

30 June 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

Hautes Capelles Primary School States of Guernsey

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I visited your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children are learning and achieving and how well the school supports children to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including co-operative approaches to learning and the use of information and communications technology (ICT) to enhance children's experiences. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school is at improving children's education.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Across the school, children are involved in active, meaningful and motivating learning experiences. In all classes, children really enjoy learning in pairs and small cooperative groups, as well as individually. They listen very well to their teachers and show high levels of respect for each other. They have a good and improving knowledge about their strengths as learners and are involved in assessing aspects of their own learning. At the junior stages, children are able to ask questions of themselves, each other and their teachers when they discuss their learning. Younger children in Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 benefit from many high-quality opportunities to learn through investigation and play, including learning outdoors. Across the school, children have a say in what and how they learn. At the beginning of new topics children are encouraged to identify what they already know and to generate key questions they would like to find answers to. The school actively promotes and celebrates children's wider knowledge and interests. As a result, the school and individuals gain many prizes and awards. These include awards for art and design, a variety of sports and enterprise projects which are supported by local businesses. From the early stages, children use ICT confidently to demonstrate their learning. For example, children in Year 3 use tablets confidently to capture and share their learning on a walk around the coast of Guernsey.

In recent years the school has made steady progress in improving the quality of children's attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Although the school does not yet quite meet the Bailiwick average attainment figures for these areas of learning, staff are taking positive action to close this gap. During their first year in school in Reception class, almost all younger children make very good progress in

their learning and by the end of the year, almost all perform above the Bailiwick average on all aspects of attainment. By the end of Year 2, most children achieve the Bailiwick expectations of attaining L2b+ in reading, writing and mathematics. There is scope to now further increase the pace of children's learning as they move through Year 1 and into Year 2, in order that a higher percentage of children are attaining L2b+ by end of Year 2.

By the end of Year 6, most children achieve the Bailiwick expectations of attaining L4b+ in reading, writing and mathematics. In addition, around one third of children in Year 6 make accelerated progress from the end of Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2. This cohort of children have exceeded expectations by attaining L5b+ in reading and mathematics. There is scope for this cohort of more able children to now also attain equally highly in writing. Overall, the school does well to increase the progress of more able children and to support less able children to attain. Staff need to continue to use their assessment data to target more closely the attainment of the middle section of learners across the school.

In English language, almost all children express their views clearly and can support their opinions with confidence. Most can read fluently, with understanding and talk knowledgeably about books they have read. Children appreciate the improvements to the school library and use it well to support their learning. At all stages, children write well, across a wide range of relevant topics. Most children produce clear, well-structured writing of high quality. However, sometimes a slower pace of learning in class means that it takes children too long to complete writing tasks. In mathematics, children use their mathematical skills very effectively to solve problems. They use websites and real-life experiences to gather information. Children in Year 2 use tally marks to gather information for a traffic survey. They are confident in using this information to create different tables and charts. Across the school, children develop important skills for life, learning and work. At Year 6, a few children use their mental agility and their knowledge of information handling and money very well to run a stationery shop for their peers. The school should continue to provide real-life contexts for children to apply and consolidate their mathematical skills.

How well does the school support children to develop and learn?

Across the school, children benefit from very positive relationships with adults. Approaches to identifying, helping and monitoring children who need additional support or extra challenge are effective. Across classes, staff work well with each other and a range of partners to meet the varying needs of children. Learning support assistants work skilfully alongside teachers to help children make good progress in their learning. Well-planned tasks and activities provide the right support and level of difficulty for most learners in most classes. Teachers give clear explanations and use questioning very well to check children's understanding and challenge their thinking. Teachers set regular and appropriate homework tasks. Parents and children are enthusiastic about the range of motivating home learning challenges that have been introduced. There is scope for teachers to continue share their skills and expertise in using cooperative learning approaches. In a few lessons observed by Inspectors, the pace of learning during such activities was too slow and therefore did not support children's progress effectively enough. Where practice is best, staff differentiate learning very carefully to help meet children's varying needs. In these classes,

teachers' skilful use of cooperative learning strategies keeps the pace of learning brisk and provides carefully planned tasks and activities which support and challenge all children.

Staff across the school encourage children to have positive attitudes to learning and set high standards for behaviour. As a result, children behave very well and are highly supportive of each other. Across the school, Inspectors observed many examples of teaching that is highly motivational and engaging for all learners. In these classes, teachers are skilled at providing focused teaching and feedback for all groups of children. As a result of such highly effective teaching approaches, children across the school are developing a clear understanding of what they are good at and what they need to do to improve.

