

Canterbury Road Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118354
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	339204
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Colpus
Headteacher	Zoe King
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 18 lessons and eight teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, parents and carers, the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher and deputy headteacher and other teachers with leadership responsibilities. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation including the school improvement plan, monitoring records, the school's self-evaluation document, pupils' progress records and the safeguarding procedures. Questionnaires were received and analysed from 69 parents and carers.

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

- the impact of the work of subject leaders on school improvement and raising attainment
- how effectively teachers are improving boys' literacy skills and challenging more able pupils to achieve as well as they can in mathematics
- the development of reading and linking sounds and letters (phonics) in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

Information about the school

Canterbury Road is an average size primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than found nationally. Their needs relate mainly to autistic spectrum disorders, behavioural, emotional and social and speech, language and communication difficulties. The school makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in one Reception class. The school has gained the Healthy Schools and Basic Skills Quality Mark awards. The headteacher was appointed in 2007 and since this time four teachers have been absent on maternity leave, including the newly appointed deputy headteacher during the headteacher's first year. Two members of staff remain on leave during the time of the inspection.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The very effective leadership of the headteacher is securing rapid improvement to this satisfactory school. The headteacher has created a strong team of hardworking, enthusiastic staff who are all committed to improving the learning for the pupils.

The school provides good care, guidance and support. Pupils behave well. They feel safe and enjoy school because they know how to take care of themselves and that any incidents of inconsiderate behaviour will be dealt with effectively. One parent wrote, 'The school provides a happy, secure and nurturing environment for my child to learn.' Pupils' good understanding of how to stay healthy and fit is recognised by the Healthy Schools award.

Overall attainment is average and has improved from significantly below average in 2007. Particularly notable is the improvement in science, where attainment is high as a result of a focus on the subject throughout the school. Gains have not been as rapid in mathematics and, although attainment is broadly average, fewer pupils reach the higher Level 5 than they do in other subjects. Although many pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points, which are generally below expectations for their age, progress overall is satisfactory as it is not even across the school or for all groups of pupils. In all subjects, girls do better than boys, but the gap between their attainment is more marked in English. More able pupils do not always make the progress expected of them. Teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. Successful support from senior leaders has increased the proportion of good quality teaching. Nevertheless, there are still inconsistencies across the school where time is not always used well enough to maximise learning, and teaching and the curriculum do not enliven learning sufficiently, particularly for boys.

Incisive and rigorous self-evaluation by senior leaders gives them a very clear and accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and those areas where further improvement is needed. Where there has been a significant improvement focus over the last two years, for example in writing and science, attainment has improved through the school. Procedures for tracking pupils' progress have been developed and give clear information that enables leaders to identify those who are underachieving and provide effective support. Expectations have been raised and school data and pupils' current work show that more pupils are making good progress in their learning. These factors indicate that the school has good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress and raise attainment in mathematics to more closely match that

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in English and science by ensuring that the most able pupils are challenged sufficiently.

- To sustain the better progress pupils are making, ensure that teaching is consistently good across the school by:
 - pacing lessons well so that pupils have enough time for independent learning
 - making sure that tasks consistently tap into the interests and learning needs of boys
 - providing a curriculum that enlivens learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils enjoy their lessons when they can get on with their work quickly and say they learn best when they get involved in practical and problem-solving activities. These aspects have helped them to do particularly well in science. Their good personal skills, such as their ability to work effectively together and their good behaviour, have a positive impact on their learning. Boys in particular were motivated in a lesson by the use of film to encourage an understanding of persuasive writing techniques. They worked well in pairs, with their 'study buddy', to apply this knowledge to a poster for the film trailer. One boy said, 'It's hard to write stories because it takes so long and you have to write so much, but this is fun and I can be a proper writer.'

Pupils work hard and learn to concentrate well. On occasion, they lose interest when they have to listen to the teacher for too long and this tends to slow the progress of higher attainers and boys more than any other groups. Consequently, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, despite the real enthusiasm and interest seen in many lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers. Pupils are proud of their school and promote its ethos of respect well, as reflected in their spiritual, social and moral development. The school has correctly identified that cultural understanding and awareness is an area to develop. Pupils take on a wide range of responsibilities enthusiastically, for example as team captains, lunch helpers and monitors. They enjoy sharing their ideas and the school council is influential in gathering views and decision making, for example formulating the school motto and choosing new books to buy for the library. Pupils are keen fundraisers and a recent 'Enterprise Week' involved them all in applying mathematical skills and investigating ways to make a profit to share between the school and a charity.

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.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and manage their classes very well. All adults work successfully to include pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable so they are able to fully participate in learning and the life of the school and make similar progress to others. Support is targeted well, for example through close collaboration between the family liaison officer, the education welfare officer and school staff, to build relationships with families and to improve the pupils' attendance. Although attendance is average, there are still a small number of families whose children do not come to school regularly, which means that they miss out on important learning.

