

# Hawkhurst Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118602
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	358398
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eileen Chadwick

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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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>	179
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Roger Manning
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Hatcher
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Fowlers Park Rye Road Hawkhurst Kent TN18 4JJ
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	8–9 June 2011
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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They spent eight hours observing teaching, which included visiting 19 lessons and observing 10 teachers. Inspectors heard samples of pupils read. These represented all the year groups present in the school during the inspection. They also held meetings with pupils from all year groups present in the school, staff with key responsibilities and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work and also evaluated documentation such as policies, the school improvement plan, pupils' work and records of their learning, progress and behaviour, together with the school's safeguarding procedures. Inspectors analysed 96 completed questionnaires from parents and carers, 14 from members of staff and 74 completed by pupils. As Year 6 pupils were away on a residential visit during the inspection, evidence for their achievement was gained through evaluating their work, assessments and teachers' planning.

## Information about the school

The school is a little smaller than average and serves the immediate community and its surrounding rural areas. While most pupils are White British, an above average proportion are from minority ethnic backgrounds with the largest group, at 5%, of Gypsy/Roma heritage. Few pupils are at early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than found in most schools. The majority of these pupils have speech, literacy, numeracy and/or emotional and behavioural difficulties. An average proportion has a statement of special educational needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in a Reception class. There have been many staffing changes since the previous inspection and two new senior leaders were appointed within the last two terms.

The school met the government's floor targets for academic performance in the most recent reporting year but did not do so in the two preceding years. The school runs a daily breakfast club but the pre-school held on the school site is privately managed and did not form part of this 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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety</b>	<b>3</b>
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school where pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school is a friendly place where good quality safeguarding underpins pupils' sense of security and enjoyment of school.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Consistently good progress in Year 2 leads to their average attainment, including in reading. This means pupils are better equipped for Years 3 to 6 than in the past.
- Pupils' attainment is broadly average by Year 6 but fewer reach average levels in mathematics than they should. Pupils make good progress in reading in Key Stage 2 and individual pupils' attainment is occasionally better in reading than mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory, although variable. The number of good lessons is increasing but about a half is satisfactory. Phonics lessons with a focus on the sounds letters make are well taught but, during writing lessons, there is not always enough direct teaching of reading or links with phonics. In a minority of lessons, the challenge for more-capable pupils slows and whole-class introductions are occasionally too hard for lower-attaining pupils.
- Parents and carers and staff say behaviour has improved over the last few years and inspectors agree. Despite this, a small minority of parents and carers and pupils express concern about disruption to learning in a few classes. This is generally when teachers do not provide the right level of work for very low-attaining pupils or when teaching assistants do too much for them and they become bored.
- The headteacher has successfully led the school through an unsettled period when there were substantial staffing changes. Subject leaders are still developing their roles. The governing body is supportive and strengthening its evaluation of pupils' achievement.

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Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, and where leadership and management are no better than satisfactory, may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next inspection.

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

- Raise the proportions reaching average levels in mathematics and improve the consistency of good teaching and learning by July 2012 by:
  - strengthening the direct teaching of reading and the consolidation of reading and phonics skills during writing lessons, especially in Year 1
  - using assessment to consistently match work to the learning needs of pupils of all abilities in all parts of literacy and numeracy lessons.
  
- Improve pupils' ability to take more responsibility for their own learning and eradicate low-level disruption by December 2011 by:
  - improving the quality of support given by teaching assistants, ensuring they help pupils towards independent learning, including minority ethnic pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - ensuring lesson introductions are not overlong for Reception children and giving them more opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning through purposeful play
  - ensuring all staff consistently apply the behaviour policy and fully engage all pupils in learning, especially the lowest attainers in Years 1 and 3.
  
- Ensure all those with leadership responsibilities, including the governing body, monitor the quality of provision and its impact on pupils' progress more rigorously by:
  - developing English and mathematics subject leaders' skills in observing colleagues teach so they have a greater impact on raising achievement
  - monitoring the impact of initiatives for raising achievement particularly by the governing body
  - ensuring the school development plan shows clear attainment targets for every year group and for those pupils who face challenging circumstances.

