

## Minster Church of England Primary School

### Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118696
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	313050
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Robert Lovett HMI

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	401
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	George Box
<b>Headteacher</b>	Wendy Stone
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 February 2003
<b>School address</b>	Molineux Road Minster-in-Thamet Ramsgate CT12 4PS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01843 821384
<b>Fax number</b>	01843 821653

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how well the curriculum meets pupils' needs, the quality of the guidance pupils receive and links with the local community. Evidence was gathered from observing lessons, scrutinising pupils' books, reading the school's self-evaluation and other documents, and analysing test and assessment results and the responses to the parents' questionnaire. Discussions were held with pupils, the headteacher, other staff, the school improvement partner and the chair of governors.

## Description of the school

Minster is a larger-than-average school with two classes in each year group. It serves an area of relative social and economic advantage, although within this there are pockets of disadvantage. Most pupils come from the local village community, although some travel from further afield. The proportion of pupils of minority ethnic heritage is below average, as is the percentage of pupils who speak a first language other than English. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the normal times is high. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school with a number of strengths. The leadership team has put in place a wide range of changes which have the potential to make a significant contribution to school improvement. However, while improvements are apparent in the curriculum, pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work, it is too soon to judge the contribution other changes might make to raising standards.

When children join the Reception Year they bring with them widely differing levels of skills and knowledge, but most have attainment at the level expected. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move up through the school and achieve broadly average standards. This rate of progress and these standards are evident in pupils' performance in national tests and assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6. Although the test results of pupils at the end of Year 6 fell in 2007, these results represent satisfactory progress in relation to this year group's lower starting points.

Pupils' progress is satisfactory and they are adequately prepared for their future lives. While teaching is satisfactory overall, there is evidence from the school's monitoring and lesson observations during the inspection to show that the quality of teaching and its impact on learning is improving. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology, such as interactive whiteboards, to enliven lessons. Pupils generally listen with care and attention and are eager to answer questions and participate. Teachers ask questions well but do not always allow pupils sufficient opportunities for pupils to reflect and consider their answers in depth. Group working is well established and pupils cooperate well, but small-group and paired discussions are not used enough to explore themes and consolidate learning. Planning supports teaching and learning well.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are friendly, confident, articulate, enjoy school a lot and have good attitudes to learning. They are very aware of the need to eat well, exercise vigorously and lead healthy lifestyles, reflecting the school's accreditation as a healthy school. Behaviour is satisfactory and improving. Pupils are very positive about changes to the way challenging behaviour is addressed and say that behaviour is much improved. While all behaviour observed during the inspection was satisfactory or good, standards of behaviour remain a concern for some parents and carers.

Pupils' contribution to the local and wider community is outstanding. The Eco Health Committee, for example, has an impressive commitment to environmental matters. Pupils contribute to the village open garden scheme and horticultural society through the gardening club. The journalist club makes a regular contribution to Minster Matters. Pupils are frequent participants in church and village events and work enthusiastically to improve the local community. Good partnerships with other schools broaden pupils' experiences. International links are well established and innovative. A good relationship with the Ecole Primaire in the twinned town of Armbouts Cappel, France, results in annual exchange visits for pupils in Year 5. The school is also forging artistic and educational links with schools in Uganda and South Africa. These links have a significant impact on pupils' understanding of cultural, economic and geographic diversity.

As a result of recent changes to the curriculum, pupils say they enjoy lessons much more and find the developing links between subjects an exciting way to learn. They are also very positive about the 'blocking' of some subjects, which allows them to work for extended periods on a single project or piece of work. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with all pupils in Years

1 to 6 learning a modern foreign language. A wide range of provision outside normal school hours, including instrumental tuition and sports, provides further opportunities for pupils.

Pupils receive good pastoral guidance and those new to the school are helped to settle quickly. As one parent wrote, 'My son is new to the school... He is the happiest he has ever been.' Academic guidance is satisfactory because the impact it has on pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school has introduced more rigorous tracking of pupils' progress so that teachers have a better idea of how well pupils are doing and can use this information to set challenging targets. Pupils know their targets but not all know what they need to do to achieve them. Marking is generally good and encourages pupils, with the best telling them what they need to improve.

While self-evaluation is good, it could be improved by ensuring a greater focus on measuring the impact of changes in provision on pupils' progress. The school knows what it needs to focus on most in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards and it has good capacity to continue to improve. The headteacher is providing effective leadership and management and there has recently been a significant redistribution of subject leader and other posts of responsibility. Early indications are that these new responsibilities are enhancing leadership and contributing to school improvement. Most parents and carers are very supportive of the school. Pupils and teachers speak enthusiastically about this as an improving school. Governors are closely involved in the life of the school and offer satisfactory challenge as well as support.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and standards are rising. When they arrive in the morning, children are greeted by a calm and purposeful environment with plenty of interesting things to do. They settle quickly and are able to show good independence in selecting activities. Children are well supported in small-group work by teachers and teaching assistants. The staff are very friendly and approachable so that children feel comfortable and confident. The outside learning environment is used well to augment the limited indoor space available. Teaching is good because it is well structured, and assessment is frequent and thorough. The school has taken effective action to improve children's communication and language skills through a programme of phonics teaching. This has resulted in improved levels of communication skills and knowledge.

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

- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better in order to raise standards.
- Carefully monitor the influence of recent initiatives on pupils' progress.

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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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	3

### 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	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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?	3

<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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

6 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Minster C of E Primary School, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 4PS

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to visit your school. Our conversations were really useful in helping me get to know your school and write my report. A special thank-you is due to the Eco-Health Committee for giving up most of their lunchtime for our meeting.

Yours is a satisfactory and improving school. During your time in the school you make satisfactory progress. Although standards fell last year, they are usually about average. You said you are happy in school and enjoy being there. (Most of your parents and carers think this too.) You get on well with each other and with the adults in school. The school's links with the local community and with other countries is outstanding and this makes a significant contribution to your understanding of good citizenship and other cultures and ways of life. You do a huge amount for your school and the local community. Your school has a good focus on improving the environment and helping you live healthy lives. Good luck with your work to achieve an environmental Green Flag Award!

One of the main reasons your school is improving is that your headteacher, supported by the teachers and governors, is determined to make sure the school does better and that standards are higher. You can help them achieve this by listening carefully, working hard and always behaving well.

I have suggested some things the school can do to improve:

- Make sure the quality of teaching improves so that more of it is good or outstanding and standards rise.
- Carefully monitor how effective the new curriculum and other changes are in increasing the progress you make.

I hope you continue to work hard and do your best.

Yours sincerely

Robert Lovett Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools



6 November 2007

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Robert Lovett  
Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools