

Folkestone, St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118676
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	291210
Inspection date	10 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Jacque Buttriss

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	103
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Bould
Headteacher	Ann Blunt
Date of previous school inspection	27 May 2002
School address	The Durlocks Folkestone CT19 6AL
Telephone number	01303 255400
Fax number	01303 249117

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller-than-average school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much higher than in most primary schools. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The number of pupils who are refugees, asylum seekers or looked after is higher than in most schools. A few pupils are at various stages of learning English as an additional language. There is a significant amount of movement of pupils in and out of the school other than at the normal times of joining or leaving. The school regularly takes in pupils who have been excluded from other schools. There is a full-time family liaison officer and a full-time learning mentor. The school runs a breakfast club and after-school provision which includes a homework club.

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 with outstanding features. Children have an excellent start to their school life in the Reception class, where they make outstanding progress. Standards across the school are broadly average and pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, vulnerable and looked after children achieve well.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The school's great strength in fostering the physical and emotional health and welfare of its pupils enables them to grow into confident, secure and caring young people. Behaviour is good and pupils feel valued. They enjoy school a lot and develop positive attitudes. When asked what they thought of their school, one older pupil said 'We'd all give it ten out of ten.'

Teaching is good overall and outstanding in the Reception class. Teachers plan well for the different ages and abilities in their classes and challenge their pupils, according to their individual needs. The good curriculum provides an interesting and well-enriched range of activities, but there is insufficient use of numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in other subjects. The Reception class curriculum is exciting and helps children to develop good social skills and a love of learning from an early age. Care, guidance and support are outstanding and are a distinctive feature of this school. Every effort is made to ensure that all pupils are fully nurtured and supported to help them gain confidence and to make the most of their education. The impressive pastoral care and support extends pupils' personal horizons and influences them to be kind and considerate to each other.

Leadership and management are good. Leaders at all levels lead by example and communicate high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Through good self-evaluation processes, priorities for improvement are accurately identified and actions taken to address them. Recent leadership initiatives have successfully led to improvements in pupils' writing and raised attendance rates. This demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve further. Governors make classroom visits and support the school. However, they are not always sufficiently well informed to monitor and challenge in a way that really contributes to the drive for improvement.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of what the school does for their children. 'Our two both love the school and so do we,' commented one parent, while a carer wrote, 'Staff work tirelessly to ensure that children's needs are met – they certainly go the extra mile.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Give pupils more opportunities to use their numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects.
- Ensure that governors are fully informed and involved in deciding the next steps forward for the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are broadly average overall. The majority of children coming into the school have attainment well below that expected for their age. They make excellent progress in the Reception class and reach standards approaching the level expected in most areas of learning. In Years 1 and 2 pupils maintain good progress to attain standards in line with the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The high movement of pupils in and out of Years 3 to 6 has an impact on the results at the end of Year 6. Pupils' performance in the national tests at the

end of Year 6 in recent years has shown below-average standards. However, the targets set have been met or exceeded and have been appropriately challenging, given pupils' starting points. Current standards of pupils' work seen during the inspection are broadly average in Year 6.

Taking into account the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and other vulnerable groups of pupils the standards attained show that achievement across the school is good. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress throughout the school. A recent priority in the school's improvement plan was to improve writing skills. Analysis of pupils' performance data shows that in all years pupils are now making considerably greater progress in writing than in other core subject areas

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' positive experiences at school contribute much to their good personal development and well-being. Attendance is average and better than at the previous inspection. Pupils behave well in class and around the school and are kind to each other. They talk about how very safe they feel in school and they know there is always someone to turn to for help and support. Pupils clearly understand the need to eat healthy foods and some of them help to prepare healthy snacks at the after-school club. Overall, their understanding of the importance of keeping fit and healthy is outstanding. Pupils enjoy school a good deal and develop positive attitudes to learning. Although the school readily takes in pupils excluded from other schools, they are well integrated and settle well and, as a result, there have been no exclusions from this school in the past year.

