



# Etchingham Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Better  
education  
and care

**Unique Reference Number** 114502  
**LEA** East Sussex  
**Inspection number** 279397  
**Inspection dates** 20 June 2006 to 20 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Sheila Browning AI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Burgh Hill
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Etchingham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		East Sussex TN19 7PB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01580 819218
<b>Number on roll</b>	113	<b>Fax number</b>	01580 819186
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Mary Alderson
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Gill Knox

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Etchingam is smaller than most other primary schools. The school is in a rural setting where about half of the pupils come from the village of Etchingam and others come from the surrounding area. The majority have favourable socio-economic backgrounds. The school has fewer than average pupils with learning difficulties. In recognition of its work, the school has gained an Activemark Gold Award for sport, a Silver award for Healthy Schools and has a partnership with a local Specialist Sports status school. It has received the Investor in People Award. For eight years it was awarded Beacon School status.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Etchingham is a good and effective school. The school also judges its effectiveness as good. Standards are significantly higher than those nationally by Year 2 and are exceptional by Year 6, and pupils achieve well because of good teaching. Children enter the Reception Year with more skills and experiences than usual. Children make good progress and almost all exceed the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year because of the good provision. The school has successfully tackled the relative weaknesses identified in science in Year 2. It is now working hard to improve reading and writing in all year groups. The school appreciates that a broader range of writing opportunities is necessary if pupils are going to achieve higher levels. Lessons are lively and well organised and, consequently, pupils find learning interesting and fun. The curriculum and the popular additional activities support learning well. Pupils' outstanding personal development produces exemplary attitudes and behaviour. Good quality care and support encourage pupils to contribute to the school and the community. Whilst assessment information is comprehensive, it is only just beginning to be used analytically. Work is regularly marked, though comments do not always clearly indicate what pupils must do to improve.

Leadership and management are good. The relatively new headteacher has worked hard, and with considerable success, to establish a more open and consultative management. Her effective leadership and the improvements in standards and achievement mean the school has good capacity to improve further. Governors are supportive and very effective. Links with parents and others are outstanding. Parents are justifiably confident in the school, which seeks and acts upon their views. The school provides good value for money.

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

- provide more well planned opportunities for pupils to use a broader range of writing skills throughout the school to secure higher levels in writing
- use assessment information to guide pupils more accurately and explain exactly what they need to do to improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are exceptionally high by Year 6. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school and there are no identifiable groups of pupils who underachieve. Children join the Reception Year with better skills than expected for their age. By the end of the Reception Year, almost all children exceed the nationally agreed goals because of the good quality provision. Years 1 and 2 build on this progress to achieve significantly above average standards, although last year, no pupils achieved the higher levels in science. As a result of the school's action, improvement is indicated this year.

Test results in 2005 for Year 6 were exceptionally high. Whilst achievement is good, more able pupils do not always do as well as they could in writing. Last year, pupils achieved better in reading than in writing. The school is working hard to investigate the reasons for this. More rigorous tracking and targeting of pupils' progress and improvements in learning for Years 3 and 4 indicate that the gap between reading and writing is narrowing. Pupils meet challenging targets and almost all achieve high standards, which have been sustained over a number of years.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They enjoy lessons and approach tasks with relish and commitment. Attitudes to learning are exemplary. Behaviour is outstanding, due to the school's high expectations and to the excellent relationships at all levels. Attendance is high. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding because they develop a sensitive approach to school life and to everyday issues as well as appreciating the efforts of others. Pupils are proud of their school and say they feel safe and free from problems such as bullying.

Pupils feel they have a strong voice through the lively and effective school council. There are many opportunities for pupils to become involved in the life of the school and to make a positive contribution in the local community. Two good examples are the recent fund-raising by pupils and their families to support the Indonesian Earthquake appeal and a local refuge.

