

# Shorne Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118594
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	339254
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 December 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Cartlidge

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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	209
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	W Johnson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caroline Conroy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Cob Drive Shorne Gravesend DA12 3DU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01474 822312
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, information on pupils' progress, safeguarding and other documents. Questionnaires from 83 parents and carers, 15 members of staff and eight pupils were scrutinised.

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

- How well leaders are improving teaching and learning.
- The progress of more-able pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The involvement of pupils in assessing their learning.
- The use of writing across the curriculum.
- The impact of care, guidance and support on pupils' enjoyment and achievement.

## Information about the school

Pupils come to this average-sized primary school from the village of Shorne and the surrounding area. The proportion entitled to free school meals is low. The school has a below-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Several new senior leaders have joined the school in the past year, including the headteacher who started in February 2009.

The school has received several awards including the Eco Green Flag and the Information and communication technology (ICT) Mark.

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

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Pupils are keen to attend this friendly school and they receive a satisfactory education. They were right when they told us: 'The teachers are friendly and treat every pupil equally' and 'Everyone at school is kind.'

Children make a sound start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make satisfactory progress, and are confident about making choices in their learning. However, class routines are not firmly established and not all activities are suitably purposeful, inviting or challenging for children of different abilities. Satisfactory teaching between Years 1 and 6 enables pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, to build steadily on what they already know in most lessons. Teachers explain clearly what pupils are expected to learn and use resources well to make topics interesting and meaningful. For example, pupils in Year 6 enjoyed trying to construct a model raft that would float using spaghetti and marshmallows.

Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6. In English, pupils' standards are higher in reading than in writing and pupils have too few opportunities to practise writing independently in other subjects. Pupils behave well most of the time, although they are not always attentive in lessons where work is not matched closely enough to their needs. Teachers are successful in boosting the pupils' confidence by congratulating them when they have done well; however, they do not consistently show pupils how to improve next time through marking and target setting, or involve pupils in thinking about how well they have done.

Pupils say they feel safe at school because members of staff are friendly and approachable. They follow the example set by members of staff in taking responsibility in school and the local community. They enjoy making suggestions about how to make the school better and carry out helpful tasks. They are respectful and polite, but have a limited understanding of cultural diversity in Britain. Above-average attendance contributes well to pupils' progress.

Sound procedures for self-evaluation and monitoring teaching and learning enable leaders to know what needs to be done next to make the school better. Standards have declined since the last inspection, but new leaders have put in place strategies to develop provision. These are starting to have a positive effect, demonstrating they have a satisfactory capacity to improve. It is too soon for new developments to have had a lasting impact on pupils' progress and leaders are aware that the day-to-day monitoring of learning is not sufficiently rigorous to help detect underachievement as soon as it occurs.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - ensuring children are given clear routines to follow
  - improving the layout of the classroom and outdoor area so that resources are more inviting and all activities are purposeful
  - pitching work at the right level for children's differing abilities.
- Ensure teaching is more consistent across the school by:
  - matching work more closely to pupils' differing needs
  - improving the guidance provided through target setting and marking
  - increasing the pupils' involvement in assessing their own learning
  - monitoring pupils' day-to-day progress more rigorously.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to practise their independent writing across the curriculum.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy coming to school and consequently their attendance is above average. They make positive comments such as, 'I like seeing my friends and learning.' They often learn quickly at the start of lessons when clear instructions and interesting topics capture their attention. For example, in a science lesson in Year 6, pupils enjoyed a video clip about being stranded on an island and used the contents of a suitcase to solve some problems. Pupils' behaviour is good around the school and on the playground. However, in some lessons pupils' attention starts to wander when discussions have gone on for too long or when work is not closely matched to their needs. When this happens they become restless and inattentive and do not produce their best work. Pupils are good at cooperating with each other when working in small groups or pairs. For example, in a writing lesson in Year 2, pupils shared their ideas for a book and took turns to make notes. Pupils particularly enjoy solving real and relevant problems. In a lesson in Year 5, they enjoyed using the grid method when calculating how many chairs would fit in the school hall for guests attending the nativity play.

Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6, with standards in reading being higher than those in writing. Girls and boys, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress during their time at the school, although they learn more quickly in some lessons than in others. Standards have declined in the school in recent years, but new systems for tracking pupils' progress are enabling leaders to identify pupils who have fallen behind in their learning and to provide additional support as necessary. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage of their education and later life. They develop sound literacy and numeracy skills, but progress in writing is slower.

Caring members of staff support pupils in developing good relationships. Pupils' spiritual,

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

moral, social and cultural awareness is satisfactory. They have a good understanding of spiritual matters and appreciate the value of kindness, love and friendship. They have helped to write the school's rules and understand their importance, but their awareness of cultures other than their own is limited. The school is working well to increase pupils' knowledge about cultural diversity by forging links with other schools. Pupils make a good contribution to the community. They help raise funds for charity and make decisions about changes to the playground. The eco committee is right to be proud of the Eco Green Flag. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and deserve their Healthy School Award. They enjoy healthy snacks at playtime and the wide range of physical activities provided. Pupils say they feel safe at school and believe 'teachers make sure we feel safe'.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers explain the purpose of lessons clearly and provide clear instruction. However, they do not always match the work closely enough to the pupils' needs or give them enough time to complete good quality work. When pupils find the work too easy or they

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

are stuck, they can become inattentive and start chatting to their friends rather than finishing their work. Teachers use resources well to support learning. For example, in Year 4, pupils enjoyed listening to audio clips about wartime Britain as part of a history topic.

