

# Sibertswold Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118691
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	326869
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Orpin

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	192
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>	Richard Webster
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Bird
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 June 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>	Coldred Road Shepherdswell Dover CT15 7LF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01304 830312

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 June 2009
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**Fax number**

01304 831386

**Age group** 4-11

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**Inspection dates** 17-18 June 2009

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Sibertswold is a smaller than average primary school which has a higher proportion of girls than boys. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than most other primary schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. Pupils are mainly from a White British background. There is one Reception class that forms the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a breakfast club and an after-school club five days a week run independently from the school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Sibertswold is a good school. It is improving because of the clear direction provided by the headteacher, firmly focused on challenging targets. All aspects of school life have been improved as a result of effective planning, rigorous monitoring, and most particularly, the use of assessment information to help guide teaching and the curriculum. Senior leaders and governors play a major part in improving achievement. Other leaders are keen to take more responsibility, but have not yet fully developed the skills needed.

Parents are exceptionally supportive and appreciative of the work of the school. This is illustrated in one parent's comment: 'This school is excellent. It is vibrant, friendly and safe. Children love it.' Pupils are self-assured, welcoming and caring and their behaviour is exemplary. They thoroughly enjoy their work and confidently tackle new ideas and opportunities, so they learn eagerly.

Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where the well-planned provision and well-informed staff help children to make good progress and develop socially. The purposeful and interesting activities make learning enjoyable, so that by the end of the Reception class, children are avid learners. Pupils continue to achieve well throughout the school, attaining standards that are above average and rising by the time they reach the end of Years 2 and Year 6. Although pupils' standards in writing are slightly lower than in other subjects, school action to remedy any weaknesses is resulting in rapid improvement.

Teaching and learning have improved well since the last inspection, so lessons are exciting and pupils are actively involved. Teaching is good and there is a very clear understanding of how it can be improved further. Teachers usually plan lessons to make them exciting and challenging, although they sometimes do not make enough provision for more-able pupils or those who are gifted and talented. The already good curriculum is being developed around themes, so lessons are relevant and interesting. For example, Year 6 gained much through their visit to, and lessons about, the siege of Dover Castle, a project which had a particular impact on improving boys' writing because they were interested in the topic they were learning.

Throughout the school pupils of all ages feel safe and know they are cared for extremely well. Teachers assess their pupils well, especially in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Older pupils know their targets and use them regularly to improve their work. Improvement since the last inspection is good and there is good capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

One parent summed up the views of the majority, writing 'We couldn't have wished for a better start for our child's education.' Children make good progress, particularly in communication skills, their personal and emotional development, and mathematical development. From a starting point that is broadly similar to that of other children, most are on track to reach average levels by the time they move into Year 1, with almost a quarter working at a higher level. Adults' clear understanding of the children's needs is evident in the well-planned curriculum, effective procedures to assess their progress, and the exciting learning environment, all of which are managed well. Excellent attention is given to children's welfare and safety. Children form valuable friendships, develop an understanding of right from wrong and how to behave. Through

their play, children are guided to appreciate the importance of sharing and taking turns. Good teaching of basic letter sounds, writing, mathematics and ICT skills prepares children well for their more formal learning in later years. Effective transition arrangements help children move smoothly into Year 1. Children benefit from a variety of interesting activities, but on occasions, there are missed opportunities for making full use of the well-equipped outdoor environment, which the school has plans to rectify.

