

# High Ham Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	123761
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	380723
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Jill Bavin

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	176
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Graham Cheetham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Rosser
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	High Ham Langport TA10 9BY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01458 250735
<b>Fax number</b>	01458 252748
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	18–19 January 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	380723



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Jill Bavin

Additional Inspector

Howard Jones

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed 18 lessons taught by seven teachers. They listened to pupils read and analysed work in pupils' books. Additionally the inspection team met with pupils, members of staff and governors. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They looked at a variety of documentation related to safeguarding, data about pupils' progress, monitoring and evaluation records and school development plans. Questionnaire responses from pupils, staff and 116 parents and carers were analysed during the inspection.

## Information about the school

Since the previous inspection the number of pupils on roll has increased, although the school remains of an average size compared with other primary schools. The increase in pupil numbers has resulted in the school providing an extra teacher and an extra class during the mornings this year. This allows all pupils to be taught in single year groups during the morning, whereas during the afternoons there are three mixed-age classes for pupils in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught as one class. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is lower than is typical nationally.

The school meets the current floor standard. More pupils join the school during Key Stage 2 than is typical nationally. There is private pre-school provision on site. It is not managed by the governing body and did not form part of this inspection. Since the previous inspection, the school has gained the Silver Eco award.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. It is well led and managed and much appreciated by parents and carers. The highly astute headteacher is ably supported by senior and other staff and members of the governing body. Staff have high expectations of themselves and their pupils, although they do not systematically share the very best practice evident in school.
- All groups of pupils, regardless of their starting points or differences in their backgrounds, achieve well in English and mathematics. They make good use of their key literacy, mathematical and technology skills in other subjects. The school has successfully increased links with parents and carers. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning, especially in reading for the younger pupils. More pupils attain higher National Curriculum levels by the end of Year 6 than is typical nationally, with a greater proportion of these in mathematics than in English.
- Pupils routinely behave well in lessons and around school. They are respectful of each other and the adults who support them. They appreciate their safe school environment and develop a good understanding of safety issues.
- Typically, teaching is good. Lessons are well planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. There are examples of outstanding teaching, including some teaching of reading, which result in pupils making exceptional progress in a short space of time. In these lessons, pupils have excellent opportunities to reflect on and articulate ideas about their learning and so identify what they need to do next. On some occasions, opportunities to accelerate learning for higher ability pupils in this way are missed as sometimes they remain working alongside their classmates for too long.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - giving pupils more consistent opportunities to reflect on their learning and develop their next steps
  - ensuring that higher ability pupils are challenged consistently throughout

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- lessons
- sharing the features of outstanding teaching in school more systematically.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Lesson observations during the inspection confirmed parents' and carers' positive views regarding their children's achievements. Boys and girls, including those who join the school during Key Stage 2, make good progress in their learning. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress. Assessment information is used well to provide targeted support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. As a result, these pupils make good progress.

Most children join the Reception class at expected levels for their age. Typically they make good progress in key skills and join Year 1 with emerging strengths in communication, language and literacy and aspects of numeracy. Those pupils who join the school after the Reception Year and during Key Stage 2 represent a wide range of attainment. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is above average. The school is extremely successful in promoting an interest in reading and in books. Those pupils who struggle to decode words understand the phonetic principles they need to apply. Their enjoyment of, and interest in, a variety of poetry and fiction is commendable.

Rates of progress are similar in English and mathematics although throughout the school, attainment and the proportion of higher ability pupils are usually a little lower in writing than in reading and mathematics. During the inspection, young pupils made exceptional progress in both reading and writing over a thirty minute period when expectations of them were extremely well pitched. They had excellent opportunities to identify and use 'tricky' words such as 'live', in the context of the question, 'Do you live on Mars?' and explain why this was 'tricky'. The best learning takes place in situations such as these when challenge is high, resources are very stimulating and pupils reflect on and articulate their own discoveries. It is too soon for the full impact of the school's most recent initiatives to enhance pupils' writing to be reflected in Key Stage 2 national tests. That said, older pupils are benefiting from the consistent and structured approach to improving achievement. They make good use of their 'vocabulary, connectives, openers, punctuation' targets and do so of their own volition. They confidently explained to inspectors how the system allows them to develop their skills when they are writing independently.

### **Quality of teaching**

Inspection evidence indicates that teaching is typically good throughout the school. This confirms the positive view that most parents and carers have of teaching in the school. A far higher than usual percentage of parents and carers returned inspection

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questionnaires and more than 90% of these agreed that their children were taught well. Inspectors found several strengths in all lessons observed. Teachers consistently motivate pupils. This results in pupils remaining purposeful throughout lessons, including those times when they work independently of an adult. A particular strength is the contribution made by teaching assistants, especially but not exclusively, to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Typically they promote pupils' learning with supplementary explanations or questions, while avoiding over-directing pupils.

Teachers mostly plan well to meet the varying needs of pupils within their class from the youngest upwards. This is a key factor in the good rates of progress made by different groups of pupils, including those working in mixed-age classes. Nevertheless, opportunities for outstanding learning are sometimes missed when planning does not identify the highest possible expectations for all groups. Occasionally, teachers spend too long recapping previous learning or explaining the lesson's tasks before extending pupils' learning. This sometimes accounts for a satisfactory rather than accelerated rate of progress. Teachers' usual teaching strategies, resources and curriculum topics support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Subjects such as 'Aboriginal myths' add cultural interest. Pupils have regular and frequent opportunities to develop collaborative social skills through well-planned paired or small group work. Children in the Reception class, for example, marvelled at drops of water dropping onto a tray of water and making concentric circles which disappear 'like a tornado'.