The personal development of pupils with learning difficulties is outstanding. Teacher assistants are trained to support pupils in speech and language and this work and the extremely strong partnership with outside agencies ensure that their needs are catered for very thoroughly. Pupils have a clear awareness of the need to eat a healthy diet and to be physically active and they put this into practice. There is a strong emphasis on the need for regular exercise, and the school's own swimming pool is used every day. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education and for their future working lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well organised. They are presented in a lively manner and proceed with pace. There are some weaknesses in the quality of teachers' marking. Although teachers use praise and encouragement effectively, they rarely give pupils a clear idea of exactly what they need to do to improve further. Teaching and non-teaching staff work together very well to encourage pupils to succeed. As a result, the atmosphere in lessons promotes a quiet, purposeful approach to learning. Pupils produce a good volume of work and take great pride in how it is presented. This reflects the high expectations that teachers have of all pupils.

Classrooms provide an exciting learning atmosphere with a range of colourful, lively displays. Teachers use resources imaginatively to create stimulating surroundings. Pupils respond well to this and enjoy pondering over displays and artefacts. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) to support pupils' learning in all subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils used a range of different graphical images to illustrate their project folders and this raised the quality of presentation.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. The low numbers in the Reception class mean that children benefit from good adult to child ratios. They enjoy a curriculum that focuses closely on their personal, social and emotional skills. Ever alert to improvements, the Foundation Stage staff are working to achieve a better balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities.

The school is moving towards a more creative curriculum that meets pupils' needs better. This and the recent improvement to resources for ICT mean that pupils enjoy their learning much more. The many popular out-of-class activities, and the range of visits and visitors, significantly enrich pupils' learning. The personal, social and health programme contributes well to pupils' personal development and successfully raises awareness of healthy, safe lifestyles. Strong partnerships with local schools offer extended programmes for gifted and talented pupils in mathematics, science, art and physical education. Pupils have numerous opportunities to contribute to the community. The school rightly recognises that pupils could be challenged more in writing and plans are in hand to achieve this.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils receive good care, guidance and support. Secure systems monitor pupils' safety, well-being and progress, and child protection arrangements are robust. In the Reception Year, children are given good support to settle happily and become confident learners. Vulnerable pupils receive excellent support from external agencies.

Pupils' attainment is assessed regularly and challenging targets are set. Pupils generally understand their targets but teachers' marking does not tell them how to improve their work. The school has begun to use a computer-based system to analyse achievement more accurately.

Pupils are exceptionally well supported personally and, as a result, they achieve well. There are very good, regular communications and close liaison with parents. Parents say, 'The school feels like one happy family'. The transition from Reception to Year 1 is very smooth and very good advice and support prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed headteacher provides effective leadership and she is ably supported by teaching and non-teaching staff and by an active, well-led governing body. She has a clear vision of how the school should develop and is determined that standards should continue to rise. Her determined and successful leadership is making a strong contribution to the school's capacity to improve further.

Regular monitoring of progress towards the school's own targets, further review and target-setting ensure that the school knows itself well. The views of parents and others are considered when setting the agenda for improvement. These arrangements ensure that the school improvement plan is well organised, informative and effective. For example, the school recognised that more able pupils in Year 2 were underachieving in science and it has provided well focused support this year. This has paid off with significant improvements.

Governors are well led by a perceptive chairperson. They now have a much clearer view of what the school needs to do to improve further. Governors bring a range of expertise to their roles and work hard on behalf of the school community. Equality of opportunity is outstanding and is promoted in all aspects of school life, and the school is highly regarded by parents.

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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>
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### 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?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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	1	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	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	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>	2	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>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	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**

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and seeing your lessons.

These are the things that Etchingham School does especially well:

we were very impressed with your outstanding performance and excellent behaviour and how hard you work

your teachers give you interesting work to do and help you to do well in lessons

the adults in the school take good care of you

there are lots of exciting clubs and extra activities, which you really enjoy

you contribute well to school life and to the community

you are well prepared for your next stage of education and your future working lives.

We know everyone wants to do better and we have suggested some things the school should do to help:

build on the good progress you are making in writing

tell you more about how you can improve your work, reach your targets and do even better.