

# Hamstreet Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118378
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	326818
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Wendy Forbes

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.

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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 (total)	315
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>	Sue Davison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Macey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 March 2006
<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>	Hamstreet Ashford TN26 2EA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01233 732577
<b>Fax number</b>	01233 732573

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This larger-than-average primary school provides an Early Years Foundation Stage setting managed by the school's governing body. An independently-run nursery shares the school's premises, working closely with the Reception classes. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These include speech and language, emotional and social, and moderate learning difficulties. The school has received a number of awards including ECO (silver), Healthy School, Basic Skills, Activemark, Artsmark (gold), NAACEmark, Travel Plan (platinum) and Investors in People.

## 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 the dedication of the staff and their warm relationships with the pupils and parents make it a happy place to learn. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance. Because of the good teaching and curriculum, pupils achieve well throughout their time at the school. Pupils are well cared for so they feel safe, secure and behave well. The school has developed strong, well-organised pastoral systems and good, effective partnerships with a wide range of agencies, which make a positive contribution to pupils' good personal development and well-being and help them overcome any barriers to learning. The school provides a wide range of support and extended services which support its work with parents and pupils. Parents are very pleased with all that the school offers, viewing it as a happy, caring, family environment. As one parent said, 'The school does so much for our children... we have nothing but praise for everyone at the school.' Pupils enter the school with skills and knowledge below those levels expected for their age. Standards and achievement have been improving throughout the school, particularly in writing. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average. Pupils' progress is monitored carefully and additional support and appropriate interventions are targeted well. As a result, most pupils continue to achieve well through Key Stage 2, making significant progress in English. By the end of Year 6 standards overall are above average. However, although achievement and standards are good overall, fewer pupils achieve the higher levels in mathematics. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning and participate enthusiastically. This is because there are high expectations and well-established routines. Pupils appreciate the effort their teachers put in to make lessons interesting. Most are adapted well to suit pupils' needs and include good opportunities for pupils to share and discuss their ideas. However, not all activities, particularly in mathematics, provide consistent challenge or opportunities for all pupils, particularly the more able, to help develop their learning. Whilst pupils' work is regularly marked, feedback and marking are not yet consistently sharp enough to help all pupils know precisely what they need to do to improve. The school's assessment systems provide both pupils and teachers with a clear picture of individual expectation and progress. Teaching assistants and other adults provide good support for pupils who need help who, as a result, make good progress relative to their starting points. The school's wide range of extra-curricular activities, as well as outside services, make a positive contribution to the good curriculum. The headteacher's clear direction and high expectations, well supported by the school's staff and governing body, are the driving force behind this good school. Opportunities are provided to develop the skills and expertise of all staff, remove barriers to learning and raise achievement. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory rather than good because there is not yet a formalised strategy for the development of pupils' understanding of different communities in Britain or internationally. These improvements in achievement and high expectations, as well as the strong commitment of the whole school community to improve learning, demonstrate the school has a good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's skill levels are low, particularly in speech and language, compared with those typical of children of their age. Excellent leadership ensures children's needs are identified very quickly, enabling very well-targeted support. The excellent care that children in the Reception classes receive, and the high expectations of them,

ensures that they benefit from an appropriate range of support. This helps most children to make good progress, particularly those that need extra help, so that by the end of Reception standards are broadly average. Staff make good use of a creative range of activities to stimulate children's interests, with particular emphasis on personal, social and language development. This provides a good balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities. Because of the good organisation, fun teaching and personalised curriculum, children thoroughly enjoy their learning and behave well. Many, although not all, are gradually developing the capacity to work independently. Children's work is meticulously assessed. A wide range of strategies and assessment systems ensure that not a moment of a child's development goes unrecorded. This helps to ensure that appropriate planning is in place. Classrooms and a stimulating outdoor learning zone provide a safe, well-organised and stimulating learning environment. Good communication between the Nursery as well as Year 1 ensures a smooth transition into and out of the Reception class.

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

- Provide greater challenge in mathematics teaching, so that high attainers reach their full potential.
- Ensure marking is consistent so that it informs pupils what they need to do to improve.
- Improve pupils' understanding of the diverse nature of British, as well as global societies through developing a more structured approach to community cohesion.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage helps to provide pupils with skills that enable them to achieve well in relation to their low starting points by the time they leave school. In 2008, most targets were met, except for higher attaining pupils in mathematics. Standards in Year 2 were broadly average. By the end of Year 6, standards in English were significantly above the national average while mathematics remained broadly average. Through the use of challenging targets the progress of pupils has accelerated this year, particularly in writing. The school's current assessment data and work in pupils' books indicate that a higher proportion of pupils are on target to achieve above national expectations particularly in mathematics this year, although there are still more who could do so. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the effective support that they receive.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils say they are proud of their school, feel very safe and, because they enjoy school, are keen to learn. They rightly appreciate the good support and care provided for them. Pupils are confident that there is an adult they could talk to if they were worried. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This is reflected in all aspects of school life, particularly in assemblies and in the wide range of rewards which help to promote the school's very positive ethos, culture and good behaviour. Opportunities for reflection are provided in well-planned assemblies and in the school's personal, social and health education, which help pupils to understand the needs of others and appreciate the diversity of the world around them. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider local community through their key roles in school life as members of the school council, play leaders and house captains. Pupils are provided with the opportunities to develop good citizenship as seen in the outcomes