Staff have recently taken steps to revisit the vision and values of the curriculum, to ensure all children and staff work towards the same goals. Staff are committed to making learning exciting and memorable. An important focus within the curriculum is ensuring that children grow up with an understanding of the history and geography of Guernsey. As a result, Hautes Capelles Primary School provides a curriculum which offers high-quality, experiential learning where children and staff make the most of the local community as a focus for learning. Staff have created a yearly plan for each stage to ensure there is a balance of history, geography and science topics taught. The school uses a variety of resources and programmes to help children build on prior learning in different curricular areas. During the validation visit, Inspectors identified that children were receiving a coherent range of learning experiences in science and ICT. As the States of Guernsey Education Department takes forward their plans to refresh the primary curriculum in the next academic year, staff in Hautes Capelles Primary School should use this opportunity to create consistent frameworks for learning all curricular areas. This will ensure that children develop a broad range of skills and help to build up their knowledge, understanding and skills consistently well as they progress through the school.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

Children have many opportunities to have a say in how to improve their school. They contribute actively to improving the school environment through the School Council. Children are enthusiastic helpers and successfully take on a range of responsibilities in class, the playground and around the school. The school successfully engages parents in the life of the school. In turn, parents and grandparents support the school particularly well through the work of the Parent Teacher Association, fundraising, attending school events and by helping in class, at clubs and on outings and community events. Workshops and information sessions, for example about mathematics and growth mind-sets, are very well attended and appreciated by parents. The school has begun to take an active approach in seeking parents' views. Parents' comments have helped to shape the improved systems for communicating information about events and school life. The pre-validation visit questionnaire results show that almost all parents are very happy overall with their children's experiences in school. Around a quarter of parents who responded to the validation visit questionnaire would like more information across the school year about how well their children are doing in their learning. They would also like more guidance around the

increased expectations of teachers as their children move through the stages of the school.

All staff contribute very well to the development and implementation of the school's priorities for improvement. Staff are highly-reflective practitioners and committed to bringing about improvement. They take on willingly responsibility for developing aspects of the curriculum and school life. They are very open to new ideas, engage in professional dialogue and are keen to share practice with each other. Staff use self-evaluation very effectively to review their work and monitor children's progress.

The headteacher has sound working relationships across the school community and is respected by staff, children and parents alike. She is very knowledgeable, extremely well organised and has a clear focus on securing improvements for children. The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. Through their commitment to working closely together, the senior leadership team is having a positive impact in ensuring there is a strong focus on self-evaluation and continuous improvement across the whole staff team. In addition, phase leaders and subject leaders also make valuable contributions to leading improvements across the school.

Overall, the highly effective leadership of promoted staff and strong approaches to self-evaluation are leading to steadily improving outcomes for children across the school.

This validation visit found the following key strengths.

- Articulate and thoughtful children who are motivated by high-quality learning experiences.
- The extensive range of ways that children can achieve success.
- Positive partnerships with parents, professionals and the local community.
- The commitment of all staff to providing a caring, inclusive and vibrant environment for learning.
- The highly effective leadership of the headteacher and promoted staff in securing improvements through self-evaluation.

We discussed with staff and the Education Department how they might continue to improve the school. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to raise attainment by increasing the pace of learning in some classes, and by developing curriculum frameworks that ensure progression and coherence in learning.

Here are the evaluations for Hautes Capelles Primary School.

Improvements in performance	very good
Learners' experiences	very good
Teaching for effective learning	very good
Meeting learning needs	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good
Leadership of improvement and change	very good

What happens at the end of the validation?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this validation visit. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, the Education Department will inform parents about the school's progress.

