

Boughton Monchelsea Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118288
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	358300
Inspection dates	8–9 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Helen Hutchings

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	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Wendy Clarke
Headteacher	Mr Jerry Jarvis
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons involving eight teachers and also observed assemblies. They held meetings with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, representative staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at planning documents, school evaluations, assessment information and pupils' work. In addition, inspectors received and analysed questionnaires from 59 parents and carers as well as those from a sample of staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of the action taken to track pupils' achievements and to use the information to boost pupils' progress.
- How well teaching challenges pupils, especially higher-attaining pupils.
- Whether pupils' personal development and well-being and the quality of care, guidance and support are as good as the school indicates.

Information about the school

Most pupils in this average-sized primary school are of White British heritage. Other ethnic heritages are represented in small numbers. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is low. Most of these pupils have specific or moderate learning difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class. Staffing has been very stable for a number of years, but four teachers are leaving at the end of the academic year and appointments have been made to fill these posts. The school has many awards for its work, including Healthy School, Active Mark and International School awards.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Boughton Monchelsea is a good school. It is a pleasant and stimulating environment, and pupils are prepared well for their next steps in education. Since it was last inspected, the school has maintained some outstanding aspects to its work and has developed others. These are seen particularly in pupils' personal development. Pupils' mature attitudes help them to contribute to the school and wider community outstandingly well. They want to do well and appreciate that they are expected to work hard. These qualities are reflected in high attendance. The outstanding care and support for pupils are reflected in the pupils' view that there is always someone on hand to talk to if feeling uncertain or uncomfortable. This results in pupils feeling exceptionally safe and knowing how to take care of themselves. Everyone in the school takes a pride in its history and family atmosphere. Well-developed communication systems lead to excellent information for parents and carers.

Pupils achieve well because the overall quality of teaching is good. Attainment in the Year 6 tests is consistently above national averages. Although there have been differences in pupils' achievement over recent years, this has been mainly due to the differing needs and abilities within year groups. However, the school has responded robustly and has changed the way in which it tracks pupils' progress. This information is used effectively to provide additional support and accelerate progress when a pupil is not making the expected rate of progress. Although teaching is generally challenging for all ability groups, in a few lessons which are satisfactory rather than good, attainment information is not used well enough to set work which is finely tuned to the needs of all pupils. The good teaching practices evident in most lessons are not shared widely enough, so that the most effective approaches to promote high-quality learning are not used consistently throughout the school. For example, while some marking clearly identifies pupils' next steps or requires pupils to respond to comments made, this is not always the case. Teachers have recognised that, while some topic work is used very well to provide a stimulus for writing in other subjects, opportunities for cross-curricular practice are sometimes missed. They are currently reviewing the curriculum to ensure that teachers new to the school next year have schemes of work which include a stronger identification of where links can be made across the curriculum.

The key reasons for the school's success are the commitment and dedication of the staff, who give pupils activities to make learning relevant and to broaden their experiences. This is particularly effective in developing pupils' understanding of their place within a global community, through securing British Council funding to link with and visit schools abroad, and reflected in the school's International School award. Planning for development reflects the breadth of school activity well, but occasionally subject planning is not focused sharply enough on outcomes for pupils. This means that there is not a sharp enough focus on the specific steps to be taken to improve pupils' attainment, particularly in English,

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mathematics and science. Staff and governors have developed an exceptionally wide range of strategies to involve and keep parents and carers informed of the school's work and their children's achievements. The leadership team and staff have a good track record of improvement and have successfully built on aspects of the school's work since the last inspection. This demonstrates the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Help pupils to make faster progress by:
 - ensuring that all marking gives pupils clear guidance about how their work could be improved
 - using assessment information to ensure that all activities are closely matched to pupils' needs
 - using more opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills through their study of other subjects.
- Ensure that best practice in teaching and learning is shared effectively across the whole school.
- Improve the quality of planning for subject development so that there is a sharper focus on the outcomes for pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

