

# 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>	313010
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

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 on roll</b>	
School	189
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Helen Rowe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Liz Hatcher
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 October 2003
<b>School address</b>	Fowlers Park Rye Road Hawkhurst Cranbrook TN18 4JJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01580 753254
<b>Fax number</b>	01580 753254

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The percentage of pupils entering and leaving the school at different times during the academic year is above that seen nationally. A high number of pupils live in social housing. The school has an above average percentage (30%) of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The vast majority of pupils are White British and 7.5% of pupils are of Romany descent. The school has experienced significant barriers to raising standards since the last inspection in relation to staffing issues, unsatisfactory behaviour of a few pupils and lack of rigorous systems to improve pupils' rates of progress. A new headteacher has been in post since September 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Hawkhurst is a satisfactory school that offers its pupils an adequate quality of education. Children in the Foundation Stage receive a good quality of education. Since the appointment of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and with the input of effective governors, the school has improved and standards have risen as a result. The quality of education provided has improved as a result of leaders' rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. Consequently, historical underachievement in Years 1 and 2 has been arrested and the quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory. This is helping pupils make up lost ground and now all groups of pupils, including those of Romany descent, achieve satisfactorily. The school has developed good links with parents and other partners. The vast majority of parents support the school and confirm that they have also seen recent improvements in pupils' behaviour, and 'My children are very happy here and the new leadership team are restoring the school to its former glory' is typical of their comments.

From a low starting point when they enter Reception, children make good progress and attain the expected standards in all areas of learning by the time they leave the Foundation Stage. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and number and standards are average. Standards are average in English, mathematics and science by the time that pupils leave the school as pupils make satisfactory progress. However, more capable pupils throughout the school could be challenged further in writing and mathematics. At present, there are inconsistencies in the way that staff use data from assessment and this slows down these pupils' rate of progress. This is because work is not always matched to their needs.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance is satisfactory, as are pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. They develop a good awareness of remaining safe and of having a healthy lifestyle. They leave the school appropriately prepared for their next steps in education. Pupils receive a satisfactory level of care, guidance and support. There are good procedures for their pastoral support but less effective ones for guiding them academically, such as through informative marking of work. As a result, pupils are not encouraged to take some responsibility for their own learning. For instance, not all of them know their targets for improvement and too few opportunities are provided for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) for research. The recently introduced long-term planning ensures that the curriculum is satisfactory but too few opportunities are available for pupils to use literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. In a relatively short time, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have developed a good understanding of what needs to be done. However, although they have already begun to make a difference, there has not been sufficient time for them to have had an impact in all areas. The role of subject leaders is developing but they are not fully engaged in monitoring teaching and learning and this limits their ability to promote best practice in order to raise pupils' achievements. The school has a satisfactory capacity to make further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception class working at a level below that expected of children of this age in all areas of learning. As a result of good teaching, children make good progress and

enter Year 1 well equipped for more formal work. The curriculum is generally well planned, but there are too few opportunities for more capable children to carry out basic calculations. A well resourced outside area enables children to work and play together, so extending their personal and social skills well. Good partnerships are developed with parents, who are pleased with the education their children receive.

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

- Use information from assessment to plan work that challenges the most capable pupils by matching lesson activities more closely to their needs, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Involve pupils more in their own learning by sharing targets with them and showing them what they need to do in order to improve, such as through more informative marking.
- Develop the role of subject leaders so that they can monitor and evaluate provision and standards in their subjects.
- Provide more activities for pupils to develop independent learning skills and increase opportunities for them to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in all subjects of the curriculum.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Up until very recently, pupils underachieved in Years 1 and 2 in reading and writing as identified by national teacher assessment. The recent implementation of phonics, coupled with improved planning and implementation of intervention programmes, has arrested this decline. Standards are now average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and so by the end of Year 6 they attain average standards in English, mathematics and science. Leaders' analysis of assessment information shows that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from a Traveller background make the same progress as other pupils. This is due to the effectiveness of the school's support systems for meeting their additional needs. On the other hand, although the most capable pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and writing, the school does not provide appropriate challenge across all year groups in order to accelerate their rate of learning in these areas.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Most pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. They are eager to learn and behave appropriately. The school acknowledges that, in the recent past, the behaviour of some pupils has given cause for concern. The staff have successfully developed procedures for supporting this small minority to ensure that their behaviour does not affect the learning of others. A significant number of parents express their satisfaction at the improvement in this area. Pupils develop a good awareness of their own school community, particularly when instituting improvements to school life through the school council and by supporting charities. The school is successful in developing in pupils a good understanding of a safe and healthy lifestyle. Pupils are adequately prepared for the future by readily taking on responsibilities in school and developing their life skills, for example when Year 6 pupils attend the West Kent Business Partnership Safety in Action event.

