

High Beech Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115096
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	338509
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Tusha Chakraborti

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Godfrey Baillon-Bending
Headteacher	Glenister Thom
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2006
School address	Mott Street High Beech Loughton
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed nine lessons taught by four different teachers, including three sessions in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They met with governors, senior leaders and a group of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, checked arrangements for safeguarding and scrutinised a range of documentation such as development plans and records of progress. Staff and pupil questionnaires were also scrutinised along with 46 completed by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the standards reached and progress made by all groups of pupils, especially in Key Stage 2
- the impact of teaching and assessment on pupils' learning and the extent to which all groups of pupils are challenged to achieve as well as they can
- the way in which the new strategies for accelerating pupils' progress are driving improvement.

Information about the school

This is a much smaller-than-average primary school in which the very large majority of pupils are White British. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, but the proportion with statements is double the national average. A very few pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Few pupils join or leave the school other than at the normal time of entry. The school has been awarded Healthy School status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school that provides a harmonious learning environment for all its pupils. Central to the school's work is the way it supports all pupils to develop good personal and social skills and grow up as confident learners, because of the caring ethos of the school. This is reflected in the views of many parents and carers, as one parent/carer commented: 'My child loves school and can't wait to get there. Staff have ensured that he made a seamless transition from one year to another and developed enormously.' The school's partnership with parents and carers and with other, outside groups is outstanding. Pupils enjoy attending this school thoroughly and are proud of their involvement in making decisions. They behave well and develop good independence skills. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and how to lead a healthy lifestyle.

The rigorous and thorough tracking of pupils' progress demonstrates that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are now making good progress. As a result, pupils currently in Year 6 are achieving above average standards; this maintains a trend of improvement since low results in 2008.

Excellent care, guidance and support and a good curriculum, together with consistently good teaching, ensure that pupils make the good progress as they move up the school. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work. They assess pupils' understanding and progress well and plan well to build on the pupils' prior learning. However, more-able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently to ensure that they achieve as consistently well as they can. Teachers place strong emphasis on extending literacy and numeracy skills, but planning for links between subjects is limited.

The school has a good capacity for sustained improvement, as is illustrated by the recent impact of the many new strategies that have been introduced. The headteacher and senior leaders are making an excellent contribution to the school's drive forward and are well supported by governors and other staff in their determination to raise achievement further. Self-evaluation is good. A rigorous system for performance management and staff development ensures that staff are supported very effectively to enhance their expertise for the good of the pupils and this is driving up the quality of teaching. Governors have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and strive to improve all aspects of the school's work. An action plan for community cohesion has been put in place and is being implemented, but, as yet, pupils' understanding of cultures other than their own is limited.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that lessons include sufficiently challenging activities that enable more-able pupils to achieve as well as they can
 - planning greater links between subjects so that pupils have the opportunity to apply their literacy, numeracy and information technology skills across the curriculum.
- Enhance pupils' cultural awareness by:
 - providing planned activities within the curriculum
 - promoting community cohesion beyond the school community, thereby, deepening pupils' understanding of their place in the wider world.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

National test results for 2008 and 2009 suggested a drop in the rate of progress in Key Stage 2. However, progress has improved and is now good. Rigorous tracking of the progress of individual pupils and carefully targeted intervention strategies over the past two years have ensured significantly raised achievement in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make equally good progress, because of the very effective individual support. The most-able pupils receive a wide curriculum, but their pace of learning sometimes drops in lessons when teachers do not challenge them enough.

Pupils have a strong sense of morality and their social skills are well developed. Their behaviour is good and makes a strong contribution to their learning in class. They work well together and respect each other's values and beliefs. In lessons, they listen well and persevere on the occasions when they are set challenges. Pupils enjoy coming to school thoroughly and say they feel very safe at all times. They are confident that any rare incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. Recognised by the award of Healthy Schools status, pupils have an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and a high proportion participate in the sporting activities offered. They are keen to undertake responsibilities through their work for the school council and carry them out maturely. Pupils from Years 5 and 6 are proud of their roles as play leaders, supporting the younger children at lunchtime. They are involved well in their local community, with various church activities and fundraising for charities. Pupils apply their basic skills well to enhance their learning and are well placed to continue their education. Attendance is above average.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and ability to succeed. Lessons are characterised by a positive emphasis on praise and recognition of pupils' contribution, with errors used as opportunities for learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan a range of activities that interest and engage most pupils in their learning. Very good relationships provide a secure learning environment that enables pupils to make good progress. Teachers know pupils very well and use questioning effectively to assess the pupils' progress. For example, in an outstanding mathematics lesson, the brisk pace and challenging questioning ensured that all groups of pupils were fully engaged in learning and assessing how well they were doing. However, in a minority of lessons, more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged, as lessons are pitched at a middle level of ability. Teaching assistants are skilful in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to enable them to access what is being taught. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and often suggest how it might be improved.