Teaching and learning in most lessons are enhanced by the particularly good use that teachers make of computer technology. The immediacy of taking pupils' work in progress, either on paper or whiteboards, and sharing it with the class through visualisers enables rapid feedback and next steps in learning to be modified. Whether pupils or adults lead the discussion, it adds a dynamic relevance and interest to pupils' learning. Improved computer technology resources have contributed to the improved curriculum and increased links between subjects since the previous inspection. Pupils are accustomed to routinely using iPads as research tools, which extends their experience of reading materials.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Staff have high expectations of all pupils' behaviour and pupils, including children in the Reception class, respond well to this both in lessons and around school. The view shared by all staff that pupils who are busily engaged in a good level of learning are unlikely to misbehave is effective. This was endorsed during the inspection, when the vast majority of behaviour seen in lessons was good, some was outstanding and it was never less than satisfactory. There have been no permanent or fixed term exclusions in recent years.

Most parents and carers who returned questionnaires agree that behaviour is good in school, and learning is rarely interrupted in lessons. In discussion, pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabled pupils, report that the school is

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commendably free of all types of bullying. Most parents and carers agree. Pupils indicate either in discussion or through their questionnaire responses that there is occasional messing about in lessons, which is swiftly addressed by staff. If anybody becomes too boisterous in the playground, pupils are entirely confident that midday supervisors will help to calm them down. Those pupils who have difficulty managing their own behaviour are supported effectively, and become increasingly self-aware and self-managing.

The curriculum and topics in assemblies provide several opportunities for pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe. These include a considerable emphasis, especially in personal, social and health education, upon giving pupils the self-confidence to seek help and support from trusted adults when they need it. Children in the Reception class begin by exploring emotions through stories such as 'The Three Bears'. Pupils' involvement in determining 'class promises' to each other contribute effectively to their sense of security, safety and well-being.

### **Leadership and management**

The headteacher, senior staff and members of the governing body share high ambitions for the school and a realistic appraisal of its strengths and weaknesses. The governing body contributes to effective arrangements for safeguarding which meet current requirements. The effective curriculum contributes to good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Previous strengths in supporting good learning have been retained and developed. The school's increased focus on environmental issues, reflected in its Eco award, helps pupils to respect and value the natural world. Topics, such as 'India', are selected to enrich pupils' understanding of the world around them. Looking at behaviour over 24 hour periods in different parts of the world harnesses a sense of wonder as well as mathematics skills. Links such as these add interest for pupils and also give them good opportunities to apply their key skills in a variety of topics. Significantly improved provision for, and use of, computer technology contributes to increased links with parents and carers. The school website offers greater opportunities to support their children's learning than previously. The school has increased provision of curriculum workshops for parents and carers, which has been welcomed. Such links are contributing to improved reading skills for boys and girls at Key Stage 1.

A key strength is the impact of strategic professional staff development on pupils' learning in the classroom. The effective management of teaching and learning, through close and accurate monitoring, helps teachers and teaching assistants to develop their skills. Members of staff demonstrate their commitment to improvement in their positive response to this feedback and to school initiatives. Marking has improved since the previous inspection and more routinely identifies both achievements and next steps for pupils. Pupils are given time to respond to marking and could explain to inspectors how it had helped them to improve their work. Systems for checking how well each pupil is progressing are detailed and currently being updated. Staff are becoming increasingly skilled at analysing the information generated. This close analysis of how well individual pupils and different groups of

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pupils achieve underpins the school's success in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. The impact is seen in the similar rate of progress for all groups of pupils. The school's effective track record of development indicates its strong capacity for further improvement.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development, taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



20 January 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of High Ham Church of England Primary School, Langport TA10 9BY**

Thank you very much for being so welcoming when we visited your school recently. I should like to say a special thank you to all those pupils who read to us, talked with us and showed us their work. We understand why you and your parents and carers value the school so highly. You attend a good school, where you make good progress in English and mathematics because teachers plan well to meet everybody's needs and teaching is good. You behave well in lessons and around school, which helps you to feel safe. We are pleased to hear from you, through our conversations and your questionnaires, that most of you feel that the school is free from bullying. We are very pleased that you know that adults will step in swiftly if anyone becomes over-excited in lessons or the playground.

The governing body helps your headteacher and senior teachers to keep making the school even better. There have been several improvements since the previous inspection, including the use of computer technology, which we saw you using confidently and sensibly. We particularly liked seeing how well the teachers and some of you use the visualisers to discuss how your work is progressing during a lesson. In order to make the school even better, we have asked your headteacher, governors and staff to address these priorities:

- increase the amount of outstanding teaching and learning by sharing their very best ideas more often
- give you even more opportunities to think about what you are doing well and what you could do next during lessons
- make sure that children who do not need extra practice or explanations leave the carpet and start independent work sooner.

You can help by continuing to behave so well and telling teachers sensibly when you have practised enough and could start more challenging work. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jill Bavin  
Lead inspector

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