

# Elham Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118741
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	363889
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Cartlidge

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>	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>	116
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Trevor Gasson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Steven Owen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Vicarage Lane Elham Canterbury CT4 6TT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01303840325
<b>Fax number</b>	01303840325
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@elham.kent.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspection team observed 11 lessons taught by six teachers. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, information on pupils' progress, safeguarding policies and other documents. Questionnaires from 64 parents and carers and 64 pupils were scrutinised.

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

- The way teaching and the curriculum are increasing the progress of more-able pupils in mathematics and science and of all pupils in writing.
- How well teachers challenge and support all pupils and involve them in marking to move learning forward.
- The impact of monitoring by leaders at all levels, including the governing body, in driving improvement in teaching, learning and pupils' progress.
- How care, guidance and support help pupils in their spiritual development and enable them to become involved in the school community.

## Information about the school

This is a much smaller-than-average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils come from White British heritages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has an above-average percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils have a wide range of needs, including specific learning and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school after Year 2 is high in some years. The school has received several awards, including Healthy School status. All classes have two year groups.

There have been several changes in leadership recently, with the headteacher joining the school in April 2011.

**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

Caring members of staff help pupils to enjoy learning at this satisfactory school. Good relationships and links with parents, carers and other agencies contribute to the good care provided.

Most pupils make the progress expected and this leads to average levels of attainment overall by the end of Year 6. However, sometimes pupils' progress is uneven in lessons and over time. Largely, this is because more-able pupils are not consistently challenged to make use of their mathematics and writing skills to extend and support learning across the curriculum.

Pupils' involvement in taking responsibility for tasks around the school and within the local community is outstanding. They express their opinions responsibly, behave well and are quick to help others and the local environment. For example, they asked sensible questions to help select the new headteacher and are involved in devising a new school motto.

Teachers provide frequent and encouraging comments on pupils' work, but they do not always make clear enough specifically what pupils of differing abilities are expected to learn. Opportunities are missed to ensure that guidance and marking involve the pupils and enable them to improve as quickly as possible.

There are satisfactory procedures for self-evaluation. The smooth running of the school has been maintained during the changes in leadership. One parent spoke for others by saying, 'The school has gone through considerable changes recently in its leadership; however, the changes were well managed and parents were informed.' The new headteacher and other senior leaders are already having a positive impact on the school, although it is too soon for them to be able to demonstrate sustained improvement. Leaders, including the new governing body, are strongly committed to raising the bar for provision and pupils' progress, and understand strengths and areas for development. Subject leaders know that there is more to do to ensure that provision and progress in their subjects are consistently good. Leaders work well with the local and global community, enabling the school to provide more than it could alone. Recent improvements in teaching and in pupils' writing demonstrate the school's satisfactory capacity to improve.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching and learning by:

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- ensuring expectations about what pupils are going to learn in each lesson are sharply focused and made clear to the pupils
- making sure that work is consistently well matched to pupils' needs
- making sure that teachers' marking always involves pupils and is used to move learning forward swiftly.
- Extend the achievement and challenges given to the most able pupils, especially in their application of mathematics and writing skills across the curriculum.
- Ensure subject leaders have the opportunity to check learning so that any inconsistencies in provision and pupils' progress are dealt with quickly.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Most children are working within the levels expected for their age when they start school in the Reception year. Pupils enjoy school, especially physical education, art and creative writing. They do best in speaking and reading because these skills are promoted well across the school. For example, in a good literacy lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher asked probing questions about two contrasting characters. The pupils rehearsed their answers with their talk partners before backing up their views by referring to the text. The gap between reading and writing is closing and teachers are modelling writing and helping pupils to understand good features to include in their work. In an outstanding lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils were very enthusiastic about helping to evaluate two pieces of writing written by the puppets 'Zippy' and 'Hector'. In this lesson, the most able pupils were extended fully as they demonstrated their impressive knowledge about metaphors and similes. However, more-able pupils are not consistently working at the level of which they are capable and progress for these pupils is not always fast enough.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although progress varies slightly between classes. In some lessons, teachers do not ensure that all pupils are working at the right level or challenged consistently well. For example, in one numeracy lesson the more-able pupils finished the mental calculations too quickly and had to wait for other pupils to catch up. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make at least satisfactory progress. Pupils' sound progress in developing basic skills, along with good aspects of personal development, prepares them satisfactorily for the next stage of education and later life. Rates of attendance are broadly average and the school is collaborating with other schools in the area to take a tougher stance over term-time holidays.

Pupils cooperate well and work sensibly on the tasks they are given. Most pupils say that if they have a worry it is tackled swiftly by members of staff, and they have a good understanding about how to stay safe, including when using the internet. Pupils are exceptionally good at helping others and are especially proud of the part they play in raising funds for charities and improving the local play area. Pupils have a good spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. They write sensitive prayers such as, 'Please help people in the world who have no food', and participate in various cultural events. They are developing a greater awareness of cultural diversity through their links with other schools. The school deserves Healthy School status because pupils appreciate taking part in sport and mostly eat healthy food at lunchtime.

