

Hoo St Werburgh Primary School and Marlborough Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118327
Local Authority	Medway
Inspection number	379597
Inspection dates	18–19 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Jon Carter

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	475
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Chappell
Headteacher	Jo Trickett
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 19 lessons taught by 19 teachers and held meetings with school leaders and managers, a representative from the governing body and three groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at assessment information, the school's analysis of pupils' progress, curriculum plans, minutes of governing body meetings, records of the school leaders' lesson monitoring, and many other documents. They analysed responses from the 205 questionnaires received from parents and carers, as well as those from 95 pupils and 59 staff.

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

- How effectively teaching uses recent and accurate assessment information to provide challenging learning activities that enable pupils to make rapid progress, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- How effectively the school curriculum makes learning exciting and engaging, so that boys make as much progress as girls.
- How well school leaders and the governing body ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those in the Marlborough Centre, make progress at similar rates to their peers.

Information about the school

Hoo St Werburgh is a primary school of larger than average size. The largest ethnic group in the school is made up of pupils from a White British background. The school has a lower than average percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. A much lower than average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language, very few of whom are at a very early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average. There is a much higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The Marlborough Centre provides for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and is based on the same site as the school. Sixty pupils attend the Marlborough Centre and have statements of special educational needs for their autistic spectrum disorders. Other pupils' special educational needs are mainly social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech, language and communication needs and moderate learning difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of two Reception classes. The school holds the Eco-school Silver Award and enhanced 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

Hoo St Werburgh is a satisfactory school. There are strengths in provision, particularly in the good quality care, guidance and support which ensure that pupils feel exceptionally safe. Underpinning this strong care are outstanding arrangements to ensure that the safeguarding of pupils' welfare is paramount. Pupils develop their personal skills well and their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. Progress and achievement for all pupils, including those in the Marlborough Centre, are satisfactory. Whilst there are a number of examples of good practice, the quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. This is because the pace of change in improving teaching has not been sufficiently rapid.

Structures and systems for improving pupils' progress involve staff at all levels. As a result of this, together with clear direction from the school's leadership team, an increasing number of pupils are making good or better progress. Recent staff training has correctly focused on strategies to overcome weaknesses in pupils' numeracy skills and how well boys make progress in writing. Where teaching successfully incorporates these strategies into well-planned learning activities, pupils make increasingly rapid progress. This is particularly evident in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where the concerted action of staff has ensured, for example, that opportunities for boys to develop writing skills are now much more closely aligned to their interests. There have been a number of opportunities for staff to share the good practice that exists in the school and the majority of staff have made use of this to develop their skills well. There is, though, still some inconsistency in practice in a small number of classes. As a result, teaching is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, pupils make at least good progress because learning activities excite them and their learning moves on swiftly. Occasionally, however, the level of challenge is less well matched to pupils' different abilities because teachers do not make best use of the assessment information available to them to set appropriate learning goals.

Older pupils take their roles as 'ambassadors' very seriously and can be seen enthusiastically leading and encouraging other pupils to participate in the good range of physical activities. There is very good awareness of healthy eating and pupils are quick to encourage others to eat healthily. As a result, pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles is outstanding, as recognised by Enhanced Healthy School Status.

The headteacher is well supported by a strong senior leadership team. The strengths and areas for development are clearly identified and self-evaluation is broadly accurate. Action has been taken quickly when weaknesses have been identified.

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Senior leaders are aware that their monitoring and support has not had consistent impact on ensuring that teaching has developed at a good pace. The governing body are supportive of the school and developing their role in challenging senior staff to bring about improvements. As yet, though, they do not always challenge the school in ensuring that teaching is of good quality and that pupils make the progress they should. The positive changes that have been made since the last inspection, particularly in improving the progress pupils make in mathematics and writing, together with the commitment of staff to bring about continued improvement, ensure the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Up to 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?

- Improve the quality and consistency of pupils' progress in lessons by ensuring that lesson planning sets clear learning goals that challenge all pupils, based upon recent and accurate assessment of what pupils know and can do.
- Improve the quality of learning by ensuring that opportunities to observe good and outstanding practice have a greater impact on improving teaching.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - monitoring and support to improve teaching has more consistent impact across the school.
 - the governing body develops its skills in challenging school leaders about the effectiveness of systems to improve teaching and accelerate pupils' progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children enter Year 1 with skills and abilities slightly below the expectations for children of their age. Through Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress so that by the end of Year 6, their attainment is broadly average.

