

# Sutton-at-Hone CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118850
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	358458
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Norma Ball

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

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	294
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pat De Winton
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Lloyd (executive head)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Church Road Dartford DA4 9EX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01322 862147
<b>Fax number</b>	01322 863592
<b>Email address</b>	office@sutton-at-hone.kent.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 November 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	358458

**Number of children on roll in the registered  
childcare provision**

**Date of last inspection of registered  
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons as well as small teaching groups out of class. Inspectors observed 13 teachers. They met parents informally and held meetings with the executive headteacher and head of school, teaching staff, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors scrutinised samples of pupils' work, the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress, management and curriculum documentation, teachers' planning and safeguarding documents. In addition, inspectors took account of questionnaire responses from 114 parents and carers, 14 from staff and 113 from pupils.

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

- The success of the school's strategies for maintaining improved progress in mathematics and science in Key Stage 2, and raising attainment in English throughout the school.
- How well teachers use assessment information to set consistent challenge for all groups of pupils
- How well the curriculum and extra-curricular activities contribute to the achievement of pupils.
- Whether the monitoring and self evaluation of leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, is leading to improvement in achievement for all pupils.

## Information about the school

Sutton-at-Hone is larger than the average-size school. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is smaller than average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has increased recently and is similar to that found nationally and currently no pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The school has Healthy School status.

The school is emerging from a prolonged unsettled period in which there have been significant leadership and staffing changes. The previous headteacher left in April 2010 following a long period of absence. During this time the school federated with another local primary school and since October 2009 has been led by an executive headteacher who works closely with the head of school.

**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

The school provides a satisfactory education. The executive headteacher works in an efficient partnership with the head of school. Together they have accurately identified important areas for improvement which are showing early signs of success. Staff are now united and working with commitment following an extended unsettled period and there is a positive ethos in the school. Pupils receive effective care, guidance and support and most enjoy school, as shown by their average attendance. They told inspectors that their school was 'better than ten out of ten because our teachers care about us and make lessons fun'. A number of parents commented on the changing ethos of the school. One told inspectors, 'I can see a big difference. There is a change for the better.'

The good start children have in the Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength. Children settle happily in Reception because they are well taught and have a wide range of interesting learning experiences. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school and at the end of Year 6 is average. There are early signs that progress is improving in mathematics and science. Current initiatives in the school are directed to improving the progress made by all pupils in English, with a special focus on writing, where progress still lags behind. As a result of more careful assessment of pupils' needs the number of pupils with special educational needs and/or learning difficulties has increased and through well-targeted intervention programmes and in class support their progress has also improved and is satisfactory. Assessment information is used well to track pupils' progress through the school. However, assessment information is not used consistently by class teachers to plan tasks in lessons that stretch all pupils so they make the best progress they can, especially the more able.

Teaching is typically satisfactory. Targets are set for pupils and used soundly to set clear steps for pupils in their learning. Pupils value these targets and find them helpful. While pupils' personal development is satisfactory, they can be over-excitable at playtimes. In lessons they are mostly well behaved but when the pace of learning slows they are easily distracted. Monitoring of teaching has been effective and inadequate teaching has been eliminated. Subject leaders are gaining skills for their new roles, particularly in monitoring teaching and learning. However, they are not effective in scrutinising lesson planning to ensure that assessment information is used effectively to plan lessons that offer challenge to all groups of pupils. The curriculum is satisfactory and new initiatives to improve achievement have been selected carefully, and there are clear signs of their effectiveness.

There is a renewed drive for improvement in the school. The structuring of three leadership teams that involve groups of staff has contributed to the new team spirit and also distributed leadership responsibilities. New initiatives are supported by appropriate staff training. The governing body has also undergone changes. They recognise the need to be more closely involved in the school on a regular basis and extend their skills to play

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a full and active part in monitoring all areas of the school's work, especially in promoting improved achievement for all pupils. Issues from the previous inspection have been addressed with some degree of success and reflect the school's satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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

- Raise pupils' attainment in English, especially their writing, by accelerating the progress they make in Years 1 to 6.
- Improve teaching by: ♦
  - making better use of assessment information to plan work that consistently challenges pupils' thinking, particularly the more able
  - ensuring that teachers' marking is consistently good in all classes in Years 1 to 6. ♦
- Improve the quality of monitoring by:
  - sharpening the skills of subject leaders in checking that lesson activities are closely matched to pupils' needs ♦
  - ensuring the governing body increases its involvement in the school and rigorously reviews all developments to raise achievement for pupils.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**3**

Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. They enjoy their work and the lively discussions in class. A Year 6 science lesson, for example, led to a lively comparison of a modern diet compared with that of Tudor times and comparison of the health and nutrition value of both diets. The recent initiative to improve progress in mathematics has been successful and led to an improvement in attainment in the latest national tests.

