



# Greatstone Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 118864  
**LEA** Kent  
**Inspection number** 280414  
**Inspection dates** 7 February 2006 to 8 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Kevin Hodge AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Baldwin Road
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		New Romney
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Kent TN28 8SY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01797 363916
<b>Number on roll</b>	364	<b>Fax number</b>	01797 363916
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Paul Black
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 September 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Leigh Mortimer

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7 February 2006 - 8 February 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 280414
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This larger than average school is situated on the Romney Marsh and attracts pupils from a wide area. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage and very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. Children's attainment on entry is broadly typical for their age, but children have fewer skills in speaking and mathematical understanding when they start in the reception classes.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Greatstone is a good school where pupils feel safe, reach above average standards in their work and enjoy attending. The wide range and good quality of provision seen by inspectors, supports the school's own judgement that its effectiveness is good. Provision is good and children have a secure start in Reception. They gain skills satisfactorily and nearly all reach expected standards in areas of learning by the time they reach Year 1. Many make good progress in their number and language work. Other pupils achieve well and reach above average standards by the time they leave school. The quality of education, including teaching, is good. There are variations in the way some pupils' work is marked in Years 1 to 6, but teachers monitor their progress carefully. In the Reception Year, the analysing of children's progress is not sufficiently rigorous. The quality of the curriculum is good, enriched by a wide range of activities, including drama, residential visits, sports clubs and musical tuition. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils behave very well and support each other willingly. Pupils know about healthy eating and the benefits of joining the after-school sports clubs. The oldest pupils have a range of responsibilities, which they carry out conscientiously, although younger pupils in Years 1 to 5 are not involved enough in taking on similar roles. The strong focus on care and guidance gives pupils a secure framework to develop confidence and to feel safe. The school is well led and managed by an enthusiastic headteacher who is supported by an effective governing body and the staff team. The school uses its self-evaluation well and its effective response to what is not working as well as it might brings about the desired improvement and builds on strengths. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, and the school has good capacity to continue. The school gives good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- improve the consistency and quality of teachers' marking in Years 1 to 6 to give pupils better feedback on how to improve,
- improve the analysis of assessment information about Reception children to ensure that they make consistent progress in all areas of learning,
- extend roles of responsibility for more pupils in Years 1 to 5 to help develop their sense of involvement and accountability for school activities.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good and pupils reach above average standards. Children's level of ability on entry is lower in aspects of their language and mathematical understanding. By the time they start Year 1 they achieve well in these two areas, but satisfactorily in the remainder as the school does not analyse children's abilities as closely in all areas. They make satisfactory progress and most reach the nationally expected goals for learning. Year 2 pupils make good progress, which is reflected in the national tests in 2005. The results in mathematics and writing were above national averages, but were just below in reading. However, the school's focus to improve reading further

means that pupils now read confidently. Pupils achieve well; they write with flair and originality and they are accurate and quick in basic number work. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve well, particularly in mathematics and science. In the national tests for Year 6 in 2005, the overall results were better than the national picture, maintaining the trend of past years. However, the school fell just short of achieving its challenging targets. The school quickly responded by recognising and addressing successfully pupils' weaker progress in English. In their class work, pupils write creatively and confidently. Writing skills are used effectively in other subjects such as science. Vulnerable children, those with learning difficulties or who are from minority ethnic groups also make good progress and achieve well because of the good support they receive in class.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being is good. The school has effective routines and clear expectations, which pupils understand. Pupils behave very well, have good attitudes to learning and report they feel safe from bullying. Pupils' social skills are well developed, contributing to the happy atmosphere. Assemblies and discussion times address moral issues well and pupils learn appropriately about other faiths and cultures. Promotion of healthy eating and lifestyles is effective. Pupils know the benefits of a balanced diet and a Reception-aged child told inspectors, 'eating yogurt can help you stay fit you know'. Many pupils participate enthusiastically in after-school sports clubs, knowing the benefits of exercise. The oldest pupils contribute well as 'buddies' to younger pupils and have other responsibilities. Younger pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their level of responsibility, although they are enthusiastic about school. By the end of their time in school, pupils have good literacy and numeracy skills. In addition, their involvement in fundraising for charities such as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and in working cooperatively gives them a satisfactory preparation for their future life. Attendance is satisfactory in the main, although there are a few pupils who have difficulty attending regularly. However, there are good procedures to check attendance and the school is making efforts to improve it.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Lively teaching, good use of technology and productive relationships with pupils are key reasons why teaching and learning are good. In the Reception classes, good teaching enables children to make up ground in extending speaking and numeracy skills. For example, in an outstanding lesson, a focus on cookery and healthy eating caused audible gasps of excitement from the children and extended their verbal skills in a fun way. In the remainder of the school, teaching is engaging, well structured and makes good use of interactive whiteboards to enhance pupils' learning. In a small number of activities, the pace of learning was slower. Pupils of all ages enjoy their