Overall, progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science is satisfactory. In some classes, the rate of progress in writing and mathematics has accelerated and pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress. For example, Year 6 pupils, using inverse calculations to solve problems in mathematics, moved on quickly in their learning because the tasks they were set took excellent account of prior learning. Pupils show confidence in applying their information and communication technology (ICT) skills, for example, when manipulating images and placing them into desktop publishing packages as part of larger projects. Challenging but realistic expectations enabled them to achieve their targets. Where progress is slower, pupils lose interest because the level of challenge is too high or because the learning activities take too long. As a result, not all pupils make the progress of which they

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are capable.

Pupils integrated into lessons from the Marlborough Centre cope very well with the different social dynamics of classrooms in the main school. They, like others with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make as much progress as other pupils in these lessons. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in lessons within the Marlborough Centre. Occasionally their progress slows when the work set is not matched to their ability.

Pupils' behaviour is good. Their strong social and moral development is reflected in their orderly and well-mannered conduct around the school and in the playground, and contributes strongly to pupils feeling extremely safe. Pupils' enjoyment of coming to school is demonstrated by their above average attendance. Recently improved progress in pupils' basic skills, together with good personal skills, ensures that pupils' development of workplace and other skills is good, contributing effectively to their future economic well-being. Pupils make a strong contribution to the school community by taking on responsibilities as play leaders and members of the school council as well as working as part of the 'green team', recognised by the Eco-schools Silver award. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to engage purposefully with the community beyond the school. Pupils from different cultural backgrounds work and play harmoniously together.

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	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

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

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Staff continuously update their understanding of different teaching methods. Consequently, activities that are planned to address pupils' numeracy needs are now better matched to how pupils learn best. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and positive. The whole school is a bright and welcoming learning environment. Displays are well planned to reflect the school's drive for improvement in numeracy and writing. Lessons are generally well planned so that pupils' learning is structured and takes account of the range of abilities. However, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always accurate enough. Where learning and progress are good or better, assessment of what pupils know and can do is used well to ensure that planning takes good account of this. Consequently, pupils are motivated to learn and progress because the work they do is suitably challenging. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson for Marlborough Centre pupils, the teacher was able to appropriately challenge individual pupils so that their understanding of adventure story features developed well. Many staff have benefitted from observing the good and outstanding practice that exists in other classes but a small minority of teachers are at an early stage of effectively reflecting on their own practice. As a result, improvements for some are taking longer to embed. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to ensure that the pace of learning is at least satisfactory.

Pupils benefit from a satisfactory curriculum which is broad, balanced and makes particularly good use of local partnerships. Links with local schools, for example, have led to curriculum development in all of the core subjects. This is beginning to contribute to improved literacy skills for boys, especially in writing. Provision made for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders ensures that they receive satisfactory opportunities to develop their social communication skills through collaborative working with their peers. Pupils in the Marlborough Centre follow a timetable which enables them to integrate successfully into lessons in the main school, where appropriate. Links between subjects, particularly to incorporate meaningful use of ICT, are established and becoming increasingly comprehensive.

A caring ethos permeates the school. Arrangements to ensure that pupils settle in quickly to school and are well prepared for moving on to secondary school are good. Comprehensive risk assessment systems ensure that pupils' health and safety is given the highest priority. Staff work collaboratively with a wide range of support agencies to ensure pupils and families are well supported. Pupils whose circumstances make them especially vulnerable receive particularly high quality care and support. Those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including pupils in the Marlborough Centre, are well supported in their personal development because staff understand their needs well and are skilled in overcoming their difficulties and anxieties.

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

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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 headteacher and her leadership team communicate a consistent message to staff about the way forward for the school. Recent staffing changes have provided opportunities for capable leaders to strengthen the leadership of key areas of the school. As a result, staff at all levels have a clear understanding of their role in driving improvement. However, while the impact of most changes, such as those made to improve boys' writing, can be seen in pupils' better progress in many classes, other changes are less well established and have not yet had a measureable effect. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory in all aspects of the school's work, and it takes suitable steps to tackle discrimination. The progress of the most vulnerable groups of pupils is monitored appropriately. The governing body provide satisfactory support and challenge to the leadership team and visit the school regularly to gain an appreciation of its strengths and weaknesses. The school recognises that governors need to develop their skills in providing high quality and purposeful challenge to the leadership team.