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

- Improve the achievement of pupils who are more able and/or who are gifted and talented; developing the quality and effectiveness of teaching so they are consistently challenged by their work.
- Ensure that staff, in addition to those already involved at senior levels, are better prepared with a greater understanding of how to contribute to the further improvement of the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good from Years 1 to 6 and their good progress means pupils leave the school with standards that are above average. However, writing skills do not always match levels in other subjects, although a clear focus on remedying weaknesses means standards in writing are rising. In recent years, standards achieved by Year 6 pupils have risen steadily. The current Year 6 pupils are progressing well and are on track to reach above average levels. Although Year 2 standards declined slightly in the past, this has been successfully reversed, so standards achieved by the current Year 2 pupils have improved significantly from the previous year. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of early intervention and well-matched support for their differing needs.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils work and play together extremely well. They are enthusiastic about their work and demonstrate a strong ability to think for themselves. Outstanding gains in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enable pupils to appreciate the differences and achievements of others and to show care and consideration. Pupils contribute exceptionally well to the school and local communities. They take responsibility seriously, for example, when acting as playground leaders. The school council contributes significantly to school life and ensures that pupils' views are well represented. Raising money for a wide range of charities gives pupils a clear understanding of wider social and economic issues. As one pupil commented, 'It helps us to understand how lucky we are and how much we have'. Pupils' preparation for later life is good, as a result of their achievement in literacy, numeracy and ICT and the development of skills in mini-business activities. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy, for example, through after-school clubs or playing on the recently acquired outdoor climbing equipment. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe. Attendance has risen and is now above the national average.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers' relationships with pupils are purposeful and staff manage their classes well, so classrooms are orderly. As one parent said, 'The teachers are keen, motivated and energetic'. They provide exciting opportunities for pupils to learn, such as the Year 4 lesson where pupils were making advertisements for a range of products, using digital cameras. Teachers make good use of ICT to make learning more interesting. Lessons move at a brisk pace and teachers encourage pupils to think for themselves. They plan their lessons well and make good use of teaching assistants who skilfully help those pupils needing additional support, also recording how well they are doing. Teachers usually make good use of assessments to plan their lessons, especially in literacy, numeracy, science and ICT, but at times there is not enough challenge for more able pupils and those who are gifted and talented.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is being developed to make more links between subjects, but is not yet fully in place in all years. The carefully planned thematic approach ensures that pupils enjoy their work because it is interesting and relevant. Good provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects helps prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education and there is a good programme for personal, social and health education. The school makes good use of the outdoor environment, for example, using the quiet garden to learn poetry. The curriculum is enriched by an outstanding range of visitors and trips, such as residential visits to France. 'Focus' weeks contribute to extending pupils' learning in other subjects, such as sports and music. The range of after-school clubs, such as drama and ICT, is extensive. Take-up levels are good.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and pupils needing help are supported exceptionally well, enlisting other agencies when needed. The school looks after its pupils outstandingly so they are very confident that adults will help them should the need arise. The school works extremely well with parents, for example, to help improve attendance. It helps pupils settle quickly when they start school and transfer smoothly to the next stage of education. Teachers have a good knowledge of the information about pupils' progress in literacy, numeracy, science and ICT and they use it well to target additional help at specific groups in order to boost their performance. There is less information collected and used about pupils' progress in other subjects and this is an area for development. Pupils' work is marked regularly and gives good guidance on how to improve. Pupils are encouraged to be increasingly involved in evaluating their own performance. They know and value having targets for their next stage of learning.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher has resulted in a whole school commitment to improvement. Senior leaders are playing an effective part in the development of the school. Leaders at other levels undertake their responsibilities with enthusiasm, but they have not all developed the skills or understanding needed to undertake fully their roles as subject leaders. There have been good gains in the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum, the use of assessment information, the rate of attendance and communication with parents. As a result, pupils' achievement and personal development and well-being have improved, and challenging targets have been set and surpassed. The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for development. Improvements are carefully planned, in consultation with all associated with the school. As one parent wrote, 'The headteacher really encourages parents and pupils to be active stakeholders in the school.' The school has a very clear understanding of its community at local and global levels and while there are slightly fewer activities at national level, the school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. The school provides equal opportunities for all pupils well, although, at times, those who are more able and/or gifted and talented are limited by a lack of challenge. Governors carry out their duties well. They are well informed, knowledgeable and provide suitable challenge to the school's leaders. As one parent wrote, 'The headteacher is an excellent leader. We have every confidence in her, the staff and the school.'



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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 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?	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>	1
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	1
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

<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**

19 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sibertswold Church of England Primary School, Dover CT15 7LF

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school.

Sibertswold is a good school and it has been successfully improved in recent years. You are working hard and you behave extremely well, so you have made good progress. Your lessons have improved because teachers know exactly how to help you learn and they make lessons fun and interesting, so you thoroughly enjoy school. Teachers mark your work carefully so you know what to do to improve and you use your targets well to help you know what to do next. Teachers are helping you to think for yourselves, but sometimes the work is a little too easy for some of you, particularly those in top groups.

You are exceptionally confident, welcoming and caring towards others. You make an exceptionally good contribution to life at school and your local community. All the adults at the school take care of you extremely well and they know what to do to continue the improvements, although some need a bit more guidance about how they can help improve the school even more.

In order to make the school even better, we have asked the adults to:

- make sure that the work is hard enough for everyone
- show some of the staff how they can be even better at helping the school to improve.

You can help by keeping up the good work.

Yours faithfully

Susan Orpin

Lead inspector