

Reculver Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118656
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	291203
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Helen Hutchings

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	499
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew R Cunningham
Headteacher	Gill Burgess
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2002
School address	Hillborough Herne Bay CT6 6TA
Telephone number	01227 375907
Fax number	01227 742761

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most primary schools and many pupils travel considerable distances to the school. Most children are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and the proportion with complex needs is high. The school has a designated unit for pupils with visual impairment. An increasing number of pupils, many with learning and emotional needs, join the school later than their peers.

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 the effective provision of education and care meets the needs of pupils well. Parents have confidence in the school, reflected in their positive responses and a high return of questionnaires before the inspection. Parents and carers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those whose children join the school at non-standard times of entry, are particularly appreciative of the school's work. A comment typical of many parents summed up the views of most: 'The school encourages children to enjoy all aspects of the curriculum and promotes a healthy happy atmosphere for the children to show their talents and embrace new ideas'. Behaviour is good and pupils' safety and well-being are of the utmost importance to the school.

Teaching and learning are good and, as children confirm, teachers make learning interesting. The curriculum is good and provides effective opportunities for pupils to use their writing and numeracy skills in other subjects, seen in the varied and vibrant displays of pupils' work around the school. Pupils say that they learn particularly well during special events, such as science week, or when given practical activities, such as the Years 5 and 6 'green powered car' project, which links many aspects of the curriculum. Pupils understand their learning targets and have a clear understanding of how well they are achieving. Teachers summarise learning at the end of lessons and help pupils to reflect on what they have learned, but this practice is not yet consistently good throughout the school.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good as a result of the school's good care, support and guidance. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding. Pupils show their good attitudes and commitment to learning in well presented work. The result of their hard work is seen in their good achievement overall. Children in the Reception classes develop a good basis for later learning. Standards through the school are broadly in line with national averages and higher now than in the last few years. Pupils' attainment is being tracked more frequently and the information used well by teachers to match work closely to pupils' capabilities. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make particularly good progress, but a few middle attaining girls in some year groups make less progress than boys.

Leadership and management are strong throughout the school. The headteacher has developed very effective teamwork where staff feel supported and work well together. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas requiring further attention and a good capacity for continued development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the progress made by middle attaining girls is more consistent.
- Strengthen teaching and learning by using the end of lessons more effectively for pupils to review their own learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and reach average standards by the time they leave in Year 6. This puts them in a good position to settle well into secondary education and enter the world of work in the future. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception classes varies from year to year but is overall below that normally found for children of their age. Children develop well and

join Year 1 with very positive attitudes to school and levels of skills and knowledge typical of children of their age. In recent years, pupils have made steady progress through the rest of the school and reached average standards in the tests at the end of Years 2 and 6. However, changes made to the curriculum and approaches to teaching are effectively improving the rates of progress pupils now make. School data show that progress is now good. Standards are slightly higher than national standards. This represents good achievement because many of the pupils joining the school after the normal entry in Year 1 have significant learning difficulties. There is still some variation in the overall rates of progress throughout the school, but pupils make particularly good progress in their final two years in the school. Improvements in mathematics teaching have resulted in higher standards, particularly in Year 2 where they are now significantly above the national average. An emphasis on improving boys' achievement has proved particularly successful, but some girls, particularly those of average attainment, make only satisfactory progress which is slower progress than boys. Higher attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties make consistently good progress. The school has regularly met the targets set for performance giving it the confidence to set increasingly challenging targets for future performance.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, is good. Their cultural awareness is especially strong as a result of a broad and lively curriculum. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted successfully in line with the school's Christian ethos. Responding to high expectations and good support, children develop independence, self-reliance and good social skills from starting school onwards. They quickly grow in confidence and establish good relationships with each other, enabling them to work well in groups and individually. Behaviour in and around school is good and pupils really enjoy school and their learning. This is reflected in their satisfactory attendance. Whilst in school, pupils take regular exercise and adopt healthy eating habits. They know how to stay safe, taking care when moving around the school, for example. Many pupils make a good contribution to the school community. For example, members of the school council have initiated several improvements to school life. They make a satisfactory contribution to the wider community and the school has plans to further develop opportunities for them to extend this. By the time they are ready to move on to the next stage of education, pupils are sufficiently mature to face the many changes this entails. The personal development of pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties is excellent. Their successful integration into the school community bears testimony to both their own efforts and those of their adult supporters.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers effectively promote good learning. They often use questioning skilfully to extend children's understanding, give opportunities for pupils to talk to each other about their learning and use technology such as interactive whiteboards well to aid teaching. A strength is the very good support which the high number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive from teachers and skilled teaching assistants. This enables them to achieve well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they always explain the lesson's purpose clearly. At the end of the lesson, pupils are invited to evaluate their own learning success. However, opportunities

