

# Sundridge and Brasted Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118608
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	313013
<b>Inspection date</b>	2 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacque Buttriss

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	63
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Milman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	Church Road Sundridge Sevenoaks TN14 6EA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01959 562694
<b>Fax number</b>	01959 562694

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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

This is a small rural primary school where most pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average, as is the proportion identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. A new headteacher joined the school in 2006.

## 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 and improving school. High rates of progress over the past year mean that all pupils are now achieving well and generally exceeding their targets. Although standards vary from year to year, due to the small size of year groups, they are also improving and are broadly average overall by the end of Year 6. This represents good progress from pupils' differing starting points. Progress has been especially strong in writing across the school. However, the school recognises that the quality of handwriting and pupils' spelling skills continue to be areas for improvement. Recent improvements mean that standards are now above average by the time children leave the Reception class.

Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences contribute well to pupils' good personal development and well-being. Pupils say that they feel very safe and secure in the school. They talk very enthusiastically about healthy eating and are keen to take exercise. Pupils demonstrate outstanding enjoyment of school and have very positive attitudes to their learning. As one parent commented, 'My son is happy and eager to come to school and even asks to go on Saturdays!' Behaviour throughout the school is excellent and the thoughtful way that pupils help and support each other reflects the very caring ethos of this school. School council representatives make a positive and valued contribution to the school community. Pupils develop a good range of learning and social skills to prepare them for their future lives. The attendance of a few pupils is low, resulting in rates of attendance being below average. The school is working very actively to improve this situation. There is now an upward trend but not all parents understand the importance of good attendance.

Teaching is good across the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they set work that is well matched to learners' needs, enabling all pupils to do their best. This good teaching has been instrumental in raising standards and has resulted in good progress across the school. Good curriculum provision is enhanced by an impressive variety of enrichment opportunities. Relationships are very good and parents rightly recognise pastoral care and support as a strength of the school: 'Each child is known and cared for individually.' Academic guidance is also good. Targets are set and assessed regularly and pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.

Under the headteacher's dynamic leadership and clear direction, the hard work of the staff team provides good support for school improvement. Challenging targets are set and achieved. The school's robust evaluation processes lead to good identification of improvement priorities. The school makes excellent use of resources to support pupils' learning.

Many parents help with a range of day-to-day activities and parents are overwhelmingly happy with the school: 'I cannot praise the school enough ... Given the choice, I would not send my child elsewhere.'

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children in the Reception Year have a good start to their education. Good teaching and a stimulating range of learning activities engage children and help them to make good progress overall. Children start school with standards broadly in line with expectations. By the end of the Reception Year, most children are exceeding the expectations for their age. Their achievement is particularly high in the areas of language skills, mathematics and social

development. However, their early handwriting and spelling are less advanced than other language skills and this is an area for development. Reception children are very well cared for and supported. The well organised induction arrangements help them settle in happily from the start. They are helped to develop good personal and social skills and to gain independence in their learning. They feel very secure and gain a high degree of confidence.

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

- Raise standards in writing by strengthening handwriting and spelling skills.
- Improve attendance by ensuring all parents fully understand the need to avoid term-time holidays and unnecessary absences.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children joining the Reception class make good progress overall and achieve well by the end of the Reception Year. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 to 6 and standards are steadily improving throughout the school as the impact of recent initiatives takes hold. Standards are now broadly average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. There has been a weakness in writing over recent years, but the school's hard work to raise writing standards has successfully led to half of all Key Stage 2 pupils making two years' progress in the past year. This represents outstanding recent progress in writing, although handwriting and pupils' spelling skills continue to be comparative weaknesses. The achievement of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good overall, and all are helped to fulfil their potential. As one parent put it, 'Every child has the opportunity to shine.'

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils of all ages enjoy helping and caring for each other and they work well together. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils are adamant that there is no bullying at all. Due to the high absence rate of a few families, attendance is below average. However, attendance figures are gradually improving as a result of the school's very hard work to turn this situation around, although a few parents still do not support the school well enough by ensuring that their children attend school regularly.