Pupils are very proud of their active involvement in a variety of exciting school and community activities and visits. These events really extend their horizons and help them appreciate diverse cultures. Pupils are developing positive views of themselves as part of the school family. They value using the church that shares the site and encourages spiritual and moral reflection in a gentle way. As a result of these opportunities, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They develop good social as well as learning skills that prepare them well for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching is evident across the school. Teaching in the Reception class is outstanding. There is also some excellent teaching for older pupils. All staff know their pupils well and tailor the teaching to their individual learning needs. As a result, pupils of all ages and abilities are properly challenged and helped to fulfil their potential. Teachers plan successfully for mixed-age classes and lessons move along at a good pace. Learning objectives are clear and there is good ongoing assessment of pupils' work. The strong teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that they all provide very good support for learning. Some lesson introductions are too long, however, and pupils begin to lose concentration. Even so, teachers' very good management of behaviour ensures that there is no disruption. Pupils with specific learning needs are identified by teachers and given additional support, which helps raise their standards in the core subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Clear and consistent planning leads to interesting and varied activities that contribute much to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their good progress. Pupils are made particularly aware of the importance of literacy in all their work. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning is satisfactory and increasing. Application of numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory. The curriculum in the Reception Year is exciting, well designed and of outstanding quality. It helps children to make an excellent start in almost all areas of their learning.

Good provision of before- and after-school clubs helps pupils to develop their academic and personal skills. Involvement in arts and community events is another outstanding feature of the school. The school has been highly enterprising in securing funding to ensure good quality experiences for pupils which enrich their learning. Pupils are helped to gain important basic skills well and to have high aspirations to prepare them for adult life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pastoral care is an outstanding feature of the school. The school makes considerable efforts to ensure the safety and emotional well-being of pupils. Vulnerable pupils and their families are individually supported. These pupils, and those with learning difficulties, are sensitively guided to do their best in their learning and fulfil their potential. Help from staff at a personal level is swift when needed. Excellent links with outside agencies provide additional specialist support.

Pupils' performance is tracked diligently and the information is used to identify how individuals and groups may be best supported academically. As a result, pupils who are learning English as an additional language, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and looked-after children make good progress. All other groups also benefit from this strong support, including higher-ability pupils, who are challenged appropriately.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The dedicated headteacher leads with a clear vision for the school and is supported by a hardworking team. Leaders at all levels are remarkably active and responsive in caring for pupils, as well as supporting their academic development. The school does a lot to help families as well as the pupils themselves, all of which contributes significantly to the quality of pupils' learning.

The strong teamwork and excellent partnerships with external agencies help to support the work of the school and promote learners' well-being. There is good equality of opportunity for all pupils. Very careful and detailed analysis of pupils' progress data helps leaders to identify and address the needs of individuals and groups very well. Good, robust self-evaluation processes support the school in its drive for improvement. A number of recent initiatives have been successful in raising standards, especially in writing, and in improving attendance rates.

Governors are keen and supportive of the school. However, they are concerned that they do not always get all the information they need, particularly about pupils' progress. They rightly recognise that this prevents them from playing a more active part in helping the school to improve.

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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?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
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	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 July 2007

Dear Children,

Inspection of St Peter's Church of England Primary School, Folkestone, Kent CT19 6AL

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we came to inspect your school. You made us feel very welcome and we enjoyed talking with you. Yours is a good school that helps you to do well in your work and cares for you exceptionally well.

These are the things that your school does successfully: ?You are friendly, polite and helpful and your behaviour is good – well done. ?The headteacher, teachers and other adults all work hard to give you a good education and to help you enjoy your learning. ?The quality of care and support the school gives you is outstanding. ?Children in the Reception class have an excellent start to their education. ?Teaching is good throughout the school. ?The school works exceptionally well with others to help make your learning interesting and fun and to ensure your well-being.

This is what your school could do better: ?Give you more opportunities to use numeracy and ICT skills in your work in different subjects. ?Make sure that governors always have all the information they need to help them play a full and active part in helping the school to improve.

We would like to wish you lots of success in your future education.

With very best wishes,

Mrs Jacquie Buttriss Lead Inspector