Lesley A Johnstone
HM Inspector

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Appendix 1

<p>Excellent</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Outstanding or sector leading An evaluation of excellent applies to provision which is sector leading. Pupils' experiences and achievements are of a very high quality. An evaluation of excellent represents an outstanding standard of provision which exemplifies very best practice and is worth disseminating beyond the school. It implies that very high levels of performance are sustainable and will be maintained.</p>
<p>Very good</p> <p>5</p>	<p>Major strengths An evaluation of very good applies to provision characterised by major strengths. There are very few areas for improvement and any that do exist do not significantly diminish pupils' experiences. Whilst an evaluation of very good represents a high standard of provision, it is a standard that should be achievable by all. It implies that it is fully appropriate to continue to make provision without significant adjustment. However, there is an expectation that the school will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.</p>
<p>Good</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Important strengths with areas for improvement An evaluation of good applies to provision characterised by important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh any areas for improvement. An evaluation of good represents a standard of provision in which the strengths have a significantly positive impact. However, the quality of pupils' experiences is diminished in some way by aspects in which improvement is required. It implies that the school should seek to improve further the areas of important strength, but take action to address the areas for improvement.</p>
<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Strengths just outweigh weaknesses An evaluation of satisfactory applies to provision characterised by strengths which just outweigh weaknesses. An evaluation of satisfactory indicates that pupils have access to a basic level of provision. It represents a standard where the strengths have a positive impact on pupils' experiences. However, while the weaknesses are not important enough to have a substantially adverse impact, they do constrain the overall quality of pupils' experiences. It implies that the school should take action to address areas of weakness by building on its strengths.</p>
<p>Weak</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Important weaknesses An evaluation of weak applies to provision which has some strengths, but where there are important weaknesses. In general, an evaluation of weak may be arrived at in a number of circumstances. While there may be some strength, important weaknesses will, either individually or collectively, be sufficient to diminish pupils' experiences in substantial ways. It implies the need for prompt, structured and planned action on the part of the school.</p>
<p>Unsatisfactory</p> <p>1</p>	<p>An evaluation of unsatisfactory applies when there are major weaknesses in provision requiring immediate remedial action. Pupils' experiences are at risk in significant respects. In almost all cases, staff responsible for provision evaluated as unsatisfactory will require support from senior managers in planning and carrying out the necessary actions to effect improvement. This may involve working alongside other staff or agencies in or beyond the school.</p>

Validation report: Hautes Capelles Primary School

Validation dates: w/c 15 June 2015

Managing Inspector: Lesley Johnstone

Type of school: primary

Age range of learners: 4 - 11

Gender of learners: mixed

Number on roll: 517

Introduction

The validation visit was carried out by a team of four HM Inspectors, who spent three days in the school observing lessons, talking with learners and looking at their work, engaging in discussions with staff and parents, looking at school records and other documentation, and scrutinising responses to the pre-validation visit questionnaires.

The context of the school

Hautes Capelles Primary School is a modern and attractive primary school serving the parishes of St Sampson's and Vale. The school is three form entry, with 21 classes in total. At the time of the validation visit, the school roll was 517. Children in Year 6 and pre-school aged children were taking part in transition activities during the time of the visit.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Learners' experiences

Staff throughout Hautes Capelles Primary School work very hard to make learning enjoyable for children. As a result, children are really motivated by their lessons and are keen to learn. In all classes, teachers have embraced approaches to cooperative learning to help make lessons more active and to help engage children in their learning. Children respond very well to these approaches and are developing their skills in working together in groups and sharing their learning. Teachers feel that children's confidence in speaking in groups and discussing their ideas has improved significantly through working together in cooperative learning groups. Teachers share the aims of lessons very well with children. In the best lessons, they encourage children to reflect on what successful learning looks like. Across the school, staff make very good use of the outdoors, including the wider local environment, to make learning exciting. For example, children in Year 3 take part in a walk around the coast of Guernsey to learn in depth about the history of the island. Younger children develop their understanding of how things grow through their gardening club and by cultivating plants to sell at the school's Summer Fayre.

Across the school, children have a say in what and how they learn. At the beginning of new topics children are encouraged to identify what they already know and to generate key questions they would like to find answers to. Staff working with younger children have worked hard to improve learning through investigation and play. As a result, children are encouraged to use resources creatively and to lead their own play experiences. For example, in the Reception classes, children use wooden blocks to make their own car ferry. In Year 1, children enjoy designing and building their own dens. Across the phases of the school, children are becoming more aware of how they can improve their own work and move from one level to the next. They would benefit from now being involved directly in setting targets for their own learning, across different areas of the curriculum.

Many children develop their leadership skills very well by representing their class on the School Council, where they have a say in the running of the school. For example, they help to develop the wide range of clubs in the school and campaign for a wide range of toys to be provided for outdoor play. A few children at Year 6 organise and run a stationery shop for other children. This provides a real-life context for them to learn about enterprise and budgeting. Older children can apply to be reading buddies for younger children, or to be play leaders who encourage and promote different games in the playground. A few children themselves lead extra-curricular clubs, such as the popular knitting club, to which forty-three children signed up to take part. A wide range of other clubs take place to meet children's interests, such as Guernsey French, computer coding, chess and puzzles.

Improvements in performance

Overall, children achieve very widely and very well across Hautes Capelles Primary School. They are rightly very proud of their successes. At assemblies each week, children's individual successes are celebrated. The school demonstrates an extensive range of activities and events where children experience success, both in school and

in the wider community. Children from Hautes Capelles Primary School frequently do very well in, and often win local competitions. Individual children have won significant local competitions and prizes for their talents in art and design. Many children achieve sporting success within their school community and across the Bailiwick. Recent examples of their achievements include the girls' and boys' football teams and the netball team, who are each the island team champions for 2015.

