

Hythe Bay CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131020
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	360191
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Jennifer Barker

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	364
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Berkeley Hill
Headteacher	Carolyn Chivers
Date of previous school inspection	17 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 22 lessons taught by 12 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, pupils, representatives of the governing body and a local authority representative. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, particularly that related to keeping pupils safe, policies and guidance, and the tracking of pupils' progress. Questionnaires from 100 parents and carers, 91 pupils and 10 members of staff were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The extent to which leaders and managers at all levels analyse assessment data and evaluate provision across the school to ensure all groups, including those at risk of underachievement, make good progress.
- The effectiveness of teaching and planning to ensure all groups of learners make progress and pupils are clear about their targets and next steps for improvement.
- The effectiveness of strategies to improve attendance over the last three years.
- The extent to which pupils are supported, guided and cared for through provision in school and partnerships with outside agencies.

Information about the school

This large school was established in September 2006 as a result of the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools, and subsequently relocated to new buildings immediately prior to the previous inspection. It incorporates a children's centre for very young children which was not part of this inspection. There is also a breakfast club and an after-school club for school-age children. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, principally because the school incorporates a unit for up to 20 young pupils each with a statement of special educational needs for their speech, language and communication difficulties. There are a few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school also has Healthy School status.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Hythe Bay provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It is improving rapidly in some aspects. It is a vibrant learning community, with strong partnerships with other schools in the area. Relationships between pupils and with staff are a real strength of the school. The school operates a successful open-door policy and as one parent put it, 'I feel very welcomed to talk to the teachers and senior staff if I have any concern about my child.' The pupils feel safe and know who to go to if they have any problems. They behave well around the school and work effectively in groups and independently in the classroom. Attendance has improved as a result of a range of strategies put in place by the leadership team and close working with families. Care, guidance and support are good overall because of the impact of the support for pupils and their families and for pupils in vulnerable circumstances.

The headteacher and senior leadership team have set clear direction, with ambitious targets to improve learning and progress across the school. The growing impact of these shows the school has a satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvement. Over the last two years, rigorous systems have been put in place for tracking progress across all year groups. This has resulted in an improving rate of progress for all pupils, with progress above expectations in some year groups. Overall, although there are variations, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress, building on the good start they get off to in Reception. Teachers are involved in regular meetings to discuss the pupils in their classes and this ensures pupils are usually picked up early if starting to fall behind. As a result, there are an increasing number of interventions for any who are not making progress and these are effectively helping to accelerate learning. Leaders and managers at all levels have collaborated well to improve teaching in the school. There are strong links with colleagues from other schools. Middle leaders as well as teachers are involved in joint lesson observations to improve the quality of teaching. Lessons are well structured, and in the good teaching seen, the pace is good, with a range of learning opportunities for pupils to work in pairs, in groups and independently. As a result, learning and progress are improving quickly. However, teaching is not yet consistently good because teachers do not always use assessment information rigorously enough to plan work at the right level for the wide range of abilities in lessons.

The new marking policy in place since September is ensuring that pupils get evaluative feedback about their work in books, although this is not yet consistent across the school. Too many pupils, particularly at the lower end of the school, are unclear about their targets and the next steps for improvement. Although there is some improvement in writing and this is assessed regularly, it remains an area of comparative weakness throughout the school. Staff training has improved the teaching of the sounds of letters and links to writing and spelling, and this is having an impact on progress, particularly in

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Key Stage 1. However, opportunities for purposeful writing across the curriculum and activities to support extended writing are underdeveloped.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good across the school by:
 - ensure assessment data are used to plan lessons so that work and resources are matched more closely to pupils abilities.
 - giving pupils more opportunities to share and evaluate their work during lessons.
- Improve progress rates, setting more challenging targets especially for more-able pupils in English and mathematics, and ensuring marking clearly shows pupils how they can improve their work.
- Raise attainment in writing and improve pupils' progress by: - extending the range of activities across the curriculum for independent writing.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Attainment in English is below average and in mathematics is well below average. Some potentially more-able pupils are working at levels in mathematics well below what can be expected of them. A minority of learners are working just below age expectations and not making the progress that their performance in Key Stage 1 would suggest is possible. However, overall, considering their starting points, pupils are making satisfactory progress. Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage at levels lower than expected for their age in communication, language and literacy and in number. They make satisfactory progress in these areas and good progress in other aspects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to others. Many pupils, including those who are vulnerable, make good use of facilities provided by the school, such as the Beach Hut in the playground. They have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and exercise as reflected in the Healthy School award. Pupils enjoy their 'wake up and shake up' sessions each day and there is a good uptake of school meals. They have many opportunities to take responsibilities, including reading with younger pupils and participation in peer group support to children in a local special school. Behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils make good moral choices and apply this to systems for resolving conflicts and addressing issues. They respect and appreciate a suitable range of cultures, for example through international days, Romanian lunches and the celebration of Christmas and Easter. Pupils' personal development is good and a strength of the school. Pupils feel safe and valued and respond well to being well cared for.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory. Much of the teaching seen was good and there were no inadequate lessons. Strengths in teaching were seen in well-structured lessons, with clear explanations and the use of questioning to develop understanding. Good lessons include activities which engage learners, for instance in the exploration of objects to develop language using describing words. These focus pupils' discussion and link to prior learning, and ensure good progress. In a Year 5 science lesson, pupils worked well to present their learning about nutrition and the working of the heart for keeping healthy through radio interviews. However, there were missed opportunities for their peers to evaluate the work through discussion of what was successful and how it could have been improved. Additional adults are deployed well during group activities and sometimes in whole-class teaching. However, in too many lessons, all pupils were carrying out the same task. This leads to an over-reliance on adult support to develop pupils' understanding, particularly for the lower attaining learners. The curriculum has many strengths, but too few planned opportunities for writing for a purpose, for instance in cross-curricular work. Strong partnerships have supported enrichment, for example through funding secured for the whole-school trip to the Lion King which has led to a whole range of creative development. A good range of extra-curricular activities is available to pupils, including film and dance. However, although there are positive signs for the development of a more personalised curriculum, with work set appropriately for pupils of differing ability, this is not yet effective in promoting consistently good or better outcomes. Care, guidance and

