



# Whitstable and Seasalter Endowed Church of England Aided Junior School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 118737  
**LEA** Kent  
**Inspection number** 280383  
**Inspection dates** 9 May 2006 to 10 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Carole Skinner AI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	High Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Whitstable
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11		Kent CT5 1AY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01227 273630
<b>Number on roll</b>	192	<b>Fax number</b>	01227 273630
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs D Clements
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 July 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs E Burrows

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The school, which is smaller than average, is situated in the centre of Whitstable. The pupils come from a wide variety of social backgrounds, but approximately half live in relatively disadvantaged parts of the local area. Just under a third of the pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. When they start school, around a third of the pupils have low attainment and few have reached above-average levels for their age.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good school where pupils achieve well and thoroughly enjoy learning. It gives good value for money. The school has a similar view of its own overall effectiveness, although its judgements of a few aspects of its work are somewhat conservative. Rigorous and systematic monitoring by senior managers identifies accurately where strengths lie and where improvement is needed. Strong leadership and effective teamwork are driving the school forward, with pupils' learning firmly at the heart of all new initiatives. Parents are very happy with the school. As one put it, "The school has a loving, caring, focused, committed team, from Head to helpers."

All adults provide exceptionally good care and support for pupils, whose excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning underpin their good progress. Pupils play an active part in running the school and take their responsibilities seriously. They love the recent innovations to the curriculum, especially the enrichment afternoons and weeks where all lessons revolve around a specific theme. Teachers are constantly seeking ways to make learning more interesting and relevant for the pupils. They have high expectations of all pupils and provide challenging activities in lessons. The school sets aspirational targets for all pupils. The relatively new systems for tracking pupils' progress towards their targets are still being refined.

Senior managers and governors have made significant improvements to the accommodation, which have opened up new and exciting possibilities for extending pupils' learning, especially in information and communication technology (ICT). Standards are rising in ICT but the use of computers to monitor and control events has been identified as an area for development (control technology). The school is very well equipped to face future challenges and staff and governors have the skills and commitment to pursue and attain their ultimate goal of excellence in all aspects of school life.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Further refine the systems for tracking pupils' progress by recording assessments throughout each year.
- Raise standards in ICT by improving pupils' understanding of how computers are used to measure and control events.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are slightly above average in Year 6, which represents good achievement given many pupils' lower-than-average attainment when they start school. This has been a consistent picture over the past five years, with slight variations between subjects. Thorough analysis of pupils' performance in national tests revealed that the most able pupils were not doing well enough in science and writing. Teachers tackled this promptly by incorporating more challenge in the learning and ensuring that boys were given writing tasks that appealed to and interested them. Standards are rising

as a result of the actions taken. Similarly, shortcomings in problem solving in mathematics have been remedied by showing pupils how to work through a problem logically in stages.

All pupils have challenging targets to achieve that help to promote good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because they are given 'small steps' targets for improvement that help them to build on their previous learning. Progress in ICT, which, until recently, has been hampered by technical problems and the limitations of the accommodation, is now improving, though standards in control technology lag behind those in other aspects.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They are exceptionally enthusiastic about their school and this is reflected in their excellent behaviour and high levels of concentration and hard work in lessons. Attendance is in line with national averages and pupils try hard to be punctual.

Pupils' very good spiritual and moral development is enriched through close links with the church and regular 'candle time' when they reflect on important themes such as joy and forgiveness. They show sensitivity when expressing opinions about a wide range of moral issues. Pupils particularly enjoyed the opportunities offered by the multi-cultural week to experience the traditions and way of life of different cultures.

Pupils feel valued because their opinions are listened to. Through the school council they influence developments in the school, such as playground organisation. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities as 'playground buddies', play leaders and prefects. Activities such as managing the fruit tuck shop, fundraising and making reports to senior staff and governors help them to develop financial awareness and contribute to the daily life of the school. Pupils understand the principles of healthy living and know about the implications of the choices they make at lunch. Playtimes are exciting as pupils take part in an excellent range of games and activities.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

High expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement underpin the good teaching throughout the school. A strong focus on how pupils learn results in well-planned lessons which draw upon a good variety of styles and methods. As one pupil put it, "Lessons are never boring because the teachers give us lots of interesting things to do." Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards to enhance pupils' learning and are increasing their expertise in teaching ICT under the expert guidance of the subject leader.