Children across the school raise significant amounts of money for charity in motivating and meaningful ways. For example, the school raised funds for a cancer charity by holding their own extremely popular Bake Off challenge. Children in Key Stage 1 raise money for the Tumaini Fund which supports international aid work in Tanzania. The school has particularly good approaches for children to learn about the history and heritage of Guernsey. Innovative home-learning tasks such as the Hidden Histories and photography challenges encourage children to connect meaningfully with Guernsey's traditions and landscape. Children learn about and experience history in realistic and memorable ways, for example through the re-enactment of a home-coming picnic for evacuated children and teachers after the liberation of Guernsey.

Over the last four years, the school has made steady progress overall, in raising children's attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Although the school does not yet quite meet the Bailiwick average attainment figures for these areas of learning, staff are taking positive action to close this gap. During their first year in the Reception class, almost all younger children make very good progress in their learning and by the end of the year, almost all perform above the Bailiwick average on all aspects of attainment. At Key Stage 1, by the end of Year 2, most children achieve the Bailiwick expectations of attaining L2b+ in reading, writing and mathematics. There is scope to now further increase the pace of children's learning as they move through Year 1 and into Year 2, in order that a higher percentage of children are attaining L2b+ by end of Year 2.

At Key Stage 2, by the end of Year 6, most children achieve the Bailiwick expectations of attaining L4b+ in reading, writing and mathematics. In addition, around one third of children in Year 6 make accelerated progress from the end of Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2. This cohort of children have exceeded expectations by attaining L5b+ in reading and mathematics. There is scope for this cohort of more able children to now also attain equally highly in writing. Staff's highly effective use of data to track children's learning, alongside effective learning and teaching approaches and targeted support for individuals and groups of learners, has increased the percentage of children making two levels of progress each year.

Overall, the school does well to increase the attainment of more able children and to support less able children to attain. Staff now need to continue to use their data to target more closely the attainment of the middle section of learners across the school. To complement the school's rigorous approaches to tracking children's attainment and progress in learning, staff could now also develop systems to track the wider achievements and participation levels of all children, such as in extra-curricular activities, learning in their own time and in the home challenge activities. Staff should use this information to encourage, facilitate and include more vulnerable children to achieve widely, in order to ensure that no child misses out.

Across the school, almost all children listen and speak with confidence. They are articulate and enjoy talking about their learning, the school, and their achievements in the community. Children collaborate very well in small groups when discussing learning activities. For example, children in Year 2 listen really well to each other when collecting adjectives to write an alliterative list for a magical, medicinal potion. In Year 5, children debate complex and sensitive topics in a mature and well-reasoned way, for example when discussing the global issue of child slavery. Across all stages children write well for a variety of purposes and most are making good and improving progress in this area. Staff provide relevant and motivating opportunities to write for different audiences and for different purposes. In the Reception classes, children write labels and stories and they know how to use capital letters well to support their writing. Children in Year 1 collaborate to write and produce their own non-fiction book about castles, which they go on to share with children in the Reception classes. As children progress through the school, almost all children write consistently at an appropriate length, including extended pieces. By Year 6, children are able to independently and without adult support, create a wide range of texts of different kinds. For example, they write figurative poetry and letters to Prince Charles about the topic of children's rights. The school has taken positive steps to ensure children are motivated in reading. There has been a focus in promoting the reading skills of boys. In addition to core reading texts which teachers use to support the development of reading skills across all stages, the school has identified a wider range of texts to offer children broad and challenging reading opportunities in school and for taking home. This is well supported by parents, the school's library service and in the improvements overall to the school library area. As planned, the school should now continue to improve further children's attainment in writing, including raising teachers' expectations of how much writing children can achieve during the course of a lesson. A few parents would like clearer information on the school's approaches to spelling and phonics, in order that they can best support their children at home.

Across the school, most children are making strong progress in mathematics. Overall, children really enjoy mathematics. They tell us that they appreciate the active and varied approaches that teachers use to introduce and consolidate different aspects of their learning, including mental calculations. Across the school, children are good at problem-solving in mathematical challenges and activities. In Year 1, most children quickly identify patterns in sequences of numbers and can confidently count on and back in tens. Children in Year 2 are becoming confident in explaining their thinking and approaches to tackling their numeracy work. In Year 6, children can explain Leonardo Da Vinci's thinking that underpins the Vitruvian man. Through teachers' skilful questioning, children make a direct correlation with mathematical formula and the proportional rules of a square. Teachers are increasing the opportunities for children to learn mathematics outdoors, and this contributes to children's sense of achievement and enjoyment. For example, children in Year 2 enjoyed the opportunity to apply their learning outdoors by conducting a traffic survey and creating graphs from the data they collected. Staff should continue to use information and communications technology (ICT) to support children's learning in mathematics. For example, children would benefit from learning to create spreadsheets in order to produce graphs and tables electronically, as well as draw them by hand. Staff should keep under review the effectiveness of 'setting' children in groups for teaching in mathematics across the Key Stage 2 phase, in order that all children make steady progress in their learning.