Pupils demonstrate obvious enthusiasm for all aspects of healthy living by making healthy food choices at lunchtime. They take lots of exercise in PE as well as by using the school's popular trim trail and attending sports activities, taking good precautions to keep themselves safe. Through the school council, pupils actively take part in improving their school. Pupils say they are very proud that their ideas, such as the trim trail, are valued and acted upon. They enjoy a good range of community involvement, such as putting on concerts for elderly residents. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, supported by particularly strong links with the local churches.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

This school's good teaching has successfully led to good progress and the raising of standards across the school. Well structured planning ensures that there is good challenge and support for pupils of all abilities. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations. Teaching assistants provide effective support. The pace of learning in most lessons is good. However, there is a need for clearer explanation of tasks in some lessons. Where pupils are unsure what is expected of them, the pace slows with the result that work is less productive. Pupils and parents alike are very complimentary about teachers' dedication and hard work. As two parents commented, 'The teachers are all very committed ... they have a lot of time for every single child.'

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

Clear planning supports the good curriculum provision and enables pupils to make good progress. There is now good provision for information and communication technology (ICT), which is taught well across the curriculum. Writing has been a focus for improvement and the effective strategies to engage and inspire the high proportion of boys have successfully raised standards in this subject. Handwriting is improving through the introduction of a joined letter formation, but it is still inconsistent in quality. Vocabulary tends to be limited in some pupils' writing and spelling is variable, and the school recognises that the curriculum needs more opportunities to develop these areas further. Improved reading resources have led to good improvement in the teaching of reading.

There is an outstanding variety of extra-curricular activities and these are very well attended by pupils of all ages, including Reception children. Visits by various members of the community and trips to places of educational interest provide very good enrichment to the curriculum.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

This is a very caring school with a high quality of pastoral support which fosters pupils' good personal development and well-being. The school has many strategies in place to improve attendance and these are having a positive impact, but there is still some ground to make up. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported, with the result that they make good progress. Good assessment and target setting procedures help learners to know how well they are doing and good marking of their books helps them know what they need to do to improve their work further. Older pupils enjoy acting as 'buddies' for younger ones and they are encouraged to take responsibilities around the school. Strong partnerships with local schools enable good arrangements for pupils joining the school and for those moving on to secondary schools. The recently appointed parent support worker is establishing positive relationships to support pupils and their families. Good links with a variety of organisations and professionals provide access to additional support whenever appropriate and safeguard pupils' well-being.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The clear and focused direction provided by the dedicated headteacher has successfully driven the school forward over the past year, resulting in a clear and continuing rise in achievement and standards. The strong staff team provides keen support for school improvement. The leadership team undertakes clear analysis of pupils' performance data and uses these findings to identify areas for action. As a result, leaders set challenging targets which have successfully raised standards throughout the school. For example, the drive to raise standards in writing has resulted in pupils of all ages making outstanding progress in this area over the past year.

The school's thorough and robust self-evaluation processes highlight appropriate priorities for improvement and these are acted upon quickly. With a number of new staff, subject leadership is in the early stages of development. The school is providing subject leaders with good support to increase their expertise and to help them play a more active role in monitoring provision. There is excellent use of resources, including the imaginative deployment of staff to ensure optimum provision for pupils' learning. The good emphasis on equal opportunities enables all pupils to fulfil their potential in various ways.

Governors provide good support and challenge for the school and fulfil their roles and responsibilities well. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. The fast pace of recent developments demonstrates that there is a good capacity to improve further.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	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

<b>How good is 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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 the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	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	1
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

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**Annex B**

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

3 October 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Sundridge and Brasted Church of England Primary School, Sevenoaks, TN14 6EA

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 well.

These are the things we especially like about your school:

- You are friendly, polite and helpful and your behaviour is excellent. Well done!
- You have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and fit.
- You greatly enjoy school and are keen to do your best.
- Yours is a very caring school where you all know and look after each other well.
- Your teachers work very hard to provide enjoyable learning activities that help you make good progress and achieve well.
- You have made excellent progress in improving your writing skills this year. Keep up the good work!
- Your headteacher, other staff and governors are leading the school well and are working hard to make it even better.
- Your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

These are the things we think your school could do even better:

- Raise the standards of your writing further by helping you to improve your handwriting and spelling skills.
- Make sure your parents all understand how important it is to make sure you do not have holidays or unnecessary absences during term time. You can help with this, too.

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

With very best wishes

Jacquie Buttriss Lead inspector



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Lead inspector