

# Capel Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118271
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	312861
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kevin Hodge

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	207
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gillian Langstaff
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janet Fletcher
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2004
<b>School address</b>	Five Oak Green Road Five Oak Green Tonbridge TN12 6RP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01892 833919
<b>Fax number</b>	01892 837158

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<b>Age group</b>	4-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

In this average-sized school, the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Pupils' levels of attainment when they join the school are below those expected for their age. The school has a number of awards which reflect its commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles, environmental awareness and links with the local community.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Capel is a good school. It rightly has a high profile within the local community as it has developed excellent links with the local parish and pupils enjoy taking part in the many activities that take place. Parents value the school's approach, as is shown by an increasing number of pupils wishing to attend. A large majority of parents responded positively to the inspection questionnaire, some describing the school as 'fantastic' and 'lovely'. Other parents commented on how the school's positive ethos helps their children to enjoy school.

Children make a good start in the Reception class, and continue to achieve well throughout the rest of the school because they are taught well. As a result, standards are broadly average and rising. Recent test results for Year 6 pupils indicate an upward trend in results, particularly in science and more recently in mathematical work. English, and particularly writing, has been a focus to improve. This is starting to bear fruit, only hampered by some inconsistent spelling that sometimes spoils pupils' otherwise creative and original efforts. Work in information and communication technology (ICT) has shown a marked improvement since the last inspection and pupils now exceed the levels expected in their work. The success with which the school is meeting the targets is not making it complacent, and senior leaders recognise that pupils' writing and designing an even better curriculum are priorities.

Underpinning the school's success is the good levels of pupils' personal development and well-being. High levels of care and guidance ensure that pupils are well known as individuals and as a result, they gain high levels of personal confidence. Pupils' behaviour is often exemplary, both within lessons and around the school, because they have a clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Pupils of all ages know the principles of how to stay safe and healthy. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good in most respects. Their awareness of their own local culture is well developed, although their understanding of the customs and beliefs of others from a more varied background is a weaker aspect. The school tracks pupils' progress very closely so that any child who is not progressing at the expected rate is spotted quickly and given additional support. However, not all pupils remember or know their personal targets and teachers' marking is inconsistent in giving pupils guidance to improve.

The headteacher provides strong leadership. Governors and staff have a shared sense of direction for the future of the school and work together well to promote improvement. The school has excellent links with other local schools and within the local community to share and develop good practice. These are bringing about improvements, for example in raising standards in ICT and, more recently, mathematics. The success of such actions demonstrates that the school has good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Provision is good because children get a smooth start to school life, are taught well and there are very effective partnerships with parents which aid children's learning. Children make good progress from their starting points, reaching standards that are average, and sometimes higher, by the start of Year 1. There is a good balance between activities directed by the teachers and those chosen by children. Their progress in developing personal and social skills is particularly good. Better approaches to developing children's early writing skills are helping their confidence, although opportunities to stretch their creative or physical abilities when working independently

are sometimes missed. Work to develop children's ICT skills is particularly effective. The outside area has a variety of resources to help stimulate pupils' interest and the development of their physical skills.

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

- Give pupils in Years 1 to 6 more guidance in developing consistently accurate spelling to enhance the quality of their writing.
- Ensure that pupils in Years 1 to 6 have a good understanding of how to improve their work through better use of simple targets and marking.
- Increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of the cultures, lifestyles and beliefs found in other places in this country and beyond.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points. As a result, they reach broadly average standards in English and mathematics, and above average standards in science by the time they leave. This is due to effective teaching, and pupils themselves being well motivated. Pupils' writing skills are improving in all year groups, although their inconsistent spelling accuracy detracts from their original and creative ideas. Pupils are accurate in their number calculation work and knowledge, being able to apply their skills to practical problems. Pupils' ICT skills develop really well and they reach higher than the expected levels by the time they leave. The school's own checks and provisional results in national tests indicate that pupils make good progress and are on course to meet their challenging targets. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in line with their classmates, as their needs are identified accurately, addressed skilfully, and monitored closely.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils really enjoy their lessons and show high levels of concern for others. They are happy, friendly and like attending school. One parent's comment was typical of many: 'Our children have grown in confidence, responsibility and awareness of others.' This ability to work together well, combined with their levels of academic ability, prepares them well for their next schools and later life. Pupils' knowledge of their own culture is good, although their deeper understanding of those people having different customs or beliefs is not so well developed. Pupils enjoy their roles on the school council as well as the many other responsibilities they have, such as being 'buddies' or mediators for their classmates. They know about and try to adopt healthy lifestyles and successfully grow their own vegetables. The school rightly values its status as an 'Eco-School' and the pupils have a good awareness of issues such as recycling and the use of solar power. There are excellent links with the community. The pupils enjoy participating in the local fete, feel proud of their efforts to win a 'Kent in Bloom' award and enjoy fundraising for local and national charities.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

