret reader', where parents come in to read to their child's class, engage pupils in different stories. The school selects interesting and challenging texts that are matched to pupils' interests. Consequently, pupils enjoy taking themselves off to the reading corner to be 'caught reading' by their teachers.

The school's expectations for behaviour are rooted in mutual respect. Early on, children in Reception learn how to share. They treat each other with kindness. Pupils play well together at breaktimes and are polite in conversation with each other. Classrooms are calm and purposeful and learning is rarely disrupted. When pupils may need additional help to manage their behaviour, the school provides effective pastoral support. Pupils enjoy their learning and attend well.

Pupils are proud of the leadership roles they have. Elections for these roles teach pupils the importance of democracy. The recently refurbished library includes well-chosen and inclusive texts that enable pupils to learn about different families and faiths. Pupils have regular opportunities to learn about spirituality and different cultures through visiting speakers and trips to different places of worship. The effective personal, social and health education and computing curriculums ensure pupils know how to keep themselves safe online.

The school has a clear focus on making improvements to the curriculum. The governing body understands its role and has strengthened its oversight of the provision for pupils. Leaders regularly review aspects of the school's work that are not as strong and have developed an effective programme of professional development to address weaknesses. Staff support the changes that leaders have made. They value leaders' work to support their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The recently developed writing curriculum is showing a positive impact in English books but is not yet consistently evident in the wider curriculum. This means pupils are not consistently developing their writing skills across subjects. The school needs to ensure that its high expectations for writing in English are embedded in the wider curriculum, so pupils are supported to write at length and with accuracy.
- Due to previous weaknesses in the curriculum, some pupils have some gaps in their knowledge that hinders them building their learning over time. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that they use its established assessment processes to continue to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding so that these can be addressed effectively.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	125929
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10379831
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	114
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Belsey
Headteacher	Lisa Hobby
Website	www.ashurstwoodprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 March 2023, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school offers a before- and after-school club.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector also met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair of governors and had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a range of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also met with leaders and looked at pupils' work in history and geography.
- The lead inspector met with leaders to evaluate pupils' writing.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed and scrutinised a range of the school's documentation, including leaders' plans for improving the school, minutes of the local governing body meetings and records of attendance and behaviour incidents.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils. Inspectors gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Stephen Cattell, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Clive Dunn

His Majesty's Inspector

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