

Ethelbert Road Infant School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 118337 |
| Local Authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 339196 |
| Inspection dates | 18–19 May 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Jacqueline Marshall |

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 | 4–9 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 112 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Viv Barrett |
| Headteacher | Samantha Fenn |
| Date of previous school inspection | 19 May 2010 |
| School address | Ethelbert Road Faversham ME13 8SQ |
| Telephone number | 01795 533124 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons, observed six teachers, and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders and governors. Although they did not meet with parents, they evaluated 83 parental questionnaires in addition to 52 questionnaires from the older pupils. They looked at documents including school policies, pupils' progress data, attendance figures and school development planning, as well as pupils' work.

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

- the effectiveness of the school's strategies for improving the learning and progress of all pupils, particularly for higher-achieving pupils, especially in writing, and for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the extent to which staff use assessment to support and challenge pupils' learning and raise attainment
- the quality of the school's work and plans as it moves from an infant to a primary school.

Information about the school

Ethelbert Road is a smaller-than-average primary school. It has recently changed its status from an infant school and will have its full complement of classes as a primary school in September 2011. The majority of pupils are from White British families. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The range of barriers to learning includes moderate learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder, speech, language and communication issues and behavioural, emotional and social needs. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. A privately run pre-school is situated on the site but this arrangement will cease at the end of this academic year as the school expands.

Pupils achieve well because teaching is good and at times better. They progress well in lessons that are lively and interesting. In this caring school, all staff know pupils' abilities well because teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing and are effective in sharing this information with them and their parents and carers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make exceptional progress. This is because of the highly effective checks regularly made on their progress and the considerable skill with which the school adapts and targets the well-focused support it gives them as a result. Across the school, day-to-day assessment is effective and teachers' marking is good overall. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to link closely enough the comments made in teachers' marking to pupils' individual targets. As a result, pupils do not always know precisely what they need to do next to improve their work. While attainment is broadly average, the headteacher and key leaders, effectively supported by governors and staff, are leading the school's successful push to use assessment more rigorously in order to improve achievement further. The systems have been effectively introduced and are used across the school to tighten planning and are increasingly

ensuring lessons in all classes match pupils' abilities and their next steps in their learning. There is still more to be done to ensure that this is done consistently. These improvements, together with leaders' accurate self-evaluation and actions to maintain and build on the high levels of pastoral care seen at the time of the last inspection, show that the school's capacity for further improvement is good.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It has several outstanding features. Since the last inspection, it has worked hard to maintain the tremendously high level of care, guidance and support it provides while ensuring that all pupils achieve well in their learning and develop extremely well as individuals. Pupils benefit from exceptionally good relationships with all staff and display enormous enthusiasm for learning. Their behaviour is exemplary both in lessons and at play, where they show considerable support for one another regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. An extremely positive relationship with a local special school enables pupils from both schools to benefit enormously from learning and playing together at Ethelbert Road during lessons each week. All pupils talk about the 'very friendly' feeling and say 'everything's amazing' and they 'want the school to keep on getting bigger' because 'then we can stay here'. Because of the school's very strong focus on its pastoral care, pupils have an extremely good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles and stay safe. This is demonstrated well through their considerable awareness of the importance of exercise and the really enthusiastic way they all join in with the daily Wake and Shake at playtime.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in all subjects by building on the best practice already seen in some classes to ensure that targets and lessons always challenge and engage pupils to achieve their best.
- Accelerate pupils' progress by developing teachers' use of marking so pupils understand exactly what to do to improve their work and know the next steps in their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Across the school, pupils achieve extremely well in their personal and social development. Good and improving attendance reflects the pupils' considerable enthusiasm for school and learning. Key factors in pupils' good development of workplace skills are their keenness to attend school, along with their ability to work well together. Their understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle is excellent. This is demonstrated well through their enthusiastic take-up of physical activity, whether walking to school, participating in clubs and sporting activities or making the most of the opportunities to exercise at playtimes. Pupils of all ages talk confidently about the benefits this can bring and are quick to describe the healthy choices they can make for their school lunches, while understanding that 'it's

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important to have a mix' of foods. Pupils contribute well to the school and wider community. They are proud of their responsibilities. The school council eagerly explained their planned Healthy Eating Day, because although they already think the school is a healthy place, 'we're trying to make them even healthier!' While voting for the school council takes place each year, pupils' knowledge of this process was deepened considerably through their eager involvement in recent elections when the school was the local polling station. Pupils from Reception children up created their own class manifestos, presented them to the school and then voted for their favourite. Pupils have exceptional spiritual, moral and social skills and their cultural awareness is good. They are extremely considerate of each other, valuing and celebrating each other's differences. This helps to make the school a very safe and welcoming place.