However, pupils get too few opportunities to develop their research skills and this restricts the rate at which they acquire new knowledge. Pupils' satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural development equips them with the ability to understand different cultures, to accept the uniqueness of individuals and to develop an early understanding of global issues, such as the environment.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is improving, and teaching and learning are now satisfactory overall as teachers use ICT more effectively to enliven teaching and increasingly explain to pupils what they are expected to learn in each lesson. This encourages pupils to become involved in their own learning. Lessons have a brisk pace and pupils have good relationships with their teachers. However, not all teachers use information from assessment to provide suitably challenging activities in all lessons for all pupils, especially the more able ones. This limits the rate at which they learn and make progress. The opportunity for pupils to learn at a faster rate is also reduced by the fact that not all of them know their targets, and inconsistencies in marking mean that at times, pupils are not sure what they need to do in order to improve. Competent teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning especially when they teach them in small groups and support the learning of pupils with additional needs.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school's curriculum is carefully planned to meet pupils' needs, and includes a wide range of enrichment activities. Supported by a satisfactory programme of personal, social and health education, pupils develop positive attitudes and awareness of the needs of others. Recently implemented long-term plans for English, mathematics and science have improved the consistency with which pupils develop their knowledge and skills. However, planning does not identify opportunities for pupils to further develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in all subjects. Good links with a local specialist sports college enable the school to extend the range of sporting opportunities it affords, strengthening the provision for physical education and the opportunity for pupils to develop a healthy lifestyle. Provision for music is good and is reflected in the good quality of singing in morning worship. The school provides a residential visit for Year 6 and this has a very positive impact on pupils' personal development and supports their preparation for the next stage in their education.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

The pastoral care of pupils is good and highly valued by parents. The school makes effective use of the family liaison officer who offers good support to pupils and parents. All pupils know where to turn to in school if they need help. Safeguarding procedures and health and safety practices are good and reviewed regularly to ensure pupils' well-being. As a result, the school is a secure and happy place in which pupils enjoy learning. Child protection systems are robust and staff have received effective training. However, the academic guidance given to pupils as to how they can improve their work is not so strong and is inconsistent from class to class. The school sets individual learning targets for pupils but these are not always sufficiently challenging,

especially for those pupils who are working at higher levels. In addition, not all teachers discuss their targets with pupils or give effective guidance about how to achieve them. The quality of teachers' marking of books is regular but inconsistent in quality and value to pupils. In some classes, it gives pupils little guidance on what they need to do next in order to make progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher has quickly made a very positive impression on parents and pupils. 'She knows all the children in the school' said one parent 'and she is very approachable'. The recent appointment of the deputy headteacher has now ensured that the headteacher's vision for the school, aimed at improving pupils' academic standards, can be implemented at a faster rate. Well informed governors provide good support and execute their duties effectively. They offer challenge, such as questioning the recent targets set for pupils, and use their collective talents well to meet their many responsibilities. Consequently, the school has audited its provision accurately but the outcomes of this self-evaluation are not yet fully effective in practice because the school does not set sharp targets with clear criteria for success. Subject leaders are committed to raising standards but are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring teaching and learning and standards in their subjects.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

1 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hawkhurst CofE Primary School, Hawkhurst, TN18 4JJ

Thank you for making us feel so welcome. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. We were impressed by the way that some of you have improved your behaviour, how you look after one another at play times and by your singing in assembly. Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. It is helping you to develop positive attitudes to learning and teaching you how to stay safe and lead a healthy life. You are making satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science but those of you who sometimes find the work too easy could be given harder things to do. Here are the things that we have asked the school to do.

- Make sure that you all have work that is not too easy, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Tell all of you what your targets are and show you the best ways to achieve them.
- Find time for teachers who are in charge of subjects to see how well you learn in their subject.
- Find more ways for you to practise your reading, writing, mathematical and computer skills in all subjects and increase opportunities for you to learn on your own.

We hope that you will be able to help your school to become even better by continuing to go to school as often as you can, behaving well and working hard while you are there.

Continue to enjoy school and good luck for the future.

Best wishes

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley Lead inspector

**Annex B**



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Bogusia Matusiak-Varley  
Lead inspector