The school's improvement planning processes have a clear and measurable impact on learners' experiences and on the life of the school. The priorities in the current improvement plan are appropriate, very well-judged and based on robust self-evaluation. Improvement plan priorities this session are leading to improvements in the use of technology to enhance learning and to improve children's performance in writing, particularly the attainment of boys. The school should continue to improve children's attainment in this area, as this improvement target has not yet been fully met.

How well does the school support children to develop and learn?

Teaching for effective learning

Across the school, children benefit from very positive relationships with staff. Children feel that their responses are valued and that teachers listen to their views. Class discussions are well organised by teachers, with rules of engagement that are clearly understood by all. As a result, there is a very positive and supportive climate for learning in classes, with children confident in asking questions of each other and of their teachers. Staff across the school encourage children to have positive attitudes to learning and set high standards for behaviour. As a result, children behave very well and are highly supportive of each other. Children enjoy and participate enthusiastically in their learning. Across the school, Inspectors observed examples of teaching that are highly motivational and engaging for all learners. In these classes, teachers are skilled at providing focused teaching and feedback for small groups of children. These groups are rotated over a period of time, thus ensuring that all children benefit from high quality and tailored input led by the teacher. As a result of this highly effective teaching approach, children in these classes have a clear understanding of what they are good at and what they need to do to improve.

Across the school, teachers set appropriate targets for children's learning in literacy and numeracy. In most classes, teachers build well on children's prior knowledge and recap on learning to ensure next steps for children are identified and addressed. Children enjoy opportunities to evaluate their own learning and in the best examples, teachers routinely moderate children's assessment of their own progress. Across the school, staff are good at sharing the purposes of lessons with children. In a few classes, Inspectors observed teachers also sharing differentiated success criteria very well within lessons. This approach sets out very clearly the expectations of what different groups of children need to do to improve. Overall, most teachers use timed activities well to ensure there is a suitably brisk pace of learning in classes. For example, children needing additional help to complete writing tasks are well supported by staff who provide additional support, encouragement and explanation. There is scope for staff to now share the very best practice in learning and teaching more widely across the phases of the school.

Staff use ICT very well to support learning. At Key Stage 2, children use tablets with confidence and work very well in pairs to research information online. Teachers' very good use of technology enables children across all three Year 5 classes to collaborate together on a project on children's rights. Children's ideas are displayed on the interactive whiteboards in classes to stimulate discussion in order to create a letter seeking the abolishment of child labour. Children in Years 3, 4 and 5 benefitted from

taking part in a motivating project, led by an Education Department ICT teacher, supported by the island's school library service, which links ICT and literacy learning. As a result, children in these classes use ICT really well to stimulate their ideas and creativity for story-writing.

Meeting learning needs

Staff plan a variety of interesting and motivating activities and tasks which meet most children's needs. Staff in the Reception classes use an impressive range of practical resources which support effectively children's learning and provide a broad range of experiences and challenges. At Years 1 and 2, children benefit from planned use of their shared open area, which supports their learning and progress well through play and investigation. Across the school, all staff work hard to try to meet the needs of learners. Where practice is best, staff differentiate learning very carefully to help meet children's varying needs. In these classes, teachers' skilful use of cooperative learning strategies keep the pace of learning brisk and provides careful differentiation to support and challenge all children. Teachers' use of 'setting', for example in mathematics, is helping to meet the needs of more able children. Short-term focus groups are arranged in order to provide targeted support or challenge for small groups of children, usually in aspects of literacy or numeracy. There is scope to now improve the pace of learning in some classes and overall, across the school day. When teachers jointly plan lessons across the same year group, care needs to be taken to ensure that individual children's needs are being effectively met. During the validation visit, Inspectors observed some variation across lessons at the same year stage. Staff in Reception classes and at the Key Stage 1 phase should keep under review the length of time they expect young children to sit on the floor during whole class lessons. At times, these sessions are too long and children quietly disengage from their learning. There is scope for teachers to continue to share their skills and expertise in using cooperative learning sessions. In a few lessons observed, the pace of learning during cooperative learning activities was too slow and therefore did not support children's progress effectively enough. Staff could review how time is used over the course of the school day and week to further support and improve the pace of learning. For example, staff could look at the way the school day is organised to maximise the available time for learning, such as the amount of time spent at assemblies and the length of lunchtime and afternoon breaks.