learning and teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. Well-briefed teaching assistants provide good support to pupils in all age groups and abilities, including those with learning difficulties. The use of assessment varies. Day-to-day recording of pupils' progress is thorough and in Years 1 to 6 is used well to spot weak areas. However, the teachers' marking in these year groups is inconsistent. In different classes and subjects, marking provides little feedback, but the best examples give pupils high levels of information to help them improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It is broad, stimulating and well balanced. A wide variety of enrichment opportunities is a key strength to this good provision. Pupils enjoy the special focus weeks, visitors, trips and residential visits because they bring learning alive. Children in the Reception classes learn and enjoy from a wide range of experiences, aided by impressive play facilities. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Planning for the youngest pupils generally ensures they cover the required areas, but not consistently to the depth needed. Comprehensive and systematic curriculum plans support activities in Years 1 to 6 and ensure that the pupils in mixed-age classes are well catered for. The bright, attractive displays around the school show many aspects of the curriculum to good effect. The high quality computer suite gives pupils frequent access to computers to improve their technology skills. There are a high number of extra-curricular activities, which are well attended.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a very caring and supportive environment and this helps ensure that pupils' care, guidance and support are good. Pupils know that they are respected, valued and safe; they feel secure in discussing any problems with adults in the school. In some classes, pupils are able to express feelings or fears through discussion time or by writing their worries down and putting them into a 'worry' box. This is appreciated by pupils, but is a new feature not consistent throughout the school. Child protection procedures are effective and there are good arrangements for securing pupils' health and safety. There is an effective system of identification, support and monitoring of pupils with learning difficulties. Well-focused and specific individual targets are set for these pupils and are reviewed at least half termly. The school works effectively with a number of outside agencies such as speech therapists and school nurses. For the majority of pupils, targets are shared with them, particularly in the key subjects of mathematics and English. However, along with marking, this varies in quality between classes. Teaching assistants are trained in a range of activities to support pupils, and they work well with them.

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## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher's clear vision, development of good teamwork and effective support by governors are significant factors in making leadership and management good. The school's evaluation that it has 'unlimited capacity' to improve reflects a shared determination to get even better. For example, the school has improved since its last inspection, often reaching above average standards in national test results. The school's self-evaluation process is accurate in nearly all areas and is an effective tool to promote further improvement. The analysis directs the school improvement plan, as well as using pupils' and parents' views to help to determine priorities. This leads to a succinct and clear focus for action. Teaching quality is regularly and effectively assessed by different members of staff and weaknesses found are remedied which improves pupils' learning. Staff generally examine and review pupils' progress carefully, but this is not sufficiently rigorous for the Reception-age children. Other areas such as assessment procedures and variations in marking have been identified for improvement. A good range of well-trained support staff helps all pupils, particularly those with additional learning needs and with particular gifts or talents. The governing body knows the school well and provides support as well as the challenge needed by the managers. Its willingness to listen to others means that it knows and responds to the views of parents. For example, the governors acted quickly to help parents have more frequent contact with staff. Resources are used very skilfully to promote pupils' learning and enjoyment. The school's finances are used to good effect and are managed carefully.

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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	3	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>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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	3	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>	2	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	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

<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**

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

- You make visitors feel very welcome and you like school.
- You reach good standards in your work, and enjoy your sporting and musical activities.
- The teachers make learning fun and interesting.
- You behave very well in class and around the school.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work well together.
- You understand about the best things to eat and why it is good to exercise.
- You feel safe and well cared for.
- Your parents or carers think it is a good school that helps you learn well.

What we have asked the school to do now

- We have suggested that teachers can give you more help if, in Years 1 to 6, they mark your work in similar ways and give you more clues about how to improve what you do.
- We want teachers to look more closely at the progress of Reception children so they can do well and learn more in all the areas of learning.
- We think that pupils in Years 1 to 5 need more responsibilities around school to help them feel more involved in making the school even better.

We hope that the school continues to get even better and that you enjoy all the activities it provides for you. Yours faithfully Kevin Hodge  
Lead Inspector