Intervention groups are well planned and provide well-targeted support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose who are not making the progress expected of them. A Year 6 mathematics intervention group, for example, worked enthusiastically on extending their understanding of scales, weights and measures. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, contributed well and made good progress within the group. Pupils' current work and the school's own tracking of performance indicate that progress is improving gradually in mathematics, but is still inconsistent in English, especially writing.

Pupils have a clear perception of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and are proud to have gained Healthy School status. Older pupils have a good range of responsibilities in school which they carry out with pride and efficiency. Play leaders have a valuable role at playtime and lunchtime and help to calm the enthusiasm of some pupils, especially boys, for energetic games that can lead to bumps and tumbles. Pupils reflect on their feelings and the broader aspects of faith and respect for others. They respond well to charity initiatives, understand right from wrong and most behave kindly and sensibly. However, pupils have a very limited involvement with their local community and have only a limited understanding of other cultures and ways of life beyond their own community. The

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satisfactory progress made by pupils and their satisfactory personal development ensure they are soundly placed for their move to secondary school.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Relationships are good at every level. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge, set clear objectives for lessons and deploy the support provided by well-trained teaching assistants well. The precision with which pupils' progress is tracked carefully through the school by senior staff has improved. The targets set in literacy and numeracy are clear and help pupils understand what they need to learn to reach the attainment goals they have discussed with their teachers. However, more able pupils sometimes receive the same work as other groups and they finish their tasks quickly and easily. Marking of pupils' work is regular but is inconsistent across the school in identifying how a piece of work can be improved. Marking is better in literacy than in numeracy.

The curriculum is extended by sound approaches to improve mathematics and English. In writing an emphasis on linking words and sounds to extend vocabulary and inspire more extended writing is beginning to show early signs of success in pupils' current work. Topics such as 'Outer Space' and 'Tudor England' inspire pupils' imagination, especially boys, to help with their writing tasks and also extend links with other subject areas to make learning fun. During the inspection a theatre company presented a lively interactive show that added a great deal to the work pupils in Years 1 and 2 were doing on the Great

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Fire of London. The curriculum provides only limited opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills in subjects such as art and music. The school also recognises that insufficient time is given to provide pupils with an appropriate range of practical experiences in science.

The pastoral care provided by staff is effective in supporting pupils and they have confidence in the adults who care for them. The breakfast and after-school club extend the care provided beyond the school day well. The efficiency with which the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or learning needs are assessed has improved. The help they receive in class and in small support groups is satisfactory and sometimes good and, as a result, their needs are met soundly and they receive support and challenge in equal measure.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The incisive leadership of the executive headteacher and head of school has resulted in establishing clear priorities for improvement that are already showing signs of success in improving pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics and science. All staff increasingly share the drive and enthusiasm of the senior leadership team and welcome their strong leadership. The role of the three leadership teams established to lead and manage curriculum areas is developing, as are the skills of subject leaders. The management of inclusion has been improved and the promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. The governing body are reviewing their roles following the appointment of a number of new members. They recognise that the support and the challenge they provide to the school is not always rigorous enough. In particular they are beginning to extend their skills so they can play a full part in monitoring pupils' achievement and scrutinise the plans for the strategic development of the school.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. There has been a careful review of the context of the school and the involvement in the local community is improving. Links with local schools in particular have grown and help extend subjects such as design and technology through partnerships with local secondary schools. Pupils' awareness of the other cultures and dimensions of society in Great Britain and abroad is not always sufficiently developed, which hinders their preparation for their future role as national and global citizens. Safeguarding of pupils' welfare is satisfactory and policies and procedures are securely integrated into the school. Checks on staff appointments are thorough. Links with parents have been reviewed in light of school surveys and the frequency of consultation meetings and reports on pupils' progress is increasing. Regular



