

Etchingham Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	114502
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	378868
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2012
Lead inspector	Jackie Krafft HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Geoff Lucas
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Williams
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jackie Krafft

Her Majesty's Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed eight lessons taught by all four of the school's class teachers. Almost all of the lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. A class assembly and small group support were also visited. Meetings were held with Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, staff and pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, listened to pupils read, looked at pupils' books, the school's pupil-tracking information and development plan, examples of the school's monitoring and a range of other documentation. The inspector analysed questionnaire responses from 50 pupils in Key Stage 2, 52 parents and carers and 14 staff.

Information about the school

Etchingham is a smaller than average primary school. The number of pupils at the school has fallen over the past few years and the proportion joining or leaving at different times has increased. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. There has been an increase since the previous inspection in the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. It is slightly above the national average. The most prevalent needs are behaviour, emotional and moderate learning difficulties. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are taught in three classes, each with two year groups. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a separate class. The school has received Healthy School, Gold Sportsmark and Play Leaders awards. There have been a number of staff changes since the previous inspection. The deputy headteacher became the substantive headteacher in September 2010 and the executive headteacher of another small, local primary school at the same time. The two schools work in partnership and have separate governing bodies. Etchingham meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Pupils enjoy their lessons and have positive attitudes to learning. They benefit from an exciting curriculum and good teaching so achieve well. It is not outstanding because good progress has not yet been sustained over time throughout the school. Teaching and learning are good but not as consistent in the Reception class as in other year groups.
- Pupils make good progress and their attainment in mathematics and reading is above average by the end of Year 6. Decisive steps have been taken to address weaknesses in writing which has improved and is now good. Pupils’ speaking and listening skills are strong. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make equally good progress as their peers because their individual needs are understood and met well.
- Good teaching is underpinned by accurate assessments, detailed planning, high expectations and good subject knowledge. Challenging questions, opportunities for pupils to talk together and useful feedback maintain a brisk pace of learning so pupils achieve well. Good progress is not consistent in the Reception class, particularly when children choose their own activities, because clear routines are not established to move their learning on quickly.
- Strengths in behaviour and safety identified at the previous inspection have been sustained and are good. Pupils are polite, considerate and motivated. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is well developed and contributes to the positive ethos of the school. Pupils attend regularly, feel safe and participate in all aspects of school life enthusiastically.
- Leaders are sharply focused on securing good teaching and learning and have managed teachers’ performance effectively to achieve this. Robust monitoring and tracking inform a detailed development plan. Priorities are pertinent but some lack quantifiable targets, milestones and success measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is as consistently good as in the rest of the school, by:

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- providing a clear learning focus for activities that children choose themselves
- establishing routines to manage how children choose these activities and use their time on each of them effectively
- ensuring that the children understand these routines and expectations clearly
- increasing the pace of learning in lessons so that children make consistently good progress.
- Sharpen the school development plan to help achieve excellence by including:
 - specific, quantifiable targets and success measures for each priority
 - clear milestones so that senior leaders and governors can measure precisely the progress being made toward targets through the year.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Typically, children join the Reception class with the skills and knowledge expected for their age. They play together well and sustain good levels of concentration, seen for example when programming a toy to move in specific directions. They enjoy practical tasks, such as constructing houses from mud, which help develop their confidence and communication skills. Most reach or exceed the learning and development goals expected by the time they enter Year 1 so are ready for their next stage of learning. However, the progress that children make in different lessons in Reception is inconsistent because they are not always moved on quickly enough to their next steps. This is particularly so when they choose activities for themselves because routines are not established to guide their choices, structure how they use their time and ensure the learning focus is clear. In these lessons children make satisfactory rather than good progress.

As pupils progress through the school they achieve well and their attainment in English and mathematics is generally above average by the end of Year 6. Attainment and progress in mathematics are consistently strong across the school and pupils acquire good early reading skills by the end of Key Stage 1 through effective daily teaching. They enjoy a wide variety of texts and most are fluent, competent readers by the end of Year 6. Attainment and progress in writing have been more variable and the school's key priority for improvement. Concerted actions have had a positive impact. The quality of pupils' writing has improved and is good. Pupils take pride in presenting their work well and their writing reflects empathy and sensitivity to the world around them, seen for example in their response to the study of poetry in Key Stage 2.

The school's own records, work seen in books and the learning observed in lessons show that all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make equally good progress from their varied starting points. This is because the school tracks their progress carefully and matches good teaching, a

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relevant curriculum and high-quality resources to pupils' diverse needs and interests well. Specialist equipment, such as sloped writing boards and voice recorders, are used effectively so that pupils with specific needs participate fully in lessons and make good learning gains. Pupils who are not making the progress expected to meet their challenging targets are given timely additional support and guidance to help them catch up. Targets are extended for those who meet them early to provide additional challenge.

In their responses to the inspection questionnaire, all pupils say that they learn a lot. This was clear to see in lessons, their books and in the class assembly confidently presented to parents and carers by Key Stage 1 pupils. Pupils are challenged effectively in lessons and achieve well, although a few parents and carers feel that their children could be challenged further. The very large majority justifiably say their children are making good progress and are being helped to develop their reading, writing, mathematical and communication skills well.

