



# Danehill Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114499  
**LEA** East Sussex  
**Inspection number** 279396  
**Inspection dates** 23 May 2006 to 23 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Robin Thelwell AI

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

|                                    |                      |                           |   |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Type of school</b>              | Primary              | <b>School address</b>     | School Lane                             |
| <b>School category</b>             | Voluntary controlled |                           | Danehill                                |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>         | 4 to 11              |                           | Haywards Heath, West<br>Sussex RH17 7JB |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>            | Mixed                | <b>Telephone number</b>   | 01825 790388                            |
| <b>Number on roll</b>              | 73                   | <b>Fax number</b>         | 01825 790388                            |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>       | The governing body   | <b>Chair of governors</b> | Mrs S Gilliam                           |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | 28 February 2000     | <b>Headteacher</b>        | Mrs Heather Hurst                       |

|                             |   |                                    |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Set in the village of Danehill, four miles north-east of Haywards Heath, the school is much smaller than most. Nearly all pupils are from White British families. No pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average. When children join reception, attainment is broadly in line with that expected for their age. The school works in close association with the Danehill Childcare Centre situated onsite.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features. It provides good value for money. Careful monitoring of school performance gives management a clear picture of strengths and areas for improvement. Although the school has an accurate view of its overall effectiveness, inspectors judge that in a few instances the school is too modest in its self-evaluation. Parents are very happy with the school and pupils enjoy the activities given them. The school's caring, family ethos makes it a welcoming place to be. As one parent said, "Danehill School is a gem in our community." Because of the small number of pupils in each year group, standards vary from year to year. However, pupils' individual records show they achieve well and usually reach above average standards. While in 2005, the very small number of eleven year old pupils achieved well in statutory assessments, those in Year 2 gained exceptionally high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Teaching is effective and takes good account of the wide range of ages and abilities in each class. Although teachers monitor pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science effectively, the school recognises the need to improve procedures to assess learners' performance in other subjects. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils benefit from a well planned curriculum that is enriched by many additional activities. Provision for reception children is effective and enables them to make good progress. The care and support for learners is outstanding. Outstanding leadership and management, together with effective teamwork amongst staff, ensure there is a shared commitment to raising standards further and a good capacity for continuing improvement. The headteacher gives excellent direction to the school's work and is now seeking to develop further the expertise of recently appointed senior managers.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Develop a whole-school approach to assessing pupils' performance in subjects other than English, mathematics and science in order to promote the best possible learning for pupils.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children join school with levels of attainment broadly in keeping with those expected for their age. They make good progress in the reception class, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Teachers make effective use of the information they collect about children's progress. As a result, nearly all achieve the levels expected by the end of reception, and a small number exceed them. All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well in terms of the challenging targets set for them by teachers. Although comparatively small numbers in each year group can lead to fluctuating results when compared with national figures, performance in the 2005 national tests for seven-year-olds was exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics. When taking into account their individual capabilities,

the very small number of eleven-year-olds assessed last year achieved well to gain standards that were average. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 make good progress and achieve as well as they should. As a result, standards for both age groups are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils of higher capability achieve consistently high standards.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and have excellent attitudes to learning. Attendance is well above the national average. Behaviour is exemplary. The strong emphasis given to learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness enables them to develop a sensitive approach to life and everyday issues, and to appreciate the achievement of others. Pupils are proud of their school. It is a place where they feel safe from bullying, and where there is always a friend with whom they can share concerns. Pupils contribute well to the school and local community. They show initiative and enjoy responsibility. Through their class councils, pupils make an effective contribution to the day-to-day life of the school. They raise funds for charities and take part in activities designed to develop skills in negotiating and decision making. As such, pupils gain a clear understanding of wider social and economic issues, together with an appreciation of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils have a secure understanding of the need for safety, regular exercise and healthy eating. They enjoy the fresh fruit provided each day, and the take-up of sporting activities available is good. The school is now working towards 'Healthy School' status.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are effective, with examples of outstanding lessons. Teachers know pupils very well and have high expectations of them. They provide work that is well matched to the diverse needs and ages in each class. Lesson plans are detailed and underpinned by teachers' good command of subjects. At the start of lessons, teachers explain clearly what pupils are going to learn and lessons proceed at a lively pace. For reception children, much learning is gained through well structured play. Good teaching ensures they learn well through a range of practical activities and investigations. As a result, children make good gains in all areas of learning. In all lessons, teachers make learning interesting and effective use of computer technology to enliven lessons. Teaching assistants work in close co-operation with teachers and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The school makes effective use of assessment information in English, mathematics and science to track how well pupils are doing, plan what is to be taught next, and to set new targets for learning. All pupils know their own targets. The school has already identified the need to improve