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newsletters from year groups keep parents informed about the work to be done in class and recent adult and family learning sessions help guide parents to support their children's learning.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start to their learning in Reception because of the stimulating learning environment and the good care they receive. During the inspection children had been inspired by their transport theme, riding tricycles and scooters around a road system and carrying out very energetic repairs on their tricycles in the repair shop. Their understanding of the world is stimulated by good learning activities. One girl in the outdoor office was pretending to speak on the telephone and look at office papers. Fully involved in her role play, she said, 'I'm absolutely so busy with work today.' Children thrive in their learning and develop a love for school along with independence and confidence. Resources are used well to cover all six areas of learning. Children have a good balance of adult-led and independent activities and adults intervene subtly in children's games to help extend learning as well as encourage the development of communication skills. Good use is made of the learning area outside the classroom, especially to develop children's gross motor skills with activities using big toys.

Children enter Reception with skills and ability levels that are a little below those of other children of the same age. Good teaching and well-planned activities ensure they make good progress and, by the time they enter Year 1, they are confident in expressing their ideas, have improved number skills and their creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world are good. Some small planning problems do arise because of the inclusion of a small number of Year 1 pupils in one Reception class. The need to ensure that Year 1 pupils have appropriate teacher- directed learning can result in

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Reception children being too constrained in their activities for brief periods. Leaders and managers are good and staff work as a close and efficient team. The high quality of the recording of children's progress is a strong feature of Reception and is used well to ensure that parents and carers are kept well informed about all aspects of their child's development. Links with parents, beginning with home visits, are good and frequent parent consultation meetings are held through the year.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

The majority of the 39% of parents and carers who replied or spoke to the inspectors are pleased with the school. They value the fact that their children like school and are safe. The inspection endorsed these views. A minority of parents expressed some concerns about various other areas of the school's work including behaviour, progress and how well parents are informed about how well their children are doing. Strategies put in place are beginning to lead to improved progress and attainment; behaviour is carefully managed and the quality and range of information available to parents has been improved this academic year. A number of parents were pleased with the recent improvements they had seen in the school. One parent wrote, 'I have been very impressed. Parents are encouraged to get involved in their child's learning and celebrating their child's achievements. My son loves going to school and is making progress in his learning and is receiving extra support in the aspects he finds a little harder.'

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sutton-at-Hone CE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 114 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 294 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	47	53	46	5	5	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	54	47	54	47	5	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	42	37	58	51	9	8	4	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	32	58	51	12	11	7	6
The teaching is good at this school	41	36	55	48	14	12	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	35	56	49	14	12	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	27	73	64	10	9	0	0
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)	24	21	67	59	10	9	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	29	66	58	7	6	5	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	17	60	53	19	17	9	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	20	69	61	10	9	5	4
The school is led and managed effectively	28	25	60	53	18	16	5	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	39	56	49	6	5	7	6

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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



15 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Sutton-at-Hone CE Primary School, Sutton-at-Hone DA4 9EX**

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to you about your work. We were impressed with all the interesting things that some of you have been learning about Tudor England and hearing about the visit to Hall Place.

You told us you like your school. We found that you have a good understanding of what you need to do to be healthy. We were impressed with the efficiency with which some of you carry out jobs around the school and the special responsibilities of play leaders, house captains and vice captains. This helps to make your school a happy place in which you feel safe.

We think your school is satisfactory. That means it does some things well, but also needs to make some things better.

- We have asked your teachers to help you to work hard so that you improve your attainment in English, especially in writing.
- Your teachers can use what they know about the progress you make to be sure they always plan the best work for you, especially those of you who find learning easier. We have asked them to mark your work well in all classes.
- Finally we have asked those teachers who are responsible for different subjects to make certain that sure that you always have the right level of work to do so that it is not too easy and helps you to learn more. We have asked the governing body to keep a closer check on all that is happening in school so that all parts of the school continue to improve and you will make better and better progress.

You all can help by always paying attention to your teachers, working hard in lessons and doing the very best you can. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Norma Ball

Lead inspector

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