



Hamstreet Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118378
LEA Kent
Inspection number 280305
Inspection dates 6 March 2006 to 7 March 2006
Reporting inspector Kevin Hodge AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hamstreet
School category	Community		Ashford
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Kent TN26 2EA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01233 732577
Number on roll	314	Fax number	01233 732573
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Andy Barker
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Jane Macey

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger-than-average primary school. Pupils come from a wide area. Nearly all are of White British heritage and very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. The pupils' attainment on entry is lower than is typical for their age and particularly low in their personal, social development and their language abilities.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hamstreet is a good school where pupils achieve well and experience a wide range of activities. The good quality of provision seen by inspectors confirms the school's own judgement that its effectiveness is good. Provision is outstanding in the reception class, where children make an excellent start and achieve well. Pupils also achieve well in other year groups and generally reach above-average standards by the time they leave school. Pupils' speaking skills in Years 1 to 6, although satisfactory, are not as well developed as they could be. Pupils with learning difficulties or who are from minority ethnic groups make good progress. The quality of education, including teaching, is good and some outstanding teaching was seen. There are some variations between classes in the level of challenge set by the teachers. Despite that, pupils generally make good progress. The quality of the curriculum is good, enriched significantly by a wide range of activities, including art clubs, residential visits and sports clubs.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils like school, and standards of behaviour are excellent. The strong focus by all staff on pupils' care and guidance gives them confidence and they feel safe. The headteacher, supported by an effective staff team and governing body, leads the school well. The monitoring of teaching is regular, but is not always sharp enough in Years 1 to 6 in pinpointing the key areas to improve teaching still further. There has been improvement since the last inspection, and the school has the capacity to improve further. The school gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop pupils' speaking skills in Years 1 to 6 by improving their range of vocabulary and confidence to speak in greater depth.
- Build upon the good teaching in Years 1 to 6 so there are consistently high expectations set between classes and year groups, particularly for the highest attaining pupils.
- Extend the monitoring of teaching in Years 1 to 6 by including a sharper focus on those key elements that will help raise the quality of teaching further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Pupils generally reach above-average standards at the end of Year 6. The pupils make very good progress in reception from their low starting point in their social, personal and language abilities. By the time they enter Year 1 they reach the expected levels in their learning goals. The national tests in 2005 indicated that Year 2 pupils performed better than the national picture but not at the higher levels. The school has responded quickly to that and its focus on higher-attaining pupils is improving their achievement. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is good and has improved for all pupils in the current year following a decline in test results for higher-attaining pupils in English and mathematics. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' speaking

skills and confidence to answer in depth are not sufficiently well developed but they achieve well in other aspects of English.

In the national tests for Year 6 in 2005, the results slightly exceeded the national picture, but the school fell short of achieving their very challenging targets. There was also variation between boys' and girls' results in English and mathematics, where girls generally did better than the boys. The school has increased its focus on writing and mathematics, improved pupils' progress and has reduced the gender gap in performance. In science, pupils reach above-average standards and in information and communication technology (ICT) pupils make good progress. Vulnerable children and those with learning difficulties or who are from minority ethnic groups make good progress and achieve well because of the good support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of right and wrong. Pupils respect their own and other cultures and taking part in special school events such as Chinese Week or Australia Day helps raise their awareness. This is largely effective, although could be extended further as the school has identified. The school promotes pupils' spiritual awareness well through assemblies and reflection times. Behaviour is excellent and is an outstanding feature throughout. Pupils believe Hamstreet is a happy, safe school. Parents agree. One commented that 'the school prepares and encourages our precious children to learn, understand and enjoy themselves'. Pupils feel there is no bullying, and were clear about what to do if it happens. They value the work of the school council and were proud to have its suggestion to have toys for the playground accepted. Pupils have enthusiastically supported causes such as the Tsunami appeal and local charities. The school emphasises effectively the benefits of being safe, eating sensibly and taking exercise. After-school sports clubs help pupils extend their activity levels. The school prepares pupils well for later life by extending their sense of responsibility, collaborative abilities and academic skills. Greater emphasis on pupils' confidence to speak at length would improve it further. Attendance is good and pupils arrive punctually to school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Very good relationships and promotion of good behaviour are key reasons why teaching and learning are good. Pupils are keen to learn and they respond very well as they feel valued. A strong feature is the level of interaction and collaboration encouraged so pupils have a good understanding of what they are learning. Some outstanding teaching seen in the reception classes and in Year 6 enthused pupils very effectively. At the start of the day, reception pupils were quickly involved in a wide range of activities and simple games to extend their speaking skills. In Year 6, quick pace, very high