Pupils achieve well academically. They are clear about their learning and, in the best lessons observed, talked with confidence about their learning and shared their ideas willingly with one another. During a numeracy session outside in the playground, pupils in Year 2 learnt quickly from their own mistakes as they tried to guide their partners using simple commands to collect treasure. Highly motivated, they reasoned about their choices, drawing effectively on their own prior learning, explaining why they could not make one move as 'that would be diagonal and we can't do that, so how do we get there just with turns?', finally deciding: 'I know, why don't we try a half turn to the right first?' Pupils of all ages talk eagerly about what they have been learning and know they have learning targets. The trend in attainment in the Year 2 national tests over the last three years has been broadly average. As the school grows and pupils move through Key Stage 2, the oldest pupils continue to achieve well, with those in Year 4 currently working above expected levels for their age. Over time, pupils make good progress from starting points that are often below expected levels for their age when they enter the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In some classes, and for some groups of pupils, progress is accelerated. As part of a whole-school focus on improving the quality of assessment, the school is ensuring that different groups, such as higher-achieving writers, are targeted to ensure they make the same progress as other groups of pupils. Progress for pupils at the early stages of learning English matches the good progress seen across the school.

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

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| 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 | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 1 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good, with examples of outstanding practice. The key features of this are: the extremely good relationships adults have with children; the effective use of the many additional adults both in class and in leading small groups; the consistently good use of 'talk partners' to allow pupils to try out and share ideas; and the extremely stimulating and engaging activities teachers provide. Together they contribute to helping pupils develop their very positive attitudes to learning. In a Year 1/2 lesson, pupils were transfixed by a series of images and music on the interactive whiteboard. They worked extremely well together in pairs to discuss how they felt and developed these ideas through drama before starting to write, descriptive words and phrases almost bursting out of them. Assessment is thorough and is used increasingly effectively to chart pupils' progress and to plan the next steps in their learning. While used extremely well in some classes, it is not yet consistent across the whole school. During lessons, adults regularly discuss with pupils just how they can improve their work. In pupils' books where marking is best, pupils understand the next small steps needed to improve their learning and achieve their targets and, as a result, progress is accelerated.

The curriculum is successful in building pupils' basic skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Teachers plan effectively to ensure it is adapted well so lessons target groups of pupils of different abilities, providing appropriate tasks such as for those at the early stages of learning English, while stretching the most able. Creative links between subjects are effectively made to help to stimulate pupils' interest and are providing further opportunities to practise skills, such as their writing, learnt in other subjects. Along with the rich and varied range of visits

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and visitors who share their expertise with pupils, these creative links effectively support pupils' very positive attitudes. The school effectively plans many opportunities for pupils to learn and develop their understanding of children from other faiths, cultures and backgrounds to their own. In line with much of their approach to the curriculum, the experience for Year 1/2 pupils was extremely practical and as a result tremendously successful. Pupils enacted the Hindu festival of Holi, daubing each other's faces with paint before pretending to spray each other using brightly coloured chiffon scarves. As they sat panting in the playground at the end of the session, they demonstrated real empathy for the celebration, exclaiming they now felt 'fantastic' and 'it's really happy!' Pupils' welfare and personal, social and health needs are catered for extremely well because the school works exceptionally closely with parents and carers as well as outside agencies where needed.

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 extremely effective headteacher, supported well by governors and other leaders, provides a clear vision for how the school can move forward. She has been instrumental in maintaining the tremendously caring ethos of the school, commented on very positively by parents, carers and staff alike. There is a positive spirit and a real team atmosphere of 'can do' among the staff. They have risen well to the challenge of moving from an infant to a primary school, ensuring that outcomes for pupils are not compromised in any way. As part of the school's development planning, governors and leaders at all levels are involved in analysing the school's results and checking teaching to see where it is most effective and where improvements are needed. The headteacher is effectively developing these skills in key leaders to ensure they are increasingly rigorous in checking how well the school is doing. As a result, leaders have a clear understanding of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses. The work of the school's leaders and staff extends beyond the school, with leaders very effectively sharing their expertise with other schools, some in challenging situations.

