

Hoath Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118361
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	291107
Inspection date	20 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Don Mason

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	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lisa Hitchings
Headteacher	Andrea Noake
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2002
School address	School Lane Hoath Canterbury CT3 4LA
Telephone number	01227 860249
Fax number	01227 860249

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	20 March 2007
Inspection number	291107

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

In this two-class school most pupils are from White British families. They come from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. On entry to school most are at the level expected for their age and a significant minority are doing better than this. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average. Plans to federate with another local school are at an advanced stage.

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 that enables pupils to achieve well. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and activities. Their good personal development is reflected in their positive attitudes and the way they care for one another. Parents express strong support for the school praising the 'remarkable attention to detail and dedication towards the progress and well-being of the children'. Good teaching and interesting activities ensure that pupils in the Foundation Stage make good progress and most exceed the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning by the start of Year 1. This good progress is successfully built on in other year groups so that pupils reach above average standards at the end of Year 6. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Extra staff are employed so that pupils benefit from being taught English and mathematics in small groups. They achieve particularly well in reading and writing because teachers' expectations are high and pupils are given detailed advice about how to improve their work. In mathematics, the progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6 is more variable, with the more able not always achieving as well as they should.

The curriculum is good and well enriched by a wide range of sporting activities (including recently introduced archery lessons), visits and visitors. The care, support and guidance provided for pupils are good. Good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that all individuals feel safe, adopt safe practices and know that someone will help them if there is a problem. Thorough marking provides pupils with clear advice about how to improve their work especially in writing. Pupils with learning needs or disabilities receive good support from well trained, enthusiastic, teaching assistants with the result that they make good progress. Pupils make a good contribution to the community through a number of activities including charity fund raising, community events and environmental activities.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is enthusiastic and energetic and copes well with the particular challenge of leading a very small school. Members of staff have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and a clear plan of action is in place to bring about improvements. They monitor the impact of their work to bring about improvements mainly through informal day-to-day discussions. However the school rightly identifies the need for subject leaders to have more frequent opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning as a means of improving practice and raising achievement further. The school has good systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress. However, the information gained is not always used as precisely as it could be to make sure that targets set for pupils are as accurate as possible.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure assessment information is used as precisely as possible to improve the accuracy of targets set for pupils, particularly those who are more able mathematicians.
- Provide more frequent opportunities for senior staff to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in order to strengthen action plans for improving practice and achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards, overall, are above average. They are particularly high in English because of the very good progress pupils make in their writing. They make good progress in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 and standards by the end of Year 2 are consistently above average in reading, writing

and mathematics. Pupils continue to make good progress through Years 3 to 6 but standards, as seen in Year 6 national tests, are more variable. In the latest tests the achievement of a small number of more able pupils in mathematics was disappointing and had a considerable impact on overall results. As a result, measures to raise achievement in mathematics have been introduced. These are clearly beginning to have an impact but the school recognises that more needs to be done, in particular, to extend the more able pupils in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils behave well in and around the school and attitudes and relationships are good. The school continues to take appropriate action to improve attendance, which is satisfactory. Punctuality is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. In religious education lessons and special events such as 'Africa Week', pupils develop a good understanding of the beliefs and practices of different cultures. Pupils gain a good understanding of their social responsibilities through, for example, their involvement in drawing up the school rules and offering ideas for sanctions and rewards. They enjoy expressing their ideas in the new school council. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and healthy and understand the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise. Pupils are also very knowledgeable about ecology and their local environment. Fund raising activities successfully promote pupils' social awareness and help them to manage simple budgets. The school's recent focus on developing the pupils' speaking and listening skills and the opportunities they have to work in pairs and teams enhance attributes that will serve them well in the future. The school has just begun to provide experiences designed to raise pupils' awareness of the world of work, but recognises correctly that there is scope to extend pupils' skills further in this area.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good. The teaching of writing throughout the school is particularly effective. The teaching of mathematics is improving and pupils enjoy, and benefit from, the practical and problem solving activities that have been introduced. Generous staffing levels mean that pupils are taught in small groups in English and mathematics. Together with careful planning, this ensures that work is usually well matched to the pupils' needs. Lessons are well paced and provide many opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and explain their thinking. Work set in English is particularly challenging and the advice offered to pupils on how to improve their work is often exemplary. In mathematics, the progress of pupils in Years 3 to 6, particularly the more able, is not monitored rigorously enough to ensure that they always reach the standard of which they are capable.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. In the younger class, staff go to great lengths to ensure that the small number of reception pupils receive the experience and activities that are appropriate for their age. There is good provision for pupils' personal development, and pupils' learning is enriched by a good range of educational visits, environmental activities, clubs and visitors. The very

good range of sports activities, including 'tri-golf', which greatly enhance the quality of the curriculum, was acknowledged by the receipt of the 'Active Mark' award last year. Many children take advantage of the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop a satisfactory understanding of healthy living. Opportunities for improving the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are systematically planned for throughout the curriculum. However the provision for the more able mathematicians is not as secure as it should be. Pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are well developed across the curriculum and valuable opportunities are provided for the development of their independent learning skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Members of staff successfully strive to create an extended family atmosphere in school with the result that pupils receive good care, guidance and support. Parents appreciate the efforts of staff to promote pupils' well-being and security. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified at an early stage and provided with appropriate support, ensuring that they make good progress. Good links with parents, carers and support agencies ensure that pupils' needs are well understood and provided for. Child protection procedures are securely in place and risk assessments are carried out regularly to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Pupils have targets for improvement and these are regularly reviewed with parents. However the pupils' understanding of their targets and what they need to do to improve is more secure in English than in mathematics. Reports to parents are informative and constructive.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The atmosphere in school is calm and purposeful. The headteacher provides strong leadership and is well supported by enthusiastic and conscientious members of staff who work together very well as a team. They have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and a clear plan of action to bring about improvements is in place. The quality of self-evaluation is satisfactory. Members of staff monitor the impact of the improvement measures they introduce in day-to-day, informal discussions. However, subject leaders have had limited opportunities to formally monitor teaching and check on whether the actions taken are really making a difference to learning and achievement. The school recognises that it needs to monitor the pupils' progress in mathematics more thoroughly to ensure that they make as much progress as possible. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good, ensuring that these pupils make good progress in all areas of their learning. The school's strong commitment to inclusion is illustrated by the fact that staff and pupils have been learning sign language to support a profoundly deaf child.

Governors are proud of the school and provide strong support. They have been active in helping the school to move forward on building and federation issues. However they recognise that there is scope for improving the procedures by which they monitor how well the school is improving. The dramatic improvement in writing in recent years and the recent improvement in the teaching of mathematics are an indication of the school's good capacity to improve further.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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	3
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	2
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?	2

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	3
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	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. We particularly enjoyed visiting your classrooms, seeing the work you were doing and talking to you about your school. Thank you for being so helpful and friendly. We found that your school provides you with a good education.

What you do well:

- You make good progress in your work and standards at the end of Year 6 are above average.
- You enjoy being at school and behave in a mature and responsible manner.
- You make very good progress in writing because you find the activities interesting and teachers give you very good advice about how to improve your work.
- You enjoy the good range of sporting and other activities provided for you.
- The adults take good care of you and you are lucky to be taught English and mathematics in small groups.
- Your school is well organised and adults are working hard together to make it even better.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Check the progress you make in mathematics in Years 3 to 6, especially of those who find the subject easy, to make sure that the work you are given to do is challenging enough.
- Give the teachers more opportunities to visit classes to check that the improvement measures that have been introduced are helping you to make better progress, especially in mathematics.