The school has effective systems in place to keep children safe, and to identify and support children who need extra help with their learning. At the start of each term, school staff take an active part in multi-agency planning meetings to identify the types of support which particular children need. Learning support assistants (LSAs) provide valuable help to children in classes. They are carefully deployed in order to best meet the needs of individuals and groups of children across the school. School staff work very well with a range of professionals in order to meet children's needs. This includes occupational therapists, children's physiotherapists, speech and language specialists, educational welfare and mental health professionals and communication and autism teachers. Children benefit from the Every Child Our Future initiative which supports children's progress in reading. Literacy intervention teachers also provide valuable guidance and advice to staff to better meet children's needs. Staff from the Les Voies Inclusion Service offer helpful support and guidance for children who have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.

The school uses data about children's attainment very well to track the progress of particular groups of learners, including vulnerable children. For example, from the school's own data, staff have taken action to improve boys' enjoyment and achievement in reading. Based on continual review of children's progress, data is also used well to identify children who would benefit from being in focus groups. Staff's keen awareness of any pastoral issues also helps to inform support for children. For example, a Glitter Girls group was established to help ease anxiety issues for a group of older girls. This has led to improved attendance for this group of learners. The school's senior management team are trained as child protection officers. All staff are confident about the school's approaches to keeping children safe. The school uses links with a range of agencies to help them develop further children's own awareness of how to keep safe, including when out and about in the community. This includes first aid training for all year groups and links with fire brigade and police.

The use of 'fragile books' ensure that staff who need to know, are aware of key pastoral issues for individual children. Almost all children say they can share worries and concerns with a trusted adult. Some classes also make worry boxes available for children to post comments and concerns. The school uses different strategies to help children develop an understanding of factors which may have a negative impact on their wellbeing. For example, any incidents of bullying or a lack of regard or respect for other children are highlighted, discussed and where appropriate, recorded. The school also records where actions are taken to address incidents of bullying and takes a pro-active approach by including there is a focus on bullying as part of curricular activities.

Where practice supports children best, staff use homework very well to support children's learning. Innovative ways in which home learning challenges have been taken forward are enabling families to take part in and learn more about their children's education. The exhibitions following these challenges enable children to showcase their learning to the important adults in their lives. The school uses many successful approaches to build positive relationships with parents, who in turn engage very well with the school in a range of ways. There is very high attendance at parents' evenings. Many parents and grandparents support the school well through being helpers in classes and also through taking part in school clubs. Other parents undertake appropriate security checks to support children's reading in school. Parents of younger children attending the School Readiness Programme speak positively about the benefits they are seeing at home in terms of their own relationship with their children, but also about the added value for their children. Parents are working very well to support the school to improve the outdoor learning environment to enable children to have much better use of the space all year round. Parent Teacher Association (PTA) events are very well supported. The PTA supports the school very well and plays a key role in fundraising through leading and taking forward various activities, such as selling tea towels to help raise funds for the school and other worthy causes. The school has started to increase parents' knowledge and understanding further through sharing key policies and yearly targets for their children. The pre-validation visit questionnaire results show that almost all parents are very happy, overall, with their children's experiences in school. Parents are pleased that the school has taken steps to improve aspects of communication. They like the weekly newsletters and appreciate the system of text-alerts which keeps them up to date with important events. Around a quarter of parents who responded to the questionnaire

would like more information across the school year about how well their children are doing in their learning. They would also like more guidance around the increased expectations of teachers as their children move through the stages of the school. Parents appreciate the helpful information sessions run by staff, for example on teaching approaches in mathematics and growth mind-sets. They would like more sessions like this to help them to support their children at home in other areas of learning, such as spelling and phonics.

Curriculum

The school has recently taken positive steps to revisit their vision and values of the curriculum, to ensure all children and staff work towards the same goals. Staff are committed to making learning exciting and memorable. As a result, there is clear evidence of a curriculum which offers high-quality, experiential learning where children and staff make the most of the local community as a focus for learning. Good use is made of visitors to the school to enhance the curriculum. For example, senior citizens visit classes to give first-hand accounts of the German occupation and evacuation. The local museums support learning well by providing artefacts and clothes from particular eras which helps to enhance children's learning. Valuable links are made with the local community and local businesses. For example staff, children and parents took part in the island celebrations of the 70th anniversary of Liberation Day by making the Capelles Remembers float for the cavalcade.