Another strong feature of the teaching is the marking of pupils' work, which gives praise for good work and shows pupils exactly what they need to do to improve. Teachers have good systems for involving pupils in assessing their own progress, and this helps pupils to have a good understanding of how well they are doing.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It is well planned around themes, with effective links between subjects. The increased focus on creativity is making learning more enjoyable for pupils. This development is still at an early stage and is being evaluated and refined as it progresses. Literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are developed effectively through other subjects as well as in separate lessons. Pupils are benefiting greatly from the new ICT suite as they now have many more opportunities to learn and practise new skills. The curriculum is enriched further by the teaching of French, a residential visit for older pupils and 'Friday afternoon activities' which develop a broad range of skills, including touch-typing, gardening and cookery. After-school clubs are popular and varied. Pupils say they particularly enjoy the themed weeks and special projects, such as the multi-cultural week, 'write-on' week and participation in a local film festival.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding. All adults know pupils very well and concern for their well-being is everyone's top priority. Adults treat pupils with respect and consideration, setting a fine example for pupils to follow. Child protection and safety procedures are firmly established and understood by staff. A strong focus on healthy eating and exercise fosters good habits and encourages pupils to make wise choices. There are very good procedures for supporting vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties, which ensure they make good progress. Parents have frequent opportunities to discuss and review their children's progress. Teachers keep a close eye on pupils' progress and act swiftly if they spot signs of underachievement. Pupils know what they are expected to achieve and say that they find their targets helpful in showing them how to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good, with some outstanding features. The headteacher has successfully built a very strong staff team who have very high aspirations for the school. Their main aim, "to provide high quality education, personal guidance and spiritual growth for all our children," is the driving force that underpins every decision. The headteacher and subject leaders provide exceptionally good leadership in English, mathematics and science and have taken prompt action to tackle identified shortcomings, for example, in writing, problem solving and the achievement of the most able pupils. Excellent leadership in ICT is enabling the school to make up

lost ground and to make full use of the new suite and interactive whiteboards to enhance learning.

Thorough analysis of test results and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning give leaders a clear idea of what needs improving. The school consults regularly with parents and pupils to gather their views. All staff and governors contribute to the school improvement plan and regularly review the progress made throughout the year. The new systems for tracking pupils' progress are helping leaders to identify quickly any signs of underachievement and put support in place to boost pupils' progress. However, the recording procedures do not yet include enough detail, such as mid-year assessments.

Shrewd financial management has enabled governors to make some outstanding improvements to the accommodation that are clearly having a positive effect on pupils' achievement and enjoyment. The school is constantly seeking ways to improve learning and to raise standards. Leaders have the vision, skills and commitment to succeed in their pursuit of excellence.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	NA	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	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	1	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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 very much enjoyed visiting your school recently, looking at your work and sitting in on some of your lessons. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming. We were particularly impressed by your excellent behaviour and your obvious enjoyment of school.

These are some of the other things we thought were good:

- You make good progress at school and achieve good standards because teachers make lessons fun for you and you work very hard.
- Teachers organise lots of interesting topics, themes and special weeks which help you to learn a lot.
- You are very good at taking responsibility and you play an important part in helping the school to run smoothly.
- All of the adults care about you very much and look after you very well.
- The staff are always looking for ways to make things even better and they listen to what you think and take notice of your ideas.
- The teachers and governors check very carefully to see how well the school is doing and act quickly if they think something could be improved.

The teachers have already started to work on two things that we think could be improved:

- The way they record and check your progress from term to term.
- The arrangements for teaching you how to use computers to measure and control events.

We are sure you will continue to work hard and enjoy your time at school, and send you our very best wishes for your success in the future.