

Hornbeam Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	135133
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	395753
Inspection dates	10–11 July 2012
Lead inspector	Robert Lovett HMI

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	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Utting
Headteacher	Paul Newton
Date of previous school inspection	January 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Robert Lovett

Her Majesty's Inspector

Janet Tomkins

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. All teachers were observed at least once and some small-group and intervention work was also observed. Meetings were held with the governors, the school council, senior staff and subject leaders. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at arrangements for safeguarding pupils and a range of key documents. Inspectors scrutinised information on how well pupils are achieving and considered the responses to staff and pupil questionnaires and 144 parental questionnaires.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school serving a relatively settled community. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The school shares the site with a privately-run nursery. This is not managed by the governing body and was not inspected on this occasion.

In 2011 the school failed to meet the government's floor standards, which set a minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress. Unvalidated data for 2012 indicate that the school has exceeded the floor standards in 2012.

There have recently been significant changes in staffing. The headteacher, a number of other senior staff and the Chair of the Governing Body have all taken up their posts in this academic year. A substantive deputy headteacher starts in September 2012. The school's most recent and significant external awards include revalidation of National Healthy Schools Status, recognition of its work in providing extended services and accreditation in the Lets Get Cooking network.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because recent improvements in provision have not yet resulted in good achievement. 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.
- In 2011 attainment was average by the end of Key Stage 1, but fell sharply in Key Stage 2. Better teaching and a clear focus on achievement are now accelerating pupils' progress and attainment overall is rising to broadly average levels. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress.
- The school is greatly valued by staff, pupils, and parents and carers. All staff say they are very proud of the school and almost all parents and carers would recommend it to others.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving. There is now good teaching in all key stages, and none is inadequate. Where teaching is only satisfactory it is because there is not a consistently good pace throughout the lesson and work is not always closely enough matched to pupils' needs.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. All staff, and almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire, agree. Pupils say they enjoy school. Attendance is well above average.
- Leadership and management are good and the school is well placed to continue to improve. The headteacher's vision is widely shared and the quality of teaching is improving because the management of teachers' performance is very effective. While the curriculum promotes an understanding of life in other countries well, it is less effective in its coverage of diversity within the United Kingdom. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, but there is not a sharp enough focus on the impact of improvements on the achievement of pupils.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is at least good and that pupils' attainment levels rise by sharing best practice and through the consistent use of:
 - a range of questions which engage, challenge and assess the progress of all pupils
 - work which is better matched to the learning needs of all pupils
 - marking which tells pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve
 - strategies to ensure that all pupils are active learners and are able to contribute fully to their own learning.
- Improve pupils' understanding of cultural and religious diversity within the United Kingdom.
- Ensure that improvement planning clearly indicates the anticipated impact of planned actions on the outcomes for pupils.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most children enter the Reception class with levels of skills and knowledge which are lower than expected for their age, particularly in respect of their communication and language skills. They then make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that by the time they enter Year 1 they have reached the expected levels. In the most recent published national assessments for pupils in Year 2, levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly average. Overall attainment for boys and girls was similar. Last year's national tests show pupils' progress slowing significantly in Key Stage 2, with their attainment in English significantly lower than average. This is because of pupils' well-below-average performance in writing. Those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals did much less well than their peers in 2011 and less well than similar pupils nationally.

As a result of a whole-school determination to raise pupils' achievement, effective interventions and improving teaching are ensuring all groups of pupils now make more rapid progress. Pupils' attainment overall and in reading is now broadly average by the end of Year 6 and levels of attainment in writing have risen sharply. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals now achieve as well as other pupils and many have made good progress. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making good progress because their progress is carefully tracked and their learning needs effectively met by teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils have positive attitudes and are eager learners. In a lesson in Reception, children made good progress because the teacher made effective use of first-hand resources, such as photographs and film clips, and, because relationships are good, children were easily motivated and engaged. Pupils in Year 6 writing about 'magic moments' remembered from the past year concentrated well and made good

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progress in writing. They used 'wow' words to grab the reader's attention from the start and described how they would use a 'cliff hanger' at the end of the paragraph to encourage readers to continue. Parents and carers are very positive about the progress their children are making and recognise the rapid improvements in provision.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving. There is good teaching to be seen across the school. Better planning and support from teachers and other adults are improving achievement and enhancing the learning of all groups of pupils. The new pupil progress meetings, which monitor the attainment of pupils who are at risk of underachieving, are having a positive impact. In these meetings teachers are asked to account for the progress of those pupils and, where progress is not rapid enough, additional support is agreed. For example, a group of pupils in Year 5 were identified as making slow progress in English. A programme of one-to-one reading support was established and as a result all made good, or very good, progress.

However, teaching is not always so carefully matched to pupils' different needs. Sometimes work is too easy or too difficult. Where teaching is good or better, pupils' progress is swift. In a good English lesson pupils worked very well together to write a story based on the structure of a traditional tale. They discussed their ideas sensibly, but with great enthusiasm. The teacher moved effectively between groups and the teaching assistant provided good, focused support for less-able pupils to enable them to sequence the narrative well. In successful lessons, teachers ask a broad range of questions which keeps all pupils engaged, encourages them to develop their ideas and to give full answers. This effective questioning is not always evident. Sometimes teachers ask questions but then answer them themselves, or do not insist on high-quality responses. Classrooms are bright, lively and uncluttered. Displays of pupils work are particularly effective in celebrating pupils' achievements across the curriculum and exemplifying high standards. The teaching of music, art and drama promotes pupils' cultural development well.

The quality of marking and assessment is inconsistent. The best marking encourages pupils and tells them how well they are doing and how to improve further. While teachers invest significant time in marking, some feedback fails to tell pupils how to improve their work and teachers do not check that their suggestions have been acted upon or comment on the success of pupils in meeting their targets. Most pupils know their targets for English, but target setting in mathematics is less secure.

Where teaching is best, teachers ensure that learning proceeds at a good pace and that all pupils are fully engaged. Where teaching is no more than satisfactory, pupils spend too long listening to the teacher and the pace of learning lacks urgency. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are particularly well supported and are making good progress as a result. Relationships in classrooms are consistently good. Pupils work well together and enjoy discussing their work.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are friendly, polite and welcoming. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils of all ages play together at break times and play resources are readily available. Staff have a high profile, whether supervising football, leading games or talking to pupils about the many fruits and vegetables growing in the class allotments. When teaching is insufficiently engaging, pupils' attention can wander. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online, when cycling and when they are near the swimming pool. They know how to behave in the event of a fire. Pupils particularly enjoy visits to local places of interest, such as the local lifeboat station and Fowlmead Country Park, and value visitors to the school, such as 'King Henry VIII' who helped bring Tudor history to life.

Pupils say that they enjoy school. Attendance is well above average and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is low. Parents and carers share the positive views of their children. Almost all say that their children feel safe at school and that behaviour is typically good. Pupils say that bullying is rare but that they would be confident to tell an adult if it occurred. Pupils know that bullying can take many forms, such as name calling, racially motivated bullying and cyber bullying, and say that none happens at their school. Opportunities to share their thoughts, during circle-time for example, make a good contribution to pupils' social and moral development. Prefects relish working with younger pupils and act as good role models.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good. Recent changes to the senior leadership team have had a significant impact on pupils' achievement. The headteacher, senior leadership team and governing body have a sharp focus on raising achievement through improving the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher's vision for school improvement is widely shared across the school, teaching is getting better, achievement is rising and the school is well placed to continue to improve. School leaders at all levels provide good leadership. Inclusion, the Early Years Foundation Stage and key subjects are increasingly well led. Well-planned professional development has provided good training and support for teachers and for middle leaders. They say that they value this highly and that it has made them more effective as teachers and managers. Effective professional development and a sharper focus on the quality of teaching have also had a positive impact on outcomes for pupils. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and is used well to inform improvement planning. Whilst improvement plans set out appropriate actions and time limits they do not always make clear the anticipated impact of these actions on pupils' achievement.

The governing body is very effective in holding the school to account. It monitors its work robustly and does not flinch from asking difficult questions. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and all staff training is up to date. The governing body is diligent in ensuring it meets its statutory responsibilities. The register of adults able

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to work with children is maintained well. The school has received good support from the local authority in its drive to raise achievement.

The curriculum is rich and varied and promotes key skills increasingly well. Pupils learn about the lives of pupils in other countries through the curriculum and through the school's partnership with a school in Sri Lanka. Opportunities to find out more about the lives of people of other faiths and cultures within the United Kingdom are more limited. This is an avenue the school is keen to explore.

Staff and parents and carers comment very positively on the welcoming and inclusive ethos and on improved communication. The school promotes equality of opportunity well. It monitors the academic progress and well-being of all pupils with great care and ensures their individual needs are met. All groups of pupils now achieve equally well. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well and has particular strengths in the development of pupils' moral, social and artistic development.

Because leadership and management are good, the headteacher's vision for improvement is widely shared, teaching is improving and achievement is rising, the school is well placed to continue to improve.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



13 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hornbeam Primary School, Deal CT1 9PQ

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly when we visited your school. A special 'thank you' to the school council and to those of you who read to my colleague and talked about your books. As I explained to reporters from the Hornbeam Herald, we were there to see how well the school is doing and make suggestions for improvement.

I am pleased to tell you that your school is satisfactory. It is well led and managed and as a result is improving quickly. You are achieving more than you did and teaching is improving. Your behaviour is good. You are polite, friendly and helpful. We enjoyed talking to you and finding out about your school. It was lovely to see you all playing so well together at break time. The school council represents your views well and has had a real influence on some important issues, such as the quality of the school meals. In the dining hall some of you told me how much you enjoy the school dinners. I agree that they are really nice – I enjoyed the fish pie hugely. It is obvious that the whole school community is very proud of the school. You show this by keeping the building and school grounds in such good condition and litter free. While the headteacher, governors and staff are already working hard to bring about improvement, here are our suggestions to help the school improve further.

- Teachers should share their good ideas so that all the teaching is at least good.
- Teachers should help you to learn about the many cultures and religions which enrich modern Britain.
- The school should make sure that plans to improve Hornbeam are clearer about how they will help you to do better.

Best wishes for the new school year.

Yours sincerely

Robert Lovett
Her Majesty's Inspector

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