An important focus of the school's curriculum is ensuring that children grow up with an understanding of the history and geography of the island. During the week of the validation visit, children in Year 3 took part in walks around Guernsey to identify key historical sites across the island. Children in Year 1 talked enthusiastically about their recent visit to Castle Cornet. Staff have created a yearly plan for each stage to ensure there is a balance of history, geography and science topics taught. Staff try hard to make links in learning between subjects during lessons. The school makes appropriate efforts to build up responsibility and independence as children move through the school. For example, children in Year 3 enjoy a sleepover in school when they build a Roman camp as part of their topic. Children in Year 5 spend two nights camping on Herm and then go on to benefit from a week-long outdoor education residential trip to Weymouth in Year 6. Children across the school are clear about the benefits of healthy eating and exercise. They receive regular physical education lessons and staff make good use of the outdoors to enhance their learning. There is a very good range of sporting after school and lunch-time clubs and the uptake of these is high.

Over the last few years, the headteacher and staff have focused on developing a shared understanding of learning and standards in literacy and numeracy. The school has invested heavily in training staff to deliver cooperative learning approaches to ensure that the curriculum is delivered in ways that engage children fully in their learning. The school uses of a variety of resources and programmes, from a range of sources, some devised in-school, to help children build on prior learning in different curricular areas. During the validation visit, Inspectors identified that children were receiving a coherent range of learning experiences in science and ICT. As the States of Guernsey Education Department takes forward their plans to refresh the primary curriculum in the next academic year, staff in Hautes Capelles Primary School should

use this opportunity to create consistent frameworks for all curricular areas, through which to build on children's prior learning as they move through the school. This would help staff to ensure that children have a broad range of skills and help to build up their knowledge, understanding and skills progressively and consistently over time.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

Improvement through self-evaluation

There is a strong ethos of continuous improvement across the school. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, children and their parents are involved in different ways in improving the life and work of the school. Everyone associated with Hautes Capelles Primary School is rightly very proud of the school and committed to maintaining a high profile in the community. The commitment and dedication of all staff supports the school's vision to deliver high-quality, memorable learning experiences for children. Professional learning and development opportunities for staff are very well judged. They support an appropriate blend of local and school priorities for improvement, whilst developing the skills of individual staff. As a result, staff feel empowered to lead learning within their own classes and across the wider life of the school. The impact of staff professional reading groups is leading to important developments in developing new teaching approaches, such as the introduction of growth mind-sets,

Promoted staff carry out a comprehensive programme of monitoring activities which provides an accurate and focused view of the school's strengths and areas for further development. This includes continuously tracking the progress of each individual learner. Teachers use a range of assessments to measure children's progress. They work very effectively in phase teams within the school to discuss and plan together for children's learning. Prompt and appropriate action is taken and recorded when any area for concern is highlighted through this process. At Years 2 and 6, teachers participate in a rigorous process of local and external moderation to check that their assessments are in line with Bailiwick and national standards. The school has identified that all teachers would benefit from engaging in similar moderation exercises.

The school improvement plan and annual report on standards are of high quality, detailed, evaluative and based on robust evidence. There is sound evidence within the school of the links between self-evaluation and improvement. This includes the successful approaches to embedding ICT across learning and in continuing to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy. Staff are taking positive steps to listen to the views of parents and children and act on any identified areas for improvement. Overall, parents are highly supportive of the work of the school. They are involved in the self-evaluation of the school in a number of ways including through questionnaires, short surveys at school events and through the work of the PTA. As a result of the school's own questionnaire issued to parents earlier in 2015, the school has taken action to improve how it communicates school events and key information. The school should continue to develop approaches to seeking the views of stakeholders, including the many professional and community partners who add value to school life.

Leadership of improvement and change

The headteacher is highly effective and clearly committed to improving outcomes for all children. She has managed the pace of change extremely well. There is evidence of the positive impact of her leadership in the quality of learning and teaching observed across the school and in the steady progress made, year on year, in improving attainment. The headteacher is ably supported by a deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. As a senior leadership team they work very well together supporting and challenging staff to achieve the school improvement priorities. The senior leaders seek feedback from staff about changes are made. They use this information very well to continue to improve and raise standards.

Phase leaders and subject leaders make valuable contributions to leading improvements across the school. Phase leaders take a lead role across two year groups and provide helpful leadership and direction for teachers and LSAs. They analyse data and provide feedback to the senior leadership team about progress within each year group and across the phase. The leadership from phase leaders and subject leaders is helping to ensure there is, overall, consistency in practice across year groups. Staff work very well together and reflect on their practice with high levels of accuracy. The school has plans to develop the leadership roles of staff further, for example by extending the role of the phase leaders as performance managers, and in the creation of the new post of curriculum leader, who will take forward this key island-wide priority.