It was evident from pupils' concentration and often excellent behaviour in the classroom that they greatly enjoy their education. Only occasionally, when they found work less interesting, did they need reminding to concentrate on their tasks. Because pupils have strong relationships with one another and with adults, they work very effectively in groups, discussing issues and deepening their understanding by talking through their ideas. For example, there was a real buzz in a lesson where pupils were following up a visit to a farm, using their literacy and computer skills to produce a children's guide book. This challenging activity required pupils to develop their understanding of a range of issues, including food production and history of buildings. Pupils' reading and numeracy skills develop well as they move through the school, for example as evident in their quick recall of number facts such as subtraction, multiplication and squaring. Pupils respond very well to the recognition of effort given when work is displayed in the 'Good Work' and 'Good Homework' folders. All groups of pupils, including higher-attaining and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress towards their targets.

Pupils appreciate the good facilities available to them, for example the indoor swimming pool. They participate keenly in a wide range of extra-curricular activities which effectively meet the interests of all ages and make a good contribution to their knowledge of how to lead healthy lifestyles. Healthy School and Active Mark awards recognise how the school's work and the availability of meals cooked on the premises effectively encourage healthy eating. Pupils have a good knowledge of and respect for other cultures, although their knowledge of world religions is less well developed. They address moral issues sensibly, discussing how to behave in a right or wrong way. Pupils are diligent in taking on many responsibilities effectively. For example, younger pupils say that older pupils are very helpful as buddies or peer mediators in resolving issues at an early stage. Pupils develop a

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strong sense of being part of a wider village, encouraging local people to attend school events. This is also shown in the involvement of former pupils who enjoy helping as volunteers or undertaking work experience in the school. The school council is helping the parish council to draw up the local community plan, and this is only one example of pupils' contribution to the community and how this extends their understanding of citizenship.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are going to learn and use resources, such as computer software, skilfully to add interest and make explanations. Classroom management is particularly strong, so that tasks are set to enable pupils to be purposely engaged when working independently. Learning and progress are enhanced by the way pupils evaluate their own and each other's work against success criteria. However, in a few lessons, while pupils reflect on their achievement this is not focused precisely enough on the learning which has taken place. Teachers generally make sure that lessons are conducted at a brisk pace which gives time for pupils to find things out for themselves. For example, in a lesson where younger pupils were developing their skills of subtraction, some pupils were encouraged to find out a new approach for themselves, deepening their understanding. Teachers make effective use of national guidance to assess pupils' achievements accurately and use this information well, for example to guide the support given by teaching assistants. In most lessons, assessment information is used well to

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match work to pupils' needs, so that it is challenging for all, including higher-attaining pupils. However, there is still some inconsistency through Key Stage 2 so that work is not always sufficiently challenging for the full lesson.

The curriculum is broad and gives pupils many memorable experiences, for example when pupils made a video to give pupils from exchange schools introductory information about the school; this now forms part of the website. Older pupils benefit from specialist teaching in English and mathematics. A particular strength lies in the enrichment visits, such as to the Tate Gallery, which enliven the curriculum well. These are used effectively as the basis for some good quality follow-up work, particularly when used as the context for applying basic skills, and contribute to pupils' academic and personal development. The classroom curriculum is complemented well by a very wide range of extra-curricular sporting and music activities. Pupils are extremely well nurtured on a daily basis and staff are highly focused on making the school welcoming to all and removing possible barriers to pupils' learning. The school is rightly proud of the high quality care and guidance for pupils and their families, particularly those who are in need of additional support from time to time. Staff work closely together to identify pupils who have special learning or emotional difficulties and strong links with other agencies mean that their needs are met exceptionally well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas requiring further attention because they monitor all aspects of the school's activity regularly. Teamwork is strong and has ensured that the school remains successful and very popular. However, planning, particularly at subject level, is not always focused sharply enough on identifying the smaller actions which will accelerate pupils' progress. Planning is well advanced to ensure continuity as new staff join the school in the next academic year. The governing body has a thorough understanding of the school's work because governors visit regularly. Staff feel supported by governors' first-hand knowledge and governors use this information effectively to support and guide the school's strategic direction. Teaching and learning are managed well, although managers are aware of the need to ensure that the best practice is shared more effectively across the whole school.

