

Canterbury Road Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118354
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	291105
Inspection dates	2–3 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Taylor

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 on roll	
School	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Tummon
Headteacher	Lynne Cornwell
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2001
School address	School Road Sittingbourne ME10 4SE
Telephone number	01795 423818
Fax number	01795 423818

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The majority of pupils in this typically-sized school are White British: a minority are from other ethnic backgrounds. Almost all pupils are fluent English speakers. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities is above average, but the proportion with statements of special educational need is below average. Free school meals entitlement is average. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Healthy Schools Award. The headteacher left the school at the end of last term and a new headteacher will join in September. The deputy headteacher is currently acting headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Canterbury Road is a good school. A particular strength is the excellent teamwork between staff, governors, pupils and parents. The school also works well with other schools to develop and share expertise.

Good induction arrangements mean that children settle quickly into school. The new accommodation in Reception has significantly improved provision so that children enjoy a wide range of activities indoors and out and make good progress.

In Years 1 to 6, pupils achieve well and standards are broadly average. Standards in writing, although improving, are still a weaker aspect of pupils' attainment that the school should continue to work to improve. Pupils of all capabilities progress well because teaching and learning are good. Staff have high expectations of pupils, share their expertise and work hard to develop their teaching. The school's good curriculum helps the pupils to develop their basic skills effectively and meets their needs well. Enrichment activities, including inter-school sports, contribute well to pupils' fitness and their enjoyment of learning.

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well. This helps pupils to behave well, develop very good relationships and really grow in confidence.

The outstanding care, guidance and support that the school provides ensures pupils are very safe, happy and well cared for in school and have a very good understanding of what they need to do to improve their learning.

The school works very well with parents, keeping them up-to-date about their children's progress and personal development and suggesting how they might help their children at home. Parents have very positive views of the school. A parent whose child experienced some difficulties with learning said, 'The school didn't give up on my child, and as a result she didn't either.' A new parent to the school noted, 'Our child has changed dramatically since joining this school. She actually wants to read and do sums!'

The school is well led and managed. Senior leaders have worked very determinedly in recent years to tackle a number of key weaknesses and make many improvements. Consequently, some of the weaknesses found at the previous inspection, such as the provision in Reception and that for pupils with learning difficulties, have been transformed into strengths. Senior leaders regularly and rigorously monitor provision, standards and pupils' progress. Some foundation subject leaders are fairly new in post. Their role in monitoring and developing work in their subjects is not yet established as fully as it might.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing.
- Establish and extend the role of some foundation subject leaders in monitoring and developing work in their subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to school is below average, particularly children's social and communication, language and literacy skills. Good provision and tracking of how well children are doing enables

them to make good progress across each area of learning, and very good progress in their personal and social development. As a result, standards on entry to Year 1 are rising. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well. Their year-on-year progress is now more consistent than it has been in the past. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress, and some make very good progress.

Although there are some year-on-year variations, standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 and 6 are broadly average and generally improving. Most pupils in Year 6 met the challenging targets set for them in 2006, and some exceeded these. Standards in the current Year 2 class are a little higher than last year. Standards in the Year 6 class are lower than in Year 6 last year. This is because these pupils' attainment levels were low when they were in Year 2, so overall they have made good progress. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved since the previous inspection and are now in line with those expected. Pupils develop good ideas to write about, but writing standards, including pupils' skills in using punctuation, are still the weakest aspect of the pupils' attainment.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are friendly, confident and polite. They enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. They work very well together. Behaviour is good in lessons, at playtimes and around the school. Attendance has improved and is satisfactory. Pupils regularly contribute to charities and understand the reasons for doing so. Their cultural development is good and they respect others' views, values and beliefs. Pupils show maturity and make good contributions to decision making and the day-to-day running of the school, for example, older pupils act as reading buddies, playleaders and peacemakers. The school council takes its responsibilities very seriously.

Very good relationships amongst pupils and with staff help pupils to feel safe. Regular participation in physical activity during breaktimes and lessons, and work on healthy eating and provision of fruit and vegetables help pupils stay fit and healthy. Some packed lunches are, however, not always healthy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching has improved well in recent years because of good staff development and training, and very effective sharing of the expertise within the school. Reception teaching meets children's needs and interests well. Generous staffing levels here also ensure that children receive clear guidance, and much individual support to move their learning on.