A clear focus on enhancing teaching and learning has resulted in typically good teaching throughout the school. Teachers' planning is clear and covers a good range of activities, although in a few lessons, more able pupils sometimes mark time in their learning and could be challenged to do more. Teachers are very good at creating an atmosphere conducive to learning that encourages pupils to behave extremely well and make enthusiastic contributions. In a very well taught mathematics lesson, excellent questioning and use of audiovisual technology enhanced pupils' understanding of fractions. This approach is not evident in all lessons, as some activities are more straightforward rather than innovative in teaching basic skills such as spelling or basic number work. Teaching assistants are generally used well and provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enabling pupils to learn quickly and confidently.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum provides a good range of activities and experiences. It makes systematic provision for teaching basic skills, and recent initiatives to improve writing are beginning to bear fruit. Class activities make a good contribution to promoting pupils' well-being and raising their awareness of their own culture. Planning to deepen their knowledge of other cultures is a weaker aspect. The teaching of French, along with artistic activities such as the willow art installation in the school grounds, is proving popular. Pupils value the help given by local secondary school students to develop these aspects. The school is reviewing its curriculum, making it more relevant and exciting for pupils' needs and interests, although this is not yet fully in place. Glimpses of this new approach are emerging with the use of very exciting ICT work across different subjects, such as using animation techniques to tell a simple story. A good range of extra-curricular activities help to broaden and enrich pupils' class-based experiences.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Pupils appreciate the good quality care and high level of commitment of staff to ensuring their safety and well-being. They know who to go to if there is a problem and the school's mediation and buddy systems ensure any that do arise are resolved quickly. Most parents report they are very happy with the level of care shown to their children. They say that the breakfast club is a great success and that 'Capel has a very warm environment; we are proud to be part of it'. Child protection procedures are rigorous and risk assessments robust. The school works closely with parents, particularly those of pupils with learning difficulties, to ensure pupils make good progress. Outside professionals support school-based staff very well and aid pupils' learning or emotional development. Teachers give regular academic guidance through their day-to-day marking, although the quality of it varies from class to class. Target setting, although used with some success in English, is not well developed in other subjects, and not all pupils have a clear idea of how targets can help them improve.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The senior leaders have successfully steered the school's improvement since the last inspection. Nearly all parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire appreciate the improvements. The headteacher has built a team which works well, although recent staff changes means that coordination of Years 3 to 6 is not fully effective and this has slowed some areas of improvement. However, there has been success in raising standards and improving the school buildings. Despite these improvements, the school is not complacent and wants to become even better. Its self-evaluation is good and leads to clear priorities such as improving the ICT provision. Parents and pupils are regularly asked for their opinions via questionnaires and the school helped improve school dinners as a result. A small minority of parents said they would like more involvement in decision-making if possible. Governors keep a general 'finger on the pulse' of the school by making regular visits, although the outcomes from these are not always recorded effectively, which slightly hampers their ability to identify emerging trends or difficulties. Governors' oversight of finance and health and safety issues is a strong aspect of their support.

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## 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
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	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.

## Annex A

**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 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

10 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Capel Primary School, Tonbridge TN12 6RP

Thank you for making us feel welcome at your school when we visited it recently. Yours is a good school which is trying to be even better.

Here are some of the things we found out:

- You make good progress in your work and you reach the expected standards, although your writing is not as good as it could be.
- All the staff make sure that you feel safe.
- The school has excellent links with other schools and the local community.
- Teachers make most lessons fun and interesting, although occasionally some activities could be taught even better.
- Those of you on the school council or who act as buddies or mediators enjoy your responsibilities and like helping the school to get better.
- You know about keeping fit and active and you say that eating sensibly is good for you. How about helping to sell fruit or your own vegetables at playtimes?
- You behave brilliantly at playtimes and in lessons and you make friends easily.
- The staff and governors are working hard to make sure that the school runs smoothly and is a really nice place in which to learn.

We have asked the school to do three things:

- Give you more help with your spelling so that your good ideas and creative writing will be even better.
- Help you have a better understanding of how simple targets in any subject can help you improve even more quickly, and make sure that all teachers' marking is really good too.
- Give you more opportunities to find out about different people's lifestyles, backgrounds and customs found in other parts of both our country and those further away.

You can help too by continuing to be brilliantly behaved and by giving the school more good ideas about improving further. I hope the Year 5 and 6 production went well. I liked your singing!

Yours sincerely

Kevin Hodge Lead Inspector