

# Hormead Church of England (VA) Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117439
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312614
<b>Inspection date</b>	4 December 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Messer

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	47
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jackie King
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Shirley Anne Turrell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 May 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Great Hormead Buntingford Hertfordshire SG9 0NR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01763 289201

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	4 December 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	312614

**Fax number**

01763 289620

<b>Age group</b>	3-11
<b>Inspection date</b>	4 December 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	312614

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the quality of the outdoor learning environment for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), pupils' progress in numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), and how well tasks are matched to pupils' abilities in Years 3 to 6. Evidence was gathered from visits to classrooms, discussions with pupils, staff and governors, scrutiny of pupils' work, analysis of parents' questionnaires and examination of school documentation, including assessment data and the school's-self evaluation.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that most of the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This school has three classes and is much smaller than most primary schools. The Nursery and Reception class caters for children in the EYFS. There is a pre-school playgroup on site, which is not managed by the governing body and was inspected separately. There is a wide spread of attainment on entry with some children showing advanced skills but most entering with attainment that is in line with the levels expected nationally. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The school has the Healthy Schools, Gold Travel Plan and Activemark awards. Most pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4 to attend middle schools. In most years a small proportion stay on until Year 6.

## 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 all groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of reading and writing. From their earliest days in school, children develop a good understanding of the relationship between letters and the sounds they represent. Older pupils read with their younger reading 'buddies' and volunteers from the community visit to share books with pupils. Parents support pupils' reading well by reading with them at home. This heightens the profile of reading and supports writing skills effectively. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain exceptionally high standards in reading and writing. Progress in mathematics in this age group is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. There is not the same emphasis on developing numeracy as there is for literacy. There are too few opportunities for pupils to extend numeracy skills by developing an awareness of how mathematics affect everyday life by, for example, recording weather data or handling money. Pupils make good overall progress in Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are usually above average in English, mathematics and science and this is confirmed by the results of national tests.

Within a broad curriculum, pupils particularly enjoy history projects. They made models of London houses that were burnt to re-enact the Great Fire of 1666, under the watchful eye of firefighters who were visiting the school with their fire engine. They have an exceptionally good understanding of chronology and events in British history. Pupils are skilled at sport and tag-rugby is particularly popular. They swim well and many reach the national target of being able to swim 25 metres before the end of Key Stage 2. They develop a wide range of skills in ICT. They use computers well for research and know how to use the internet safely.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and cultural development, is good. Their social development is outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent and they thoroughly enjoy learning. They are eager to please and keen to succeed. They are courteous and sensitive to the needs of others. The older pupils take great care of the younger ones and enjoy helping them with their learning. The school council carefully considers suggestions for school improvement and is currently planning to create a nature garden. Pupils have a good understanding of different religions. Their understanding of different customs and the cultural diversity of our society is less well developed. The governors have a good policy on community cohesion, which includes plans to heighten pupils' understanding of different communities, both in the United Kingdom and in other parts of the world.

Teaching is good and teachers are particularly skilled at motivating pupils and stimulating their curiosity. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and make sure that tasks are matched to pupils' widely varying stages of development. The curriculum is enriched by an exceptionally good range of educational visits. As part of their project on the Tudors, pupils visited Kentwell Hall and dressed in Tudor clothes, which made their learning come alive. Teachers use computers and interactive whiteboards well to extend learning. In a science lesson, a well chosen computer program helped pupils to understand how the earth and moon rotate around the sun. Annual residential visits for pupils in Years 3 to 6 provide effective opportunities for learning across the curriculum and extend personal development exceptionally well.

Good care, guidance and support help pupils to feel safe and secure and support their learning well. Close attention is paid to pupils' health, safety and welfare. Pupils are given good advice

about eating a balanced diet and taking plenty of exercise, so that they develop a good understanding about how to lead healthy lifestyles. They receive sound guidance about how to improve their work and reach the next stages in their learning. Pupils have targets to aim at in literacy and numeracy. These often stretch over a whole term and are not revised frequently enough to have sufficient impact on pupils' achievement.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's good leadership has been a key factor in maintaining clear direction and on helping pupils to achieve well. Staff and governors share a commitment to improving provision and all have a secure understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school further. They have good plans to refurbish the classrooms, renew furniture and improve the fabric of the building. Good management ensures that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Most parents are pleased with the education provided for their children. One commented, 'The school continues to go from strength to strength and my children, who have already achieved so much, are very happy.' The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate and identifies the most pressing areas for development. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the school is well placed to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Good provision helps all children in the EYFS make good progress, achieving and often exceeding expected levels in all areas of learning. The variety of stimulating indoor and outdoor learning opportunities keeps children engrossed and interested. For example, the role play area has been transformed into 'Santa's Workshop', where children learn effectively and have great fun wrapping presents, writing cards and dressing up as Santa's helpers. The improved outdoor environment provides many opportunities for children to run, climb, dig and play. All these experiences extend learning well. Appropriate clothing, including wellington boots and waterproof suits, ensures that, even in inclement weather, children are suitably dressed before venturing outside. Trusting and caring relationships between adults and children result in confident, happy children who are very keen to work and play together. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and to each other. They understand that to get along they must take turns, share and not squabble over equipment. Systematic assessments are used satisfactorily to inform teaching, but do not always identify the next steps for learning. As a result, opportunities are not always fully exploited to tailor learning to meet children's individual needs. Provision is well led and managed and runs well on a day-to-day basis. The EYFS team has a common sense of purpose and adults work together well. Good relationships have been developed with parents who support their children's learning regularly and are happy to discuss any concerns with staff.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop skills in numeracy that are related to their everyday lives.
- Revise target setting so that pupils' targets span a shorter period of time and are reviewed more frequently.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

<sup>1</sup>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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

4 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hormead Primary School, Buntingford, SG9 0NR

What a good school! We thoroughly enjoyed the short time we spent with you. Thank you for being so friendly and helpful.

One of the main strengths of the school is the way that you are so caring of each other. The older ones are very sensitive to the needs of the younger ones and aware of when they need help and support. You all get on so well together and make great friendships. Your school is much smaller than most but you told us that is just the way you like it because its small size gives a family feel. You enjoy school enormously and have lots of fun. You are polite and well behaved. You enjoy learning new things and finding out more about our world. You are particularly good at reading and writing. You enjoy mathematics and science. You know how to use the internet safely and you are developing a good range of skills in ICT. You know a great deal about the history of Britain and you go on lots of fascinating visits to places of interest. You are good at sport and do exceptionally well in swimming. You understand the need for a healthy diet and how important it is to keep yourselves fit by having plenty of exercise. You know how to stay safe and look after yourselves and others.

We think that there are two main things that would help to improve your school further. We think that your work in numeracy would be even more interesting if teachers linked your learning more closely to how mathematics is used in everyday life. We also think that it would be helpful if teachers checked your targets in literacy and numeracy more frequently, in order to speed up the progress you make. We know that you want to do your best and we are sure that if you continue to work hard the school will get even better.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

John Messer

Lead inspector