procedures to assess pupils' performance in the remaining subjects and to use the resulting information effectively to support teaching and learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good curriculum that meets the needs of all learners. Pupils spoke with much enthusiasm about the things they do, particularly mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). There is good provision for basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Such skills are used well in other subjects. A comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education, together with initiatives such as the 'fresh fruit' scheme, helps pupils make healthy choices and develop life skills. Residential visits give good support to these aspects of provision. A good range of visits and visitors enlivens the curriculum, giving pupils good access to first-hand and practical learning experiences. Enrichment courses provide good opportunities for pupils identified as gifted and talented. A variety of out-of-class activities gives pupils further opportunities to improve knowledge and skills in such diverse activities as French, karate and sport. To improve the curriculum further, teachers are working to develop coherent links between subjects in order to enhance pupils' enjoyment and their learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils receive outstanding care, guidance and support. At every level, there is high regard for the needs of individuals. The smallness of the school means adults know learners really well. Effective communications with parents, together with strong links with the Childcare Centre on-site, add to the quality of care given to pupils. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are rigorous, and risk assessments are made before pupils go on visits. Thorough background checks are made on staff before appointments are confirmed. Arrangements to help children settle into reception, and to transfer to secondary school, are smooth, ensuring learners are confident in coping with new situations. A strong focus is given to promoting healthy lifestyles. Teachers' thorough marking of work helps pupils understand how to improve. The support and guidance for pupils with learning difficulties and those identified as gifted and talented is very effective.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. The headteacher provides exceptional leadership and is very well supported by the staff and governing body. She knows the school and pupils very well. She has a clear understanding about what needs to be done to raise standards and improve provision. The headteacher has successfully developed a shared commitment from all staff to achieve the school's aims. The school improvement plan reflects the views of all those involved with the

school and is an effective tool to move the school forward. Teaching and learning are monitored effectively. Assessment of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science allows the school to set challenging targets for improvement. The school has effective procedures for monitoring how well it is doing, and evaluates its performance realistically. The school regularly seeks the views of parents and pupils and acts upon them. For example, following suggestions, the school now provides more art and music activities and a wider range of clubs. In response to pupils' wishes, class councils were created. Governors are experienced and supportive, and have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors manage finances well and play a good part in strategic planning. As such, they have played a role in securing the significant improvements made to the accommodation and in the development of provision for ICT, which is rated highly by pupils. Led by a headteacher with a passion to provide the best provision for all pupils, supported by a well-informed governing body and recently appointed senior management team, the school has good capacity to improve further.

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## Inspection judgements

|  |                       |              |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | <b>School Overall</b> | <b>16-19</b> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| <b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b> | 2   | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?  | 2   | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage  | 2   | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 1   | NA |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements  | Yes | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection   | Yes | NA |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |    |
|--|---|----|
| <b>How well do learners achieve?</b>   | 2 | NA |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 2 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress                              | 2 | NA |

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
| <b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                           | 1 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 2 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners   | 1 | NA |
| The attendance of learners  | 1 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 2 | NA |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 | NA |

### The quality of provision

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>          | 2 | NA |
| <b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b> | 2 | NA |
| <b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>   | 1 | NA |

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

**Leadership and management**

|  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 1   | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1   | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review      | 1   | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 1   | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money  | 2   | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 2   | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected  | Yes | NA |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>  |     |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily  | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise  | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse   | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health   | Yes |
| <b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>   |     |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements                                   | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place  | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism                                | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them   | Yes |
| <b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>  |     |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships   | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them                   | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| <b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>                           |     |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills  | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams                                  | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form          | NA  |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy               | NA  |

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils, Thank you very much for making us very welcome when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed coming into your lessons and looking at your work. We particularly enjoyed talking to some of you about your school. These are some of the things we are most pleased about:

- You enjoy school and look forward to coming each day.
- You work very hard in lessons and show great interest in your work.
- How well you are learning and making progress.
- You are extremely well behaved, polite and helpful to each other and visitors.
- You enjoy the interesting work your teachers give you, and the help they provide in lessons to help you to do well.
- All the adults in school look after you very well, and help you to feel safe and keep healthy.
- The ways in which your headteacher, staff and school governors keep trying to make the school even better.

To make sure the school keeps improving, we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to think about how they can check on how well you are doing in all subjects, so they can make sure the work you have is just right for you, not too easy or too hard. Once again, thank you for making our day an enjoyable one. Yours sincerely,  
Robin Thelwell (Lead Inspector)