Quality of teaching

Almost all pupils and most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agree with the inspection findings that teaching is good. Teachers have a thorough understanding of the different needs and interests of their pupils. Using their good subject knowledge, they skilfully plan interesting lessons which capture pupils' interest and build on their previous learning. Meaningful activities are well matched to pupils' different abilities. Good adult questioning provides the right balance of support and challenge to move learning on at a good pace consistently in Key Stages 1 and 2. Consequently, pupils are excited by their learning, work productively and make good progress. One parent wrote, 'My child is inspired and enthused to learn,' and another, 'Teaching is always tailored to the ability of the child.' These comments capture well what was observed in almost all lessons, although less consistently in the Reception class.

Teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to develop their communication skills by talking together, using drama and preparing presentations. This builds their confidence and widens their vocabulary which is having a positive impact on improving the quality of their writing. Two pupils, for example, made a well-articulated presentation to governors about how they learn best and what has helped them to improve.

Where teaching is most effective pupils' learning is constantly monitored during lessons so that any misconceptions are identified and corrected quickly. Ongoing feedback and detailed, constructive marking comments ensure that pupils understand how well they are doing and precisely what they need to do to improve. Pupils were observed spontaneously referring to their target cards in lessons as a prompt when checking their work. They say that they find this helpful. Others explained how 'teachers always give us ideas to get things stuck in our heads'.

Teachers make good use of varied resources such as information and communication

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technology (ICT), music, film and pictures to motivate pupils and bring learning to life. In a literacy lesson, pictures and music were used successfully to evoke emotions and help pupils to reflect on the impact of language in writing. The well-planned curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Meaningful links between subjects are made through topic-based learning journeys. These capture pupils' imagination, develop their appreciation of art and other cultures and also provide them with opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills. These themes are extended in regular home learning activities which pupils enjoy and take pride in completing well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are courteous, respectful and welcoming. They show consideration when learning and socialising together. They taking turns, share equipment and help each other with their work. Older pupils take on responsibility readily, acting as buddies and play leaders to support younger pupils, which they say they really enjoy. Pupils understand that expectations of their behaviour are high and are clear about the consequences of any unacceptable behaviour, as well as its impact on others. Relationships between pupils and adults are good and behaviour is managed consistently well. Pupils who have difficulties managing their own behaviour are given useful strategies to help them, such as taking time to sit quietly away from others to regain control over their emotions. The positive responses by most parents, carers and pupils to the questionnaire confirm that the good behaviour observed during the inspection, in lessons and at other times during the school day, is typical. Pupils' enjoyment of school and positive attitudes to learning are reflected in their good attendance and punctuality.

The overwhelming majority of pupils say that they feel safe, well cared for and that all forms of bullying, whether physical, mental or cyber, are rare and dealt with effectively. Most parents and carers agree. Through the curriculum and visiting speakers, pupils are well aware of how to keep themselves safe. They understand the importance of using the internet safely and discuss the rules that are displayed in classrooms to reinforce this. They are knowledgeable about different forms of bullying and what they should do if they have any concerns. Strengths in behaviour and safety identified at the previous inspection have been sustained.

Leadership and management

The high expectations of senior leaders are clear to see in the good teaching and learning, positive attitudes of pupils and well-ordered, welcoming atmosphere that pervades the school. The interesting, well-planned curriculum is underpinned by the school's ethos. It meets the diverse needs of all pupils successfully and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness strongly. Promoting equality and tackling discrimination is given a high priority by leaders. As a result, all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are fully included in the life of the school, enjoy learning and achieve equally well. Governors and staff ensure that effective procedures to safeguard pupils are in place and that

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government requirements are met.

Robust monitoring, regular assessments and detailed analyses of information ensure that senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. Good practice is recognised and staff performance managed well to secure improvement in teaching and learning. Staff value the provision made for their professional development. Coaching, training and support are targeted effectively where improvements are needed, including through joint activities with the partner school. This has had a positive impact on improving the outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the quality of pupils' writing, demonstrating the school's good capacity to improve further. Governors are provided with a good range of information, including that from pupils, about the school's performance and the impact of new initiatives. They use this to ask challenging questions which support the school's drive for improvement. A detailed development plan includes relevant, key priorities, but some lack quantifiable targets, success measures and milestone to help governors monitor the rate of progress being made through the year.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



23 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Etchingham Church of England Primary School, Etchingham TN19 7PB

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school recently. I especially enjoyed talking with you, listening to some of you read, discussing your books, looking at your work and seeing you in lessons.

Your school is providing you with a good education so you achieve well. It is a welcoming and an attractive place to learn. You and your parents told me that you enjoy school and feel safe. You attend regularly and arrive on time which is important. Teachers make your lessons interesting and fun so you learn a lot. You have plenty of opportunities to practise your reading, writing and mathematics and to talk about your work together in lessons. You are keen to learn and enjoy the practical activities that teachers plan for you. I found out lots of new things when I watched the class assembly about Australia with some of your parents. I also know how much fun you had when the Olympic triple jumper came into school for your sponsored activity. You behave well, are polite, considerate and keen to learn. You told me that you know how well you are doing and what you can do to improve because your teachers tell you. You find your targets help you too. You enjoy your home learning. I could see that you put a lot of effort into this and produce some interesting work.

To help make your school even better I have asked your headteacher, teachers and governors to:

- make all the lessons in the Reception class as good as possible
- to add some more information to their plans to improve the school so they can monitor its progress more easily.

You can all help too by continuing to attend school regularly and always trying your very best in all the lessons.

Thank you again for such a warm welcome, and I hope you all carry on enjoying school and learning even more.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Krafft
Her Majesty's Inspector

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