are missed to get the best from this by requiring pupils to explain their achievements to make their reflection on their learning more meaningful.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum meets the needs of all pupils well. The curriculum is rigorously planned to meet statutory requirements but is extended to ensure that pupils, from their earliest days in the Reception classes onwards, experience a wide range of activities. Additional provision effectively supports learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those who from time to time fall behind. Provision for pupils who are identified as gifted or talented is effective, including additional activities beyond the school for older pupils. The school has successfully focused on improving boys' progress by planning activities to interest them, but partly as a result of this some middle attaining girls have not been so caught up in the excitement of learning. The recent changes to link subjects more closely is successfully improving standards and the school recognises that further developments are needed to increase the number of opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills in the real contexts of other subjects in all year groups. The basic curriculum is enriched well by the inclusion of French and a good range of visits, including residential experiences, beyond the school. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils enjoyed a 'Singalong' when they sang a song in French to pupils from other local schools. The range of extra-curricular clubs is broad and participation levels are high indicating that provision meets pupils' interests well and makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good with some outstanding features. Outstanding care and support for pupils with additional needs, many with severe and complex learning difficulties, enable them to be fully included in most school activities and lead to excellent personal development and good academic progress. Care and support for all pupils are good, with close attention to their health and safety. Robust procedures ensure that they are well protected. A few parents expressed concerns about how the school deals with pupils' safety, behaviour or bullying. The school properly records both reported incidents of bullying and relevant misdemeanours. These are taken seriously and action taken is appropriate so that both relationships and behaviour are good.

Support and guidance for pupils' academic development is good and this is reflected in good achievement. Work is marked regularly, with examples of quality marking that focuses on achievement and how pupils might improve further. In other instances, marking is less helpful in giving detailed advice on how to improve. However, older pupils are confident in talking about their learning targets and how to achieve them. Younger pupils' targets are displayed in classes, effectively reminding them of what they have to master next.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher, ably supported by senior colleagues and subject leaders, sets a positive direction for the school's work. The thorough organisation of

staff teams enables teachers to work closely with colleagues within their phase and also to participate in curriculum teams working across the school. This results in a good staff understanding of whole-school issues and effective sharing of good practice. The detailed school plan is focused successfully on improving pupils' learning, progress and standards, as well as being committed to a high level of personal development for all pupils. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are effective, with a thorough annual analysis of the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment. The findings have led to whole-school initiatives for improving learning, such as that on problem solving and computation in mathematics and recent training undertaken by all staff on a whole-school approach to writing. The school recognises that there is still work to do to increase the usefulness of its tracking of pupils' progress to aid its accuracy in identifying groups that are not doing as well. The funding available to the school is used efficiently, for instance for the additional support staff for pupils with learning disabilities and/or disabilities. Governance is good, with a range of well organised committees to fulfil the governing body's duties, and it challenges the school on its performance. This is a school where there is no complacency and which has a good capacity to continue to improve.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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

3 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Reculver Church of England Primary School, Reculver, CT6 6TA

Thank you very much for the friendly welcome you gave us recently. We very much enjoyed visiting your school and talking to you and visiting some of your lessons. I said that I would let you know what we thought:

- We agree with you that you attend a good school.
- Children settle well into school life in the Reception classes.
- Your behaviour is good and this helps you to enjoy working and playing together.
- The adults in the school help you to make good progress and reach standards which are similar to those of other pupils of your age, and sometimes better.
- All of the adults take good care of you so that you are safe and secure in school.
- You have interesting things to do in lessons and appreciate that teachers try hard to make learning interesting.
- The exercise you take and your understanding of how to eat healthily mean that you are leading healthy lives.
- Many of you enjoy attending a lot of clubs.
- You are given the support and guidance you need so that you are ready to move on to your next school when the time arrives.

Your teachers have already started to work on some things which we think will help you to do even better in the future:

- They will make sure that all of the girls do as well as the rest of you.
- They will use the time at the end of the lesson to make sure that all of you have understood exactly what you have learned in the lesson.

We wish you every success in the future.

Mrs Helen Hutchings Lead inspector