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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 |
| 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 | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage grow quickly in confidence, becoming keen explorers and learners by the time they enter Year 1. Children entering the school this year did so with levels of skills and understanding in line with those expected for their age, though in previous years they have been below. They are making good and, at

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times, better progress, especially in those areas where their skills are weaker and are expected to enter Year 1 with above average attainment. The curriculum is adapted extremely effectively to engage and enthuse learners in all they do, with a well-balanced mixture of activities led by staff and those chosen by the children themselves. Much has been done since the last inspection to develop the outside area as part of the whole learning environment and staff have been particularly successful in creating such rich and stimulating surroundings. Teaching is outstanding and the children develop rapidly in all aspects of their personal and social development. Adults are skilled at moving on children's learning through the extremely good quality interventions they receive as they play. A group of children talked animatedly about how to remove seeds frozen in ice cubes from the water tray until they noticed the seeds' skin was looking strange. As a result of an adult's effective questioning, they realised it looked 'like mine does when I've been in water too long' and became scientists, excitedly observing the seeds through magnifying glasses, peeling them and then comparing them to germinating seeds they had previously planted. At every turn, the children's learning was made possible by the wealth of resources they could choose and the nurturing interventions of the adults. Staff work very well with parents and carers to ensure there are really good levels of communication and the children get off to a good start. Home-school books have been developed particularly well to give parents and carers a real understanding of the achievements of their children and how they can help their children's development through everyday activities. Led extremely effectively by the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, the whole team use assessment particularly well to promote learning and are able to demonstrate the good gains that children make in all areas of learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |

Views of parents and carers

The number of parental questionnaires received by the inspection team was particularly high, with almost all those sent out being returned. The vast majority of these were positive and most of the written comments expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. They commended the safe and caring attitude of the school, its support for pupils, the quality of teaching, how much their children enjoy school and their satisfaction with the help they received for their children's learning. Typical comments included: 'Wonderful school with really motivated, thoughtful and inspiring teachers', 'Ethelbert Road enables a child to blossom through their care, creative and thoughtful

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teaching and welcoming approach' and □The children really do feel the school is "theirs."

A very small minority of parents and carers reported concerns over how they were informed about the progress their child was making and how the school deals with disruptive behaviour. Inspection evidence showed that, while pupils do progress at different rates, progress overall was good and this information was regularly shared with parents and carers. While there are some isolated incidents of less acceptable behaviour, this is managed well and has not affected pupils' learning. Very few parents and carers recorded concerns about other issues, including the quantity of sport available, mixed age classes affecting the progress of pupils and an over- emphasis on religious studies. The inspection found no evidence to support these concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 65 | 78 | 16 | 19 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 73 | 88 | 9 | 11 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 55 | 66 | 24 | 29 | 4 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 60 | 72 | 20 | 24 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 68 | 82 | 14 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 59 | 71 | 29 | 24 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 56 | 67 | 22 | 27 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 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) | 50 | 60 | 24 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 54 | 65 | 25 | 30 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 55 | 66 | 22 | 27 | 4 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 47 | 57 | 33 | 40 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 60 | 72 | 21 | 25 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 67 | 81 | 15 | 18 | 1 | 1 | 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.



20 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ethelbert Road Primary School, Faversham, ME13 8SQ

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We were pleased to hear how tremendously you enjoy coming to school and that your teachers plan lots of interesting things for you to do and get involved in. You get on extremely well with one another and your behaviour around school is first-rate. You have an excellent understanding of how to be safe and lead a healthy lifestyle. We agree that there are lots of interesting visitors to your school and activities to get involved in. We understand why you think the adults do lots to help make you feel really safe and cared for.

Your school is good. The curriculum planned for you meets your needs. Teachers help you to make good progress in your work and some of you to do even better. The leaders in your school run it well. They know just what needs to be done to make your school better. In order to help you make even faster progress, we have asked the adults at your school to do two things.

- Make better use of assessment so that you are always challenged to do your best.
- Make sure you know just what to do next to improve your work through marking and targets.

You can help by always following the advice teachers give you on how to improve your work. Thank you for helping us with our work.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Marshall

Lead inspector

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