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support are strengths of the school, particularly the school's work with families through family support workers and learning mentors. Some pupils have very complex needs and the school works well with outside agencies to ensure they are well supported. Pupils with challenging behaviour are also well supported. Consequently, overall, the standard of behaviour is good and exclusions are rare.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The overall effectiveness of leadership and management is satisfactory. Developments in gathering robust data and tracking progress systematically are improving progress rates. The development of teaching and learning in partnership with other schools and agencies is having an impact so that the increasing proportion of good teaching is improving outcomes for pupils. This has involved leaders and managers at all levels and the creation of a cohesive team, which forms a sound basis for future improvement. The governing body is well organised and has an accurate view of the school. There are now well-established systems in place for challenging and supporting the school, with dual governors' visits across all areas of the school's work and these are having positive effects on the quality of education provided. Governors are clear about their statutory duties, as seen in the good processes for safeguarding, including ensuring policies are reviewed and available to parents. Parents overwhelmingly support the school and its work, and particularly the range of opportunities which enrich the curriculum, such as the Hythe University and its contribution to raising aspirations for pupils at the highest level. Community cohesion, including partnerships, is good. The school has clearly analysed the changing features of the school community and detailed planning is clearly in evidence. An example of this is the strategy for engaging with parents of pupils who speak English as an additional language. This has had a real impact on community cohesion and can be seen in the bringing together of members of the community for the Romanian lunch day. There are also International days and sponsorship links with children across the world. Study of China, included visits to China Town, further enriching the pupils' experience.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is good overall. Children settle well into the life of the school and build on good relationships, as many have attended the children's centre. They are happy, polite and considerate towards each other. They enjoy learning and are stimulated to progress by the range of learning opportunities on offer to them. There is a good mix of adult-led and child-led activities across the range of development and adults are skilled at developing the children's language skills through questioning. They have opportunities for indoor and outdoor play and a range of resources ensures that physical development is good. A frieze on the wall telling the story of the Nativity showed children are developing their creative skills as well as spiritual understanding and knowledge and understanding of the world. An area set up for Father Christmas, with elves helping him wrap presents and write cards, gave children opportunities to develop problem-solving, creative and social skills. Fewer opportunities were seen for children to develop writing and number skills through other activities. Children are regularly assessed across all areas of learning so that activities are well planned to develop their next steps. By the end of Reception, children make best progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Their literacy skills remain slightly lower than average as they begin Year 1.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost a third of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires. The responses were overwhelmingly positive. Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities were particularly pleased with the support and guidance their children received. The findings of the inspection team support such views. A very few individual parents referred to concerns about behaviour. Inspectors found that staff managed pupils' behaviour well and as a result it was good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 100 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 364 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	66	30	30	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	68	68	32	32	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	57	57	41	41	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	52	43	43	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	62	62	36	36	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	58	58	40	40	2	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	51	39	42	4	5	2	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	48	48	44	44	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	58	58	39	39	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	46	47	47	5	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	53	53	39	39	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	61	61	33	33	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	61	61	33	33	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



10 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hythe Bay Church of England Primary School, Hythe, CT21 6HS

Thank you for all your help and warm welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you, hearing about what you think of your school and watching you at work in lessons. Your school gives you a satisfactory education. This means that there are many good things about the school, but there are also some things that need to be improved.

We were impressed by your behaviour around the school and that you feel safe there. Your relationships with each other and with the staff are good, and especially when you are given the opportunity to work together in lessons, or to help others with reading. You told us how much you enjoy your time at the school, especially the school trips, including the visit to the Lion King and the work you did linked to it. You also like the challenge that comes from the work of the University of Hythe.

Your headteacher, the governing body and staff are working to improve your school and help you progress. We have asked them to do some things to help your school improve.

- Make sure that activities in lessons are planned better to ensure that you do not find work too easy or too difficult.
- Help you to make better progress by linking your work to targets that are right for you and showing you how you can improve.
- Help you to improve your writing by giving you more opportunities to write in different ways across the curriculum.

Best wishes for an enjoyable year at school.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Barker

Lead inspector

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