Staff recognise that embracing creativity and innovation is an important part of developing life skills for children and increase their engagement in learning. Staff are developing ways to embed this in their practice and there are examples of effective use of ICT to achieve this aim. Staff work very well collaboratively to evaluate their changes to learning and teaching and agree the way forward. In addition, staff are developing an understanding of growth mind-sets to recognise that ability and achievement are not pre-determined. This is helping teachers become more solution-focused in planning to meet the needs of all learners.

Summary

Capacity for improvement

The school has worked hard to fully address the main points for action since their last validation visit. As a result of a very effective project led by the deputy headteacher, the school is now data rich, and teachers' use of this data to improve children's learning is much more robust. In addition, the school's clear focus on achieving consistently high standards in learning and teaching across the school is having a positive impact on children and teachers alike. As a result of the highly-effective leadership and robust approaches to self-evaluation, we are confident the school has the capacity for continuous improvement.

This validation visit found the following key strengths.

- Articulate and thoughtful children who are motivated by high-quality learning experiences.
- The extensive range of ways that children can achieve success.
- Positive partnerships with parents, professionals and the local community.
- The commitment of all staff to providing a caring, inclusive and vibrant environment for learning.
- The highly effective leadership of the headteacher and promoted staff in securing improvements through self-evaluation.

We discussed with staff and the Education Department how they might continue to improve the school. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to raise attainment by increasing the pace of learning in some classes, and by developing curriculum frameworks that ensure progression and coherence in learning.

Here are the evaluations for Hautes Capelles Primary School.

Improvements in performance	very good
Learners' experiences	very good
Teaching for effective learning	very good
Meeting learning needs	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good
Leadership of improvement and change	very good

What happens at the end of the validation?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this validation. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, the Education Department will inform parents about the school's progress.

Lesley A Johnstone
HM Inspector

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If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact us by telephone on 0141 282 5000, or e-mail: complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us addressing your letter to the Complaints Manager, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston EH54 6GA.

Appendix 1

<p>Excellent</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Outstanding or sector leading</p> <p>An evaluation of excellent applies to provision which is sector leading. Pupils' experiences and achievements are of a very high quality. An evaluation of excellent represents an outstanding standard of provision which exemplifies very best practice and is worth disseminating beyond the school. It implies that very high levels of performance are sustainable and will be maintained.</p>
<p>Very good</p> <p>5</p>	<p>Major strengths</p> <p>An evaluation of very good applies to provision characterised by major strengths. There are very few areas for improvement and any that do exist do not significantly diminish pupils' experiences. Whilst an evaluation of very good represents a high standard of provision, it is a standard that should be achievable by all. It implies that it is fully appropriate to continue to make provision without significant adjustment. However, there is an expectation that the school will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.</p>
<p>Good</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Important strengths with areas for improvement</p> <p>An evaluation of good applies to provision characterised by important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh any areas for improvement. An evaluation of good represents a standard of provision in which the strengths have a significantly positive impact. However, the quality of pupils' experiences is diminished in some way by aspects in which improvement is required. It implies that the school should seek to improve further the areas of important strength, but take action to address the areas for improvement.</p>
<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Strengths just outweigh weaknesses</p> <p>An evaluation of satisfactory applies to provision characterised by strengths which just outweigh weaknesses. An evaluation of satisfactory indicates that pupils have access to a basic level of provision. It represents a standard where the strengths have a positive impact on pupils' experiences. However, while the weaknesses are not important enough to have a substantially adverse impact, they do constrain the overall quality of pupils' experiences. It implies that the school should take action to address areas of weakness by building on its strengths.</p>
<p>Weak</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Important weaknesses</p> <p>An evaluation of weak applies to provision which has some strengths, but where there are important weaknesses. In general, an evaluation of weak may be arrived at in a number of circumstances. While there may be some strength, important weaknesses will, either individually or collectively, be sufficient to diminish pupils' experiences in substantial ways. It implies the need for prompt, structured and planned action on the part of the school.</p>
<p>Unsatisfactory</p> <p>1</p>	<p>An evaluation of unsatisfactory applies when there are major weaknesses in provision requiring immediate remedial action. Pupils' experiences are at risk in significant respects. In almost all cases, staff responsible for provision evaluated as unsatisfactory will require support from senior managers in planning and carrying out the necessary actions to effect improvement. This may involve working alongside other staff or agencies in or beyond the school.</p>