In Years 1 to 6, strengths in teaching include a good pace to lessons, strong emphasis on developing pupils' speaking skills and vocabulary, staff's enthusiasm and positive management of pupils. Consequently, pupils are confident to 'have a go', to share their opinions and answer questions. Planning identifies clear learning intentions that are firmly based on pupils' previous learning. This, along with pupils' very good involvement in assessing their own work and learning, means pupils have a good knowledge of what they need to do to improve. Well trained teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Although most teaching is at least good and some is outstanding, relative weaknesses in a few lessons relate to teachers' questioning skills, and in ensuring that the most able pupils are consistently challenged.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum in Reception gives good attention to all areas of learning and has a strong emphasis on children's personal, social and communication, language and literacy skills. A good mix of adult-led and independent activities maintains children's attention and promotes their enjoyment and skills in working independently and together.

In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum provides very well for teaching the basic skills and personal, health and social education. Links between subjects are developing well, but there is scope to extend these, and to make greater use of visits, including those within the immediate locality. The provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities is very good. Gifted and talented provision is satisfactory and improving. The small number of pupils who are new to learning English are supported well. Visitors to school include members of the local community who share their experiences and talk about their jobs. These are interesting and help pupils understand the world of work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Teachers and other staff know pupils very well and provide outstanding care and support. Academic support and guidance are very good. Pupils and their parents know how well pupils are doing, and what they need to do to improve. The school is also quick to provide additional learning support to those who need it, through a wide range of effective programmes.

Pupils are very well supervised at all times and there are very good procedures for vetting staff and eliminating other risks. Consequently, pupils feel safe, very happy and confident in school. Staff quickly notice children who need that bit of extra support, including those who are most vulnerable. They go out of their way to help them and maintain very good links with parents and external agencies in this regard. Parents also appreciate the care the school provides. One parent, whose child was supported through the school's anger management programme, remarked, 'I have got my old son back!' Another praised the way that the inclusion team and family liaison officer had helped the whole family overcome some personal difficulties.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The senior leadership team provides very good leadership. This has been at the core of the school's ability to improve pupils' achievements whilst also overcoming staffing difficulties and tackling some weaknesses in provision and teaching. Leadership has also created an ethos in which staff, pupils, parents and governors feel valued, and are empowered. Therefore, they make a very positive contribution to the school and work together very well, providing the school with a good capacity to continue to improve.

Senior leaders have a very precise picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses because they analyse data very well and regularly monitor provision, lessons and pupils' work. They act decisively to make improvements, and regularly check to see whether the actions taken have proved to be successful, drawing well on staff's, pupils' and parents' views. Importantly, senior leaders are not reluctant to identify when things have not worked as well as they had hoped. This means they can quickly refine their plans and put something better in place. Some of the

foundation subject leaders are fairly new in post and their leadership roles need to be established firmly and their skills developed further.

Governors are very supportive of the school and bring a range of expertise to it. They have developed a clear strategic role and provide a good level of challenge, especially through their involvement in the school improvement teams. Financial management is good. This has enabled the school to direct funds towards improving resources and the number of support staff. The highly efficient administration enables the school to run very smoothly on a day-to-day basis, and frees up staff and senior leaders' time to focus on raising standards, improving pupils' progress and ensuring their personal development and well-being.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

4 May 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Canterbury Road Primary School, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4SE

Thank you very much for making us so very welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking with you. We think that Canterbury Road is a good school.

These are the things that work well:

- Teaching is good and this helps you make good progress. We enjoyed looking at examples of the work you have produced both in your books and on display around the school.
- You are friendly, well behaved and polite. You get on very well together and take good care of each other. We noticed how well the older pupils take care of younger ones.
- The staff take exceptionally good care of you and help you if you have a problem. It was good to see them playing with you and teaching you new games in the playground. The staff also listen to your views, encourage you to do well and tell you how you can improve your work. We also noticed how good you are at checking your own work and learning.
- The curriculum in all year groups is good. You told us you enjoy lessons. We noticed that you take part in clubs and other activities during and after school. These help you to enjoy school, and to stay fit and healthy.
- Your headteacher and other senior staff lead the school very well. The teachers and staff are always thinking of new ways to improve your school.

This is what we have asked the school to do next:

- We noticed that you have good ideas to write about and can see that your teachers are working hard with you to improve writing standards. We have asked them to continue with this. You can help by continuing to work hard and by checking your work carefully when you have finished it.
- We have asked some of the staff to look at how work in subjects such as history, geography and physical education might be made even better. You might help by telling them what you think.

Thank you once again for your help when we visited.

With very best wishes

Kathryn Taylor Lead Inspector