All lessons have clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils. Introductions are thorough and generally include all pupils in discussions, with opportunities for them to share and articulate their own thinking with a 'talk partner'. This is often extended by teachers' good questioning skills, but sometimes at the expense of taking learning forward quickly. In a few lessons, pupils listen to teachers for too long before getting on with independent learning. Marking is consistent and provides pupils with useful information about how to improve their work, but pupils are not always clear about their targets for learning or how and when they have achieved them. Early reading and phonic skills are below average by the end of Year 2. However, the recent organisation of pupils into ability groups across the Reception and Years 1 to 4, as well as training for teachers and teaching assistants, means that pupils now have skilled teaching in these areas and are making good gains in their learning. The curriculum satisfactorily develops pupils' basic skills, as recognised in the award of a Basic Skills Quality Mark. It makes a good contribution to pupils' personal qualities, especially their understanding of issues

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connected with their health and safety. These aspects, as well as enrichment activities through special events weeks, visits and visitors, are strengths in an otherwise satisfactory curriculum. Teachers make some useful links between subjects, but recognise that more could be done to enliven learning to make it more relevant and interesting for all pupils, but especially boys.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is ambitious for the school and has high expectations for pupils and staff, which are driving the rapid improvement. Staff are accountable for evaluating and monitoring pupils' progress as they move through the school. Senior leaders and middle managers, including those who lead subjects, are motivated to initiate change, share the vision of the headteacher and make a good contribution to school improvement. Staff say they feel valued and encouraged to develop their skills. There are rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and learning to identify any weaknesses and good support, both from senior leaders and through sharing good practice to bring about improvement.

The inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is comprehensive, eliminates discrimination and ensures equality of opportunity. Senior leaders are relentless and determined in their work to involve parents in the life of the school and in supporting their children's learning. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are good and the school ensures that pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The school has satisfactory procedures to promote community cohesion and works well to engage parents and carers in the community, for example by providing a breakfast club to accommodate working parents and the new Willow Room for coffee mornings and parent, carer and toddler groups. Governance is satisfactory and governors are involving themselves more in the school community, increasing their understanding of the school's performance. As a result, they are in a better position to hold the school to account.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2

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The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Reception class make steady progress from their starting points that vary from year to year but are often below expectations for their age, particularly in their reading and writing skills and their social and emotional development. There are positive, trusting relationships with the team of adults and, as a result, children are happy, behave well, settle well into the routines of the day and are well cared for. Parents appreciate the support given for a smooth transition into school. One wrote, 'My child found it hard starting school but the staff made the transition from pre-school to primary school easy.' Children understand the need to keep themselves safe and healthy and know why they wash their hands before eating. One child said, 'We need to get rid of the germs or we might get sick.' Provision is satisfactory. Children enjoy the opportunities to make their own choices throughout the day. However the daily routine involves too much time when children follow instructions in whole-class lessons, which sometimes limits their exploration, problem-solving and independent learning skills. Children have access to a recently improved safe and secure outdoor area. However, this lacks a sufficient range of opportunities to ensure that children's learning is sustained whether they choose to be inside or outside. For example, opportunities are missed to extend and enrich their reading and writing skills by providing books or writing equipment in the tent on the 'camping site' or the 'igloo on the North Pole', where children really enjoy playing and creating their own worlds. Children generally achieve the expected levels in their mathematical development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative development. Other areas of their learning remain below expectations when they move into Year 1.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of the parents and carers who returned the questionnaire agreed that they were happy with their children's experience at school and that their children enjoy coming to school. The majority of concerns expressed were about how effectively the school deals with behaviour. The inspection found that behaviour is good and the school manages any inappropriate behaviour well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Canterbury Road 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 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 210 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	45	32	46	4	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	52	29	42	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	37	36	52	6	9	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	49	28	41	3	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	39	57	24	35	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	41	34	49	4	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	35	36	52	4	6	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)	19	28	36	52	7	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	42	33	48	4	6	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	35	32	46	8	12	5	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	35	33	48	8	12	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	30	44	29	42	4	6	5	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	51	29	42	4	6	1	1

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



12 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Canterbury Road Primary School, Sittingbourne, ME10 4SE

You may remember that I visited your school recently with two other inspectors. I am writing to thank you for being so friendly and polite and telling us what you thought about your school. We agree with you and your parents that Canterbury Road is a caring and safe place to be and lives up to its motto of being, 'A friendly, happy place to learn'.

Your school is satisfactory overall. This means that some things are particularly good and some things need to be better. Your school has improved recently because the headteacher and all the teachers and other adults work very hard to make it better for you. Well done, also, for working so hard to improve your writing. I enjoyed reading lots of your work around the school and on your 'working walls'. I know that some of you said you were anxious about behaviour in school, but we were impressed with your good behaviour in lessons and around the school, and very pleased to hear that you enjoy coming to school. Well done for understanding how important it is to stay fit and healthy.

We have asked everyone in your school to do the following important things:

- Make sure that those of you who find learning in mathematics easier are given work that challenges you and helps you make better progress.
- All of you are beginning to make better progress in your learning and, to make sure you keep this up, we want all your lessons to be as good as the best ones. To make sure this happens, we have asked the teachers to give you enough time to work independently and to plan work for you that is always interesting so that you want to learn new things in different ways. This will especially help the boys.

Thank you again for being so helpful and interesting to talk to.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead inspector

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