Arrangements for ensuring that pupils are adequately safeguarded are exemplary. All staff and governors are trained regularly and recruitment procedures are rigorous. Effective links with parents ensure that they have access to a good range of information about how well their children make progress and they can experience the learning environment first hand on weekly class open days. The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion is satisfactory. School leaders have an accurate understanding of pupils' backgrounds. They ensure that pupils have suitable opportunities to enhance their understanding of the diversity of different heritages within the school. However, school leaders recognise that links with children in different areas of the UK and globally are less well developed and appropriate plans are in place to redress this balance.

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	3
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	3

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tackles discrimination	
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children achieve well as they progress through the Reception classes. Currently children are making more rapid progress because of the enthusiasm and knowledge of the new teaching team. Children are very happy because adults take good care of their needs, which helps them to settle quickly and want to learn. They are encouraged to make independent use of a good range of resources and activities both indoors and outside. They know how to play and move between classrooms and the garden safely. Children respect and make good use of the resources. Adults encourage children to make healthy choices and develop their understanding of regular hygiene routines well. Children are keen to work and become confident learners as they play together and share all the activities in this secure and welcoming environment. The staff have provided a good balance of learning opportunities, which enables children to learn independently and engage in individual interests. They also teach them well in a more structured way during phonic group learning. However, there are occasions when staff miss opportunities to stretch the more able and develop children's critical thinking using more open-ended questions.

Good quality assessments effectively inform children's profile and learning journey records and are used well by staff to plan children's learning. In addition, staff take good account of children's interests to guide planning of the next steps in learning. Good leadership and management enable a strong sense of purpose within the staff team. There are clear plans to continue staff training in order to further improve practice. Parents are increasingly being involved in their child's learning and this is set to continue and expand. As a result, parents are well informed and partnerships are effective.

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 higher than average proportion of parents and carers responded to the

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questionnaire. The responses on most questionnaires were positive, although there was an even balance of positive and negative written comments where parents and carers had chosen to explain their views. Parents and carers most frequently commented positively about the care provided for pupils in the Marlborough Centre. Inspectors found that the quality of care is good across the school, but particularly so for pupils who are vulnerable and have special educational needs and/or disabilities. One summarised the views of many when writing: 'The Marlborough Centre has made such a positive difference to our child's behaviour and education.'

Where parents and carers held negative views, they were most often connected with the quality of communication, particularly in respect of listening and responding to their views. This was associated with having sufficient information about pupils' progress and what they were learning so that parents and carers could provide better support at home. There were also a few concerns about being able to access members of the school's leadership team. Inspectors found that the school has good systems in place to communicate effectively with parents, although the school accepts that these are not always used well enough to secure high engagement with parents.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hoo St Werburgh Primary School and Marlborough Centre 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 205 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 475 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	95	46	100	49	8	4	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	118	58	83	40	2	1	1	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	69	34	119	58	13	6	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	77	38	113	55	11	5	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	83	40	112	55	7	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	72	35	116	57	13	6	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	75	37	121	59	2	1	1	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)	69	34	113	55	4	2	3	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	77	38	109	53	9	4	4	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	70	34	113	55	12	6	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	27	115	56	21	10	3	1
The school is led and managed effectively	84	41	97	47	15	7	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	92	45	103	50	6	3	1	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



20 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Hoo St Werburgh Primary School and Marlborough Centre
ME3 9BS**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. I am writing to tell you that Hoo St Werburgh is a satisfactory school.

We were particularly pleased to see you behaving very well in lessons and enjoying your learning. You told us that you feel exceptionally safe at school and we saw that your ambassadors are working hard to encourage everyone to be healthy. We have judged that these are outstanding aspects of your school.

You make at least satisfactory progress in lessons. In some classes, your learning is faster because lessons take better account of what you already know and can do. However, in many lessons, you are asked to take part in activities which are not as well matched to your abilities as they could be.

Staff at your school take good care of all of you. Those of you that need extra help from time to time are very well looked after. The school's procedures for keeping you safe are outstanding. Your attendance is above average – well done!

To help the school to get even better, we have asked the headteacher to:

- improve how well you make progress in lessons by giving you all appropriately challenging and interesting work
- improve the quality of teaching by getting all teachers to use the good practice they see in other classes to help you make rapid progress in their lessons
- improve how well the leadership team ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good in all classes.

You can all help by letting your teachers know if your work is too easy or too hard.

Yours sincerely

Jon Carter
Lead inspector

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