## Main report

Senior leaders, staff and the governing body are ambitious for the school and have embarked on a well-planned journey of improvement. Staffing issues that have held back school improvement have been resolved and pupils' progress is improving. Leadership roles and structures have been revised and there are clear systems for managing the school. Based on accurate analysis of what needs to be done, through regular monitoring, the action taken to improve the quality of teaching and the curriculum has resulted in a positive climate for learning. Leadership and

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management are satisfactory. Improving teaching is central to the plan for raising achievement but there is not yet enough good teaching to ensure pupils of different abilities make consistently good progress throughout the school.

On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's starting points are lower than seen in most schools, especially in communication, language and literacy. Their progress is satisfactory overall but often better for higher- and middle-attaining children than the lower-attaining ones. Their attainment is still below average, including in reading, writing, sounds and letters, and early mathematical development, by the time they enter Year 1 because for a minority of children, including Travellers, attainment remains low in these areas. Progress is satisfactory in Year 1 and, as a result, pupils' attainment in reading remains below average. Good progress in Year 2 raises attainment. The school builds satisfactorily upon this in Key Stage 2 and larger proportions are reaching average and higher levels in younger classes in Key Stage 2 than in Year 6. By Year 6, attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion attaining higher levels has risen this year, although there is a drop at average levels, particularly in mathematics. A few cohort changes have had an impact on overall attainment because of the small numbers involved.

Good relationships provide a positive framework for learning. Classrooms are usually calm and pupils told inspectors they enjoy school and feel safe. The vast majority of parents and carers feel their children are happy and are kept safe at school. Inspectors' lesson observations, evaluation of pupils' work and assessments, as well as hearing pupils read, showed their learning is satisfactory overall. There is some good learning, but this is not consistent across year groups, and this prevents pupils' attainment rising more evenly.

In Reception, children's interest is aroused by an interesting curriculum based on many practical experiences. This was seen in a good adult-led lesson when, working in ability groups, children measured parts of their body using simple means. Children of all abilities learned well because of the skilful way in which activities were matched to their learning needs. There are also some rich learning opportunities for independent play. However, not enough time is devoted to developing children's early communication, literacy and numeracy skills through purposeful play or for helping them to develop their independent learning skills. Adult-led activities are occasionally too long and then children begin to lose interest and become distracted. This particularly affects the lowest achievers, who are often from minority ethnic backgrounds. This prevents them from developing consistently good learning attitudes and getting off to a good start in school.

The arrangements for teaching phonics (the sounds that letters make) are having a positive impact on raising achievement by Year 2. Setting in phonics enables those who need extra challenge to work at higher levels and those who struggle to be taught in smaller learning steps. In an excellent phonics lesson observed in Year 2, pupils showed how well they could apply their understanding when writing new words. However, during Year 1 writing lessons, there is not always enough attention

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to helping pupils to consolidate their reading and phonics skills. Occasionally, pupils are also prevented from making faster progress in reading when, during whole-class literacy time, the direct teaching of reading is insufficiently rigorous.

At Key Stage 2, pupils' learning is mainly satisfactory but not yet consistently good in both English and mathematics in all year groups, especially for lower- and higher-attaining pupils. Pupils learned well in a good mathematics lesson in Year 4 because work was well matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities. Good support by the teaching assistant ensured lower-attaining pupils made particularly good progress during group work.

Lower-attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and minority ethnic pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Intervention sessions, taught by specialist staff, often lead to good learning but, during whole-class and group work, activities are not always matched well enough to their needs. At times, teaching assistants do too much for these pupils so they do not take enough responsibility for their own learning. This occurs particularly in Reception and Years 1 and 3. A nurture group for pupils in Years 4 and 5 has recently been started and was seen to provide some good support for those at risk of disaffection and underachievement, including for those from Traveller backgrounds. Pupils said they felt the support was helping them to do better, although it is too early to judge its full impact.