of pupils' own 'anti-bullying' campaign, initiated and organised by Year 5 pupils. Very good opportunities to develop links with other countries and raise funds for charitable events are appreciated by pupils. The wide variety of 'healthy' activities provided ensure pupils have an excellent understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. Positive attitudes to learning and good progress overall help to prepare pupils well for the next steps in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good, but ranges from outstanding to satisfactory. Common strengths include the very good relationships that help set a positive tone for learning. Teachers' good subject knowledge ensures that most plan work that is well matched to pupils' individual abilities and consequently progress is good in the majority of lessons. Teaching assistants are well informed about what pupils are expected to learn from activities and have a good level of expertise in the areas where they are working. In the outstanding lessons seen, teachers are particularly well planned, providing extremely good levels of challenge and using practical resources highly appropriately. All of this stimulates pupils' interests very well. One excellent example was seen where children confidently and excitedly conversed in basic French, extending their key vocabulary. However, where teaching is satisfactory there is inconsistency in the pace and challenge provided for the more-able pupils, particularly in mathematics, and marking is not so effective and so progress is slower.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school's good curriculum is interesting, relevant and contributes positively to pupils' personal and academic development. However, while longer-term planning has good detail, some daily plans do not develop this further to ensure the needs of the most able are fully met. Good resources including an extensive range of computers, swimming pool, environmental area and outstanding outdoor learning facilities all help to complement the exciting, 'creative' curriculum. A range of recognised curriculum programmes have helped to bring about improvements in basic skills as seen in the most recent improvements in Year 1 reading. Strong provision for personal, social and health education provides many opportunities for pupils to improve their personal life skills and self-esteem. A good range of specialist sport, music and modern foreign languages, visits and visitors are used effectively. The school has a very good range of additional out-of-hours activities and clubs, well attended by pupils.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Outstanding pastoral care ensures that any issues for pupils who may have particular emotional needs are followed up quickly and rigorously by staff. Procedures to protect children and ensure their safety are robust. Pupils and their families requiring specialist help appreciate the good support provided by the school's extended provision, family liaison officer and contact with outside agencies. Clear expectations are set for the academic progress pupils should make each year and there is a comprehensive range of strategies in place to keep track of pupils' progress which is regularly monitored by staff. Pupils have learning targets for improvement and are beginning to be involved in the assessment of their own learning. Pupils' work is regularly

marked; however there is inconsistency in the quality of this marking, so that not all pupils know or understand how to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The excellent leadership qualities of the headteacher provide a clear direction which is focused well on high expectations and raising standards. Senior staff analyse assessment data well to accurately evaluate the school's performance. Other staff benefit from the opportunities to develop their leadership and management roles. At a whole-school level excellent use is made of pupil assessment information to set challenging targets which are rigorously monitored. The impact of this can already be seen in the rapidly improving standards in writing. However, this has not brought about consistently individualised feedback and marking. Consequently, not all pupils know and understand what they need to do to next. Governors are effective in carrying out their statutory duties, providing a good balance of challenge, support and monitoring. The school promotes community cohesion through the developmental work that is done locally and through the successful conservation and charitable work. However, the school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory rather than good because there is not yet a formalised strategy for the development of pupils' understanding of different communities in Britain or internationally.

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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?	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?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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

<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?	3
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**

26 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ham Street Primary School, Ashford TN26 2EA

- Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we came to visit your school recently. Your school is a good one and the hard work of your teachers, teaching assistants, governors and your headteacher is helping it get even better. We think that your own hard work is contributing to this. We are delighted that you like school and you told us that you enjoyed the activities that your teachers plan to help make learning fun. We know that you particularly love the school swimming pool and information and communication technology. We enjoyed hearing about the things that you do to make your school a happy place and know that you are very proud of the work that your school council and playtime leaders do. It was also good to hear that you feel so safe and well looked after. These are some of the other things we have said about your school.
- You make good progress in your learning particularly in English.
- You are keen to improve your work and try hard to do this.
- You are taught well and have good relationships with your teachers, who make your lessons interesting.
- You behave well and care about your school.
- The younger pupils enjoy the excellent outdoor learning environment.
- The adults in the school take very good care of you.
- We have asked staff and governors to do three things to help make your school even better.
- Find ways to make sure that those of you who sometimes find parts of mathematics lessons a bit easy are challenged to reach even higher standards.
- Make sure that feedback and marking help you to know and understand how to improve your work, particularly in mathematics.
- Help you to find out more about different lifestyles in Britain as well as in other parts of the world.

We know you are proud of your school. You can help it to be even more successful by continuing to work hard. We wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Wendy Forbes

Lead inspector