The curriculum places a strong emphasis on supporting many aspects of pupils' personal and social development and contributes very well to their enjoyment of learning. For example, the introduction of a new writing scheme has provided pupils with the excitement of choosing and writing a range of creative and factual accounts. However, opportunities to plan cross-curricular links between different subjects and embed references to different cultures are not fully exploited. The extension of the school's much-needed accommodation over the past three years has resulted in improved provision for extra-curricular activities. A good range of activities such as clubs, trips and visits, significantly enriches pupils' learning experiences. Annual events like health week,

book week, science day and music day, make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning. Gifted and talented pupils are supported well through the local schools consortium.

The school provides a very happy and welcoming environment for its pupils and systems for pastoral care are outstanding. The school works extremely well with parents and carers and outside agencies to support the learning and the well-being of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and provided with excellent support from staff. Carefully targeted interventions for pupils experiencing particular difficulties are very well implemented through a whole-school approach and skilful support from the teaching assistants. The arrangements for transferring children between the key stages within the school, as well as between Year 6 and the secondary schools, are very well organised and give pupils a good start to their next stage of education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team, effectively supported by other staff and governors, has been very successful in ensuring improvement and good outcomes for pupils. Over the past year, the leaders have ensured a more thorough and rigorous tracking of pupils' progress and this has provided a prompt for quick intervention, leading to a substantial improvement in pupils' achievement across the school. Staff morale is very high and staff are constantly seeking ways to improve their practice. They are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in driving the school's improvement forward. Governors are frequent visitors to school and, paired with the subject leaders, hold specific responsibilities for checking the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. As a result, there is an excellent, shared understanding of the priorities of the school's improvement plan and a high commitment to the actions necessary for these to be realised.

The school is highly committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all its pupils. This commitment has ensured sustained improvement in the performance of different groups of pupils and variations in rates of learning between groups are identified and reducing. Safeguarding procedures illustrate good practice and staff are well trained. Issues to do with safety are very well integrated into the curriculum. The governors have evaluated all aspects of community cohesion rigorously and have produced a robust action plan. They, rightly, identify the strengths of links to the local community

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

and the comparative weakness in terms of communities further afield. The school provides good value for money and manages its budget very efficiently.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start to their education as a result of a well-organised curriculum and good teaching. A highly positive learning environment with attractive displays and a good range of resources ensures that children make good progress during their time in the Reception class. They start school with skills and abilities that are broadly as expected for their age and, by the end of the Reception year, the majority of children reach standards that are above the national average.

A wide range of practical activities are planned effectively to stimulate children's imagination and to extend their speaking and listening skills. This was evident in a session where children explored the shapes, colours and patterns in paintings by Piet Mondrian, and confidently embarked on their own paintings, using vibrant colours. They were encouraged to discuss and express their views about Mondrian's paintings of trees, evaluating images as they see them. Regular teaching of the link between sounds and letters supports children well in developing their literacy skills. Children develop good co-ordination and personal skills as they explore through the well-organised indoor and outdoor activities. Occasionally, however, children spend too long in the carpet area listening to introductions, when they could move more quickly into activities.

The school ensures excellent relationships and close contact with families through an effective induction system. As a result, children settle quickly into their daily routines.

Staff ensure that the children's health, safety and well-being are always seen as of utmost importance. Assessment of children's progress is rigorous and the information gained is used effectively to inform planning. Leadership is effective in providing children with an enjoyable, safe and secure learning environment.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers responding to the questionnaires were very pleased with their children's experience in this school. All those responding appreciated that the school keeps their children safe and it ensures that pupils develop very good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. A very small minority of parents and carers feel that they are not helped sufficiently to support their children's learning and that some pupils do not make enough progress at this school. Inspectors agreed with the positive views expressed. They found that the school works very well in partnership with parents and carers, but found that, occasionally in lessons, a few pupils are not challenged.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at High Beech Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 96 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	66	16	32	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	30	60	17	34	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	30	33	66	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	44	22	44	6	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	48	23	46	3	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	30	29	58	6	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	44	26	52	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	20	40	24	48	0	0	2	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	42	26	52	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	36	25	50	3	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	38	26	52	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	40	27	54	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	54	21	42	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 June 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of High Beech Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School,
Loughton, IG10 4AP

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly and helpful. We enjoyed talking with you and it was good to see how much you enjoy lessons and all the extra activities. You told us that High Beech is a good school and we agree.

You work hard in lessons, make good progress and achieve good standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. I enjoyed reading some of the stories and other factual accounts that you wrote. I was pleased to see that you are keen to take responsibilities and carry them out successfully to help the school to run smoothly. I was very impressed with your knowledge about how to stay safe and to lead a healthy lifestyle. I saw that your behaviour is good and you enjoy playtimes and lunchtimes together, helping each other. Some of you talked to me about your roles as play leaders and I was very pleased to see how well you perform this job in looking after the children in the Reception class. Teachers and other adults help you to learn well and find lots of interesting things for you to do. They also look after you well. They listen to your views and act on them. You know that the adults will help you if you have any problems.

Your headteacher, teachers and other staff are doing a very good job in running your school and are always trying to make further improvements. I have asked them to make sure that you are always set challenging work to do so that you do even better. I have also asked them to see that you work on skills like writing even when learning other subjects, and learn more about people in different communities outside your area. You can help by doing your best and continuing to take good care of each other, so that your school continues to be a happy place.

Yours sincerely

Tusha Chakraborti

Lead inspector

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