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*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>2</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>1</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>2</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?

Teachers plan lessons that match the pupils' interests, although they do not always ensure that there is enough challenge for more-able pupils. They have established good relationships, enabling them to manage behaviour well. Tasks are explained clearly, but teachers sometimes concentrate more on what pupils are going to do rather than on what pupils of differing ability are expected to learn. Teachers and teaching assistants provide much valuable praise and encouragement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to consolidate their learning by responding to advice given in marking.

The curriculum has a strong emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy, although some opportunities are missed for pupils to extend these skills when working in other subjects. For example, there is too little use of data handling, including graphs, and missed opportunities for good quality scientific reporting. Pupils appreciate the good enrichment opportunities provided, including visits, visitors and the wide range of clubs.

Members of staff know the pupils well and increase pupils' confidence. Pupils make positive comments such as, 'Teachers go over things if you don't understand' and, 'If you're stuck they give you a clue.' There is good support for children when they first join the school in the Reception or in subsequent years. Senior leaders are tightening up procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities,

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because in the past this process has been over zealous, resulting in too many pupils being identified.

*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>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders embed ambition and drive improvement satisfactorily because there is a clear and shared understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school so that it can become good in the future. Recent improvements have been made in the tracking of pupils' progress, enabling senior leaders to identify more precisely where development is needed. Leaders promote equal opportunities and tackle discrimination satisfactorily. All pupils are included well socially, and the school is working to eliminate unevenness in learning and progress, especially of more-able pupils.

The school's safeguarding arrangements are thorough and all parents who replied to the inspection questionnaire agree that pupils are kept safe at school. There are good procedures for first aid, and risk assessments and policies are kept up-to-date.

Governance is satisfactory and is improving. The governing body is starting to have an impact on improving provision and pupils' progress. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to be involved in the local community and to learn about cultures other than their own. For example, pupils recently enjoyed a French day where pupils from a school in France joined them to celebrate French food and art. The school is developing community cohesion further by helping pupils to develop non-stereotypical views about the people in the countries that benefit from their fund raising.

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*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</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 at least satisfactory progress in the Reception Year and enter Year 1 with mostly average levels of attainment. They make best progress in learning about letter sounds and in mathematical calculations because these skills are promoted especially well. For example, children are expected to be independent in trying out spellings for themselves and enjoy adding small numbers of animals together when discovering them buried in the sand tray. Children's social development and emotional development are comparative weaknesses and stories are being chosen to help children to empathise with others. For example, during the inspection children were invited to comment on the feelings of a fish that was left out of a game. There is good balance between tasks that children have chosen for themselves and activities that are led by adults. Occasionally, some activities that children can choose for themselves are not fully resourced or explained to maintain the children's interest. When this happens, children do not learn new things quickly enough. However, overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory.

Close links with parents and carers enable children to settle into school routines swiftly, to enjoy learning and behave sensibly. Members of staff work together closely to support children and they assess their learning carefully. Although leaders have clear plans for improvement, opportunities are missed to make the best use of assessment information to accelerate children's progress.



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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

There was a higher than average return of questionnaires from parents and carers compared with other primary schools. Most are pleased with all aspects of the school's work. They are especially pleased with leadership and management and the way that their children are kept safe at school. The inspection team found that the new leadership team and governors are starting to have a positive impact on the school and pupils are kept safe. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns over the way children's needs were being met and the progress they made. The inspection team found these aspects of the school's work to be satisfactory and that differing needs are not always being met in full, especially for the more-able pupils.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Elham Church of England Primary 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 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 116 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	70	18	28	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	50	78	14	22	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	36	56	25	39	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	39	34	53	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	55	28	44	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	53	27	42	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	55	27	42	2	3	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)	33	52	22	34	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	50	27	42	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	52	29	45	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	48	27	42	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	32	50	27	42	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	61	24	38	1	2	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	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](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.

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"><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.**



22 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Elham Church of England Primary School, Canterbury CT4 6TT**

We enjoyed coming to see your friendly school. Thank you for being so helpful during our visit. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

These are the best things about your school.

- You are good at speaking and reading.
- You behave well and enjoy coming to school.
- Well done for being exceptionally good at helping around the school and in the local area. We are pleased that you helped to select your new headteacher.
- We agree with you when you say that teachers look after you well.
- The headteacher and other leaders know what needs to be done to make the school better.

These are the things we have asked your school to do next to make it better.

- Make sure that you are always clear about what you are all expected to learn in each lesson and that you are involved in marking so that you can improve your work straight away.
- Make sure that you always complete work that is hard enough for you and use your mathematics and writing skills in other subjects, especially those of you who find learning easy.
- Make sure that teachers who look after subjects have the opportunity to check how well you are learning so that they can make sure that everyone is as successful as possible.

Thank you once again for telling us about your school and letting us see your work. You could help your teachers by always doing your best work.

Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge

Lead inspector

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