expectations and good subject knowledge helped pupils to understand complex mathematical formulas quickly. In other year groups, interesting activities encourage good attitudes and hard work, but some opportunities are missed to extend pupils' speaking skills. Teachers regularly remind pupils about their targets and monitor their general progress carefully and regularly. The expectations set for pupils sometimes vary between classes or year groups, so not all pupils are fully stretched, especially higher attainers. Teaching assistants and other helpers are well deployed. They give good support, especially for pupils with learning difficulties, who make good progress as a result.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, with aspects such as the provision for the youngest pupils being outstanding. It is broad, rich and interesting. A two-year programme for planning ensures that activities match pupils' different ages and interests. In response to lower-than-expected English and mathematics results last year, the school quickly focused on improving spelling and writing activities. Grouping pupils by ability in mathematics has helped teachers identify and address gaps in their learning. Provision in ICT has improved and a computer suite helps pupils have better 'hands on' access to computers and the Internet. Activities for pupils with learning difficulties are well planned and in response to test results, the interests and needs of boys are now met well. The school identifies activities to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils, but also recognises this needs further development. The outstanding curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very well organised and provides interesting activities so that children make very good progress. An excellent range and number of additional activities include learning French, using the extensive school grounds and having residential visits to broaden pupils' experiences in all years. After-school clubs help pupils to reach high standards in music, art and physical education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

A clear recognition that pupils come first is a key reason why provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is good. Parents comment overwhelmingly that their children are well cared for. The school is working hard, however, to resolve a concern about car parking at the beginning and end of the school day. There are good levels of supervision in the playground, helped by the pupils' buddy system. The school provides good levels of support when pupils join the school or change year group. This includes meetings for parents and pupils to meet new teachers and to settle quickly into new routines. Procedures for child protection are fully in place, supported by recent training for staff. Risk assessments for health and safety are carried out on a regular basis. Lessons based on health education contribute positively to drugs education and through topics such as 'Stranger Danger'. Pupils are given targets to help them improve and direct their efforts and these generally work well, although do not always ensure that pupils are fully stretched in every class. Parents are kept fully informed of their

children's progress through regular consultative sessions and termly reports. Links with outside agencies such as school nurses and dental screening are used very effectively to provide support for pupils and staff.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The very high quality of provision for the youngest pupils, the focus on pupils' well-being and collaborative decision making are key reasons why leadership and management are good. The headteacher has successfully created a happy staff team with a clear vision. The school uses self-evaluation effectively, particularly by involving governors', staff and pupils' views to decide annual priorities. The improvement in school lunches is an example of where governors have influenced change. The way the school has responded to some weaknesses thrown up by recent national test results shows that not only is self-evaluation good, but that necessary follow-up action is taken quickly. Regular forums with parents also help highlight issues effectively. This open approach aids the school's drive for improvement and capacity to improve. The headteacher and senior staff regularly monitor and evaluate teaching in the school. This is largely effective, but is not always evaluative enough in Years 1 to 6 in pinpointing key weaknesses to ensure that teaching improves further. Governors have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school through receiving regular reports, visits and discussion with pupils. Finances are managed well to achieve good value for money. There are very good links with parents and the village community, which contributes to the pupils' learning and the popularity of the school. As one parent accurately said, 'the school is a well led, strong and thriving community'.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

We really liked visiting your school and we were impressed with the way you welcomed us and spoke enthusiastically about what you do and liked most. Here are some of the things we found out while we were with you.

What we liked most about your school

- You reach good standards in your work and enjoy your English, mathematics activities and computer suite.
- Children make a very good start in the reception class.
- You behave extremely well in class and around the school.
- The headteacher, governors and staff help you to develop well.
- You do exciting activities in lessons and in clubs.
- You understand about the best things to eat and why it's good to take exercise.
- You like taking responsibility for things like fund raising to help others.
- Your parents or carers think it's a good school and helps you to learn.

What we have asked the school to do now

- Help you get even better at speaking and be more confident in discussion with others.
- Make sure the teachers in different classes always expect as much as possible from all of you so that you are always challenged to do your very best.
- Just as we have asked you to do better, your teachers too should also be helped to spot ways they can improve on their already good teaching.

Best wishes for your future.