The key teaching strengths are that teachers usually manage pupils' behaviour well and create a supportive climate for learning. Other good features include teachers' good use of whiteboard technology and the sharing of objectives at the beginning of lessons. The most effective lessons are characterised by high expectations and challenging activities that move pupils' learning forward at a fast rate. Where teaching is satisfactory, it is generally because insufficient use is made of assessment information to ensure that work is properly matched to pupils' differing capabilities. Although pupils have clear learning targets, they do not know what actual level they are working towards, which prevents them taking more responsibility for improving their attainment.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Most show respect and consideration for others and pupils of all backgrounds work and play together in harmony. Pupils' behaviour, attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The majority behave well in lessons and around the school, and parents and carers say that behaviour has improved significantly in the last few years. However, a small minority of parents and carers and pupils express concern about the poor behaviour of a few pupils. This is usually when teaching fails to capture the interests of a few lower-attaining pupils or their literacy and numeracy work is too hard. The behaviour policy is usually applied well but, very occasionally, there are instances where low-level disruption causes a loss of learning time. A few parents and carers expressed concern about bullying but pupils say they are free from harassment and, on the few occasions when bullying occurs, it is generally dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are encouraged to make a positive contribution

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to the community, for example through school council work or as play leaders.

The school has successfully narrowed the gap in the proportions of pupils who are below average by Year 2, including vulnerable pupils. Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 is improving and the proportions reaching higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics have risen substantially this year, especially in reading and writing. This shows the school has a satisfactory capability to sustain improvement. Leaders and managers are satisfactorily promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination. However, they know some inconsistencies in progress remain for some lower-attaining and/or vulnerable pupils and are keen to address these. Safeguarding arrangements are good, are prioritised and firmly established in policies, working practices and the ethos of the school. The school seeks to involve parents and carers in their children's education but is aware that there is still work to do to engage parents and carers from all backgrounds in their children's education.

The school has developed appropriate leadership structures which include dispersed responsibilities across the staff for subjects, phases and key aspects. Partnerships with a national support school have been well managed and have had a good impact on school improvement, including improving teaching through coaching. Literacy and numeracy subject leaders are keen but, as they are new to their roles, they are still receiving training. Governors are playing an increasingly effective role in strategic planning but their monitoring of initiatives for improving attainment is inconsistent. The school improvement plan includes the right priorities and actions for raising attainment but does not show enough attainment targets for year groups and particular focus groups, such as vulnerable pupils, which restricts governors and staff in their evaluations.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hawkhurst Church of England 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 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 179 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	55	57	40	42	1	1	0	0
Q2 My child feels safe at school	58	60	33	34	5	5	0	0
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	37	39	49	51	8	8	0	0
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	32	33	55	57	6	6	0	0
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	49	51	44	46	2	2	0	0
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	32	33	60	63	2	2	0	0
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	16	17	64	67	10	10	2	2
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	15	16	53	55	17	18	5	5
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	21	22	54	57	8	8	4	4
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	33	35	53	56	7	7	0	0
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	43	45	44	46	5	5	3	3
Q12 The school is well led and managed	45	47	40	42	6	6	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 all 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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 achievement of all pupils.</li> <li>■ Behaviour and safety.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of leadership and management.</li> </ul> <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.</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.**



10 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Hawkhurst Church of England Primary School, Cranbrook  
TN18 4JJ**

Thank you so much for making us so welcome and for helping us with the inspection when we visited your school recently. Your views are important as you are the school's customers. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school.

The school provides you with a satisfactory education and here are some of the things your school does well.

- You make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 and in reading in Key Stage 2.
- Those of you in Reception and Key Stage 1 do well learning about the sounds that letters make in phonics lessons.
- You help to make your school a happy one because you get on well with each other and most of you behave well.
- Staff take good care of you and you told us how safe you feel.
- Senior staff, teachers and governors are working hard to make your school even better.

This is what we are asking your school to do to improve.

- Help more of you to reach the standards expected of you in mathematics by Year 6.
- Make all lessons as good as the best ones so that the work is at just the right level and never too easy or too hard for you, as well as helping you to make more decisions about your learning.
- Help the few of you who misbehave to behave as well as everyone else.
- Make sure school leaders and governors contribute equally to making the school better and check how well things are going.

All of you can help by working hard in all you do and showing good behaviour at all times. We hope you will continue to enjoy school.

Yours sincerely

Eileen Chadwick  
Lead inspector

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