Staff actively promote equality of opportunity and challenge discrimination by identifying and tackling any obstacles to learning or pupils' well-being. Safeguarding procedures are effective and applied consistently across the school. The school is a cohesive community.

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The strong links with schools overseas promote pupils' understanding of different cultures, and the recent link with a school in Merseyside is engaging pupils with others living in a different environment in the United Kingdom. The good relationships between the governing body, staff and parents and carers enable all to work very well together in partnership. The extensive communication systems enable parents and carers to understand their child's targets and achievement, and good discussion of these is a central theme in parent-teacher evenings. The school has forged an excellent range of partnerships that have a very positive impact on improving well-being and achievements for pupils and development for staff in the school. For example, pupils who are identified as being gifted or talented attend additional activities, mainly with support through local secondary school activity, which provide them with extra challenge and broaden their perceptions. One example of how the school secures good value for money is the way in which senior leaders make very effective use of external advice to help them to highlight where the school needs to improve because it brings additional expertise to school evaluation.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Reception class develop as confident and enthusiastic young learners, with a real sense of fun and interest. They enter with skills that are generally above typical expectations for their age, particularly in early numeracy skills and in their positive attitudes to learning and ability to work collaboratively. They make good progress in all areas of their learning so that they are ready for more formal learning in Year 1. The extremely attractive and well-organised classroom successfully fosters children's enjoyment of school, and the extensive outdoor area is well used to support learning. Children particularly like working with their friends outside, for example in the wet sand tray, making hideouts for toy dinosaurs, using the tricycles and scooters, and making up

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their own dances. Children have very strong relationships with adults and their peers which lead to good behaviour and consideration for the feelings of others. Good teaching and a well-planned curriculum ensure a good balance of valuable opportunities for children to follow their own interests and those activities directed by the teacher. Adults interact well with children, although occasionally miss opportunities while children are playing to deepen learning by extending dialogue and conversation. Well-informed leadership and management ensure that adults keep a close eye on children's development and emerging needs, and plan well for continuity in their learning as they move into Key Stage 1.

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

A very large majority of parents and carers are happy with the school, being particularly confident about how children are kept safe and their personal development promoted. A small minority expressed concern about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour and takes account of parental suggestions and concerns. The inspection found that the school promotes good behaviour very effectively, with behaviour being outstanding in many lessons, and considerate behaviour a strength around the school. The school and the governing body have set up exceptionally comprehensive ways to keep parents and carers informed and to seek their views through regular surveys, and these are considered very carefully when planning developments.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Boughton Monchelsea 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 207 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	58	23	39	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	61	19	32	3	5	1	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	44	26	44	6	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	37	28	47	5	8	4	7
The teaching is good at this school	20	34	26	44	9	15	2	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	36	26	44	8	14	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	47	29	49	1	2	1	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)	21	36	22	37	10	17	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	37	32	54	4	7	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	27	22	37	16	27	4	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	29	21	36	13	22	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	23	39	15	25	14	24	6	10
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	42	24	41	9	15	1	2

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Boughton Monchelsea Primary School, Maidstone, ME17 4HP

You may remember that inspectors visited your school recently. Thank you for being so friendly and for explaining to us what you were doing when we came to see you in lessons. We enjoyed chatting to many of you, including the school council members who were very good at explaining how you feel about your school. This letter is to explain what we found out.

The school gives you a good quality of education, which means that you are prepared well for secondary school. There are many good and excellent things which help you to develop as young people who take on responsibility and support your fellow pupils exceptionally well, for example as peer mediators. Your attendance is high and you have an outstanding understanding of how to stay safe and look after yourselves. You make good progress and your attainment is above average. It was good to see the many interesting things you do, especially when you visit and learn about other places, and how you concentrate on your work. We have made some recommendations for your headteacher and teachers to help you to make even faster progress. We have asked them to:

- make sure that they give you clear guidance about exactly what to do to improve when they mark your work
- always give you work which is at the right level for you to make fast progress
- find more ways for you to practise your writing skills in topic work
- share with each other the ways you learn best.

We have asked your teachers to identify any gaps in your knowledge and let your new teachers have this information so that you do not lose any time in September.

We are sure that you will continue to work hard. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Helen Hutchings
Lead inspector

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