The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of clubs, notably those for sport, and pupils in Years 1 to 6 learn to speak French. Cross-curricular links are developing well, but leaders are aware that there remain too few opportunities for pupils to practise their writing independently when working in other subjects. A new scheme to support pupils' personal development is having a positive impact and pupils are successfully encouraged to care for the environment. For example, pupils were keen to take part in the '60 minute makeover' in the school grounds. Themed weeks, such as the anti-bullying and creative weeks, make a good contribution towards the pupils' enjoyment of school. The school is right to be proud of its ICT Mark.

Members of staff are caring and have good relationships with their pupils which contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has recently been reviewed so that additional support is more frequent. Marking is supportive but does not always provide enough guidance on how pupils can improve their work. Pupils are set individual targets in literacy and numeracy, but they do not always remember what they are because teachers do not refer to them often enough.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

New senior leaders are working together well to improve the school and its self-evaluation is satisfactory. There is a shared and realistic understanding of priorities for development and leaders are starting to use information collected from monitoring provision and pupils' progress to drive the school forward, demonstrating a satisfactory capacity to improve. Stakeholders, members of staff and governors are involved in the review and development cycle, although initiatives to raise standards are too recent to have had a sustained impact. The school has a sound commitment to equal opportunities and is tracking the progress of individuals and groups more closely so that dips in progress can be rectified more swiftly than in the past.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and understand the school's strengths and areas for development. They are expanding their role in holding the

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

school to account for its actions by finding things out for themselves. The school sets and achieves realistic targets.

Leaders work together satisfactorily with parents and carers to support pupils in their learning, and are aware that links with parents and carers could be strengthened further. The school is working closely with external agencies to support pupils who are finding life difficult and to ensure that there are no forms of discrimination. At the time of the inspection the school's safeguarding arrangements were found to be satisfactory, with some minor aspects of administrative work remaining unfinished. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily and has introduced video conferencing links and visits to other schools, although the impact of these activities on pupils' understanding of cultural diversity is so far limited.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Most children join the school working within the levels expected for their age group. They make satisfactory progress and attainment is broadly average by the time children enter Year 1. Members of staff are cheerful and friendly and provide a balance of teacher-led activities and those that children have chosen for themselves. However, routines are not clearly enough established to ensure that children know what they should or should not do. For example, they do not always wash their hands after visiting the toilet, or hang up aprons when they have finished using them. Members of staff are good at encouraging children to cooperate with each other and children are confident when speaking to adults and their friends.



The new leaders evaluate children's progress and have put in place strategies to help raise attainment, such as the daily sessions held to boost the children's knowledge of letter sounds. For example, in one lesson children enjoyed identifying missing objects and saying which objects had names that rhymed. Leaders have suitable plans to develop the outdoor area to provide more stimulating activities that encourage the children to use their imaginations and creativity.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
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**

Most parents and carers are pleased with the work of the school. They are especially positive about how well members of staff keep pupils safe, teach them to lead healthy lives and help them to enjoy school. A small minority expressed several concerns, including about the way pupils' needs are met, the amount of progress they make and the way unacceptable behaviour and parental concerns are dealt with. The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. The school is aware that not all pupils consistently make enough progress because differing needs are not always met well enough. Leaders are seeking ways in which they can increase the involvement of parents in their children's learning and have responded to parental concerns by holding workshops about anti-bullying. The inspection team did not observe unacceptable behaviour during the inspection but found that pupils can become inattentive when work is not closely matched to their needs.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shorne 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection.

In total, there are 209 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	52	33	40	7	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	43	40	48	6	7	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	16	52	63	16	19	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	23	41	49	15	18	5	6
The teaching is good at this school	26	31	43	52	10	12	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	31	43	52	10	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	41	44	43	2	2	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)	13	16	42	51	16	19	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	25	43	52	12	14	3	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	27	38	46	12	14	10	12
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	28	38	46	15	18	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	41	49	31	37	9	11	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	39	33	40	14	17	2	2

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



9 December 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Shorne Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Gravesend  
DA12 3DU

Thank you for being so helpful during our visit. We are pleased that you enjoy coming to school. We found that your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

These are the best things about your school:

- You enjoy school and are good at keeping safe and healthy.
- It is good that you are helpful in school and in the local area. The eco council has helped to look after the environment well and you grow and sell your own vegetables.
- We agree with you that your teachers are kind and caring.
- Your headteacher and other leaders know what needs to be done to make the school better.

These are the things we have asked your school to do next:

- Give those of you in the Reception Year clear routines to follow, work that is just right for each of you and activities that are always inviting and worthwhile.
- Make sure that teachers give you work that is neither too hard nor too easy, show you clearly how you can improve your work and involve you in checking how well you have done.
- Check frequently that you are all making as much progress as you should.
- Provide more chances for you to practise your writing in other subjects.

Thank you once again for talking with us about your school and showing us your work. You could help your teachers by making sure you always listen carefully in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge

Lead inspector

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