



Mayfield Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114512
LEA East Sussex
Inspection number 279400
Inspection dates 15 June 2006 to 15 June 2006
Reporting inspector David Collard AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Fletching Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Mayfield
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		East Sussex TN20 6TA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01435 873185
Number on roll	131	Fax number	01435 873553
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Alan Nethercot
Date of previous inspection	19 June 2000	Headteacher	Ms Sue Hooper

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 15 June 2006 - 15 June 2006	Inspection number 279400
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Mayfield is a smaller-than-average village primary school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below that nationally and there are no pupils from minority ethnic groups.

At the time of the inspection, the newly appointed headteacher had only been in post for six weeks. Previously, the school had been led by an acting headteacher, supported by an acting deputy headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school presently provides a satisfactory quality of education but has the potential to improve very rapidly under the strong, determined leadership provided by the new headteacher and acting deputy headteacher. Even in a short space of time, there is evidence of an impact on pupils' achievement and the quality of provision, particularly teaching. This is because there has been a stringent and accurate evaluation of both the key strengths and weaknesses. The standards and achievement of pupils, including those in the Foundation Stage, are satisfactory. Children enter the school with the attainment expected for their age, make satisfactory and sometimes good progress through the Reception class and, despite some variability in the interim, achieve the nationally expected levels by the time they leave the school in Year 6. More significantly, progress for higher-attaining pupils has improved and nearly a fifth now reach the higher levels.

Teaching, the quality of the curriculum offered and the care of pupils are all satisfactory. There have been many staff changes and this along with the lack of a comprehensive analysis of the assessment data in the past meant that teachers did not know exactly how pupils were progressing. This is no longer the case. The governing body, staff and the pupils are now very aware of the improvements needed. Significantly, the difficult messages have been conveyed in a sensitive way and, as a result, the school has continued to enjoy very solid support from parents and pupils.

The school now readily recognises that, while pupils' progress has generally remained at satisfactory levels overall between the two inspections, more progress could have been made that would have addressed the variability in its provision. There is a clear determination to improve this position as quickly as possible but, at present, the school only provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the early successes in action planning so that all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- Raise the quality of satisfactory teaching to that of the best so that pupils are effectively challenged.
- Help teachers make the best use of the new tracking data so that they all have a better understanding of pupils' progress and plan activities to ensure better achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. The impact of better support for more-able pupils can be seen in the marked improvement in their overall performance. The challenging targets are likely to be met this year and possibly exceeded for the more-able pupils in English.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress because their needs are now closely identified and appropriate support is effectively provided.

Children make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage and are suitably prepared for work when they start Year 1. Nearly all achieve the expected goals for learning and make particularly good progress with their communication, language and literacy.

As in last few years, pupils will leave Year 6 with the standards expected for their age. While this represents satisfactory achievement overall, data analysed by the headteacher shows that pupils' progress has fluctuated in the time they have been at the school. For instance, those now in Years 3, 4 and 5 have all underachieved at some time in the past and subsequent teaching has had to remedy this poor progress. The school's improvement plan rightly focuses its main priority on removing these fluctuations and ensuring that pupils make consistently good progress in each year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including that for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Attendance is good. Pupils say they feel safe and the adults listen to their views. They are confident that, whatever the problem, the school can solve it. Pupils of all ages report that they feel able to discuss any problems with adults in school. Through subjects such as science and design and technology, pupils are taught how to play and work safely and about the need for a healthy lifestyle. There are good opportunities to be involved in activities within the local community.

Discussions with pupils show that behaviour has improved measurably in the last term. Most pupils behave well and consider the needs of others but in some classes there is occasional inappropriate behaviour that can disrupt the learning of others. This is partly the result of many staff changes, with a consequent lack of knowledge about individuals. For instance, when one boy was asked how many teachers he had had this year, he could not remember all of them.

The school is very aware of the importance of pupils being prepared for a future life beyond school, and uses ways to help pupils develop basic skills and financial awareness such as being responsible for their own lunch money.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but better in the Reception class and Year 6. Here they are much better focused on the individual needs of the pupils and are therefore more challenging and interesting. As a result, pupils are more motivated by what they are asked to do and make the most progress. The satisfactory teaching

is characterised by more mundane activities, insufficient use of individual activities and some unsatisfactory marking which provides limited guidance for pupils about how to improve their work.

The many staffing changes in some classes have led to inconsistencies in teaching but there are good indications of improvement. The headteacher has a good plan to help eliminate the weaknesses through the use of assessment and stringent monitoring of classroom practice. A key priority is to ensure tasks motivate pupils and keep them interested. Already the first effects of this can be seen. Improved planning in literacy and numeracy means activities are more relevant to the capability of the pupils. In addition, teachers have a more realistic view about how well their pupils can do and so are starting to provide more challenging work. One pupil said, "The work seems to be harder since the new headteacher arrived."

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory, with the Foundation Stage curriculum providing particularly rich experiences for learning. Recent curricular revision is now providing a broader base for developing key literacy and numeracy skills as well as promoting important life skills such as being healthy and staying safe. This is still at an early stage of development and so has not yet impacted sufficiently on pupils' learning. A whole-school focus on Native American Indians was being used well, amongst a group of local schools, to promote the pupils' personal, social, moral and spiritual development as well as improving academic success.

The outside areas and recently developed facilities of an adventure trail and quiet area, together with a wide range of popular clubs and activities, contribute effectively to the extended curriculum. Pupils say that these are a valuable and enjoyable part of their school life and are extending their awareness of society and their roles and responsibilities within it.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory. Statutory requirements for health and safety and child protection are met. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties has recently been improved because a new dedicated co-ordinator now provides support for teachers in developing individual education plans. Guidance and support of learners is enhanced by good links with external agencies such as the local authority and the educational psychology service. Better guidance for pupils about improving their work needs more attention, although there are some examples of good and helpful feedback. Parents are informed about their children's progress. However, a small number feel that they could play a more active role in supporting their children if they were kept more fully informed of learning and behavioural targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall but there are some notable strengths such as the particularly strong teamwork between the two senior managers. Since her recent appointment, the headteacher has begun to introduce very effective procedures for monitoring how well the school is doing and consequently has an accurate and realistic understanding of its main strengths and weaknesses. She is ably supported by an acting deputy headteacher. Both have experience of similar issues in other schools so this, along with the improvements already made, indicates that the potential for rapid and effective development is good.

Middle managers are less confident in their role but recognise a need for more training to ensure they are able to take an active role in supporting school development. Recently, the more rigorous systems for assessment have made middle managers more accountable for their areas of responsibility. For example, by using careful analysis of the performance data, some members of staff have already identified the need to address the comparative individual weaknesses in learning for some pupils. Although this is not yet a universally adopted system, it is planned to make it so.

Parents are positive about the school, with several commenting that they are now more active participants in their children's learning. Links with parents are strengthening so that they include their views in the procedures for checking school effectiveness.

The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and generally has a sound understanding of the development required. A financial deficit in the school budget has now been turned into a small surplus. The governors are aware that continued stringent financial management will be needed this year in order to ensure continued development on a restricted budget. Currently, it does not provide sufficient challenge but plans to extend its monitoring procedures so that it is in a better position to hold the school to account.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	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	3	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	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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 looking after us during our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed watching the work you were doing linked to 'Native American Indians' and hope the totem pole turns out to be as good as it looked. You are probably wondering what we have said about your school so I have included a few of the main points below.

You told us how much you enjoyed school and we could see that this was the case. We thought that when we saw you in lessons nearly all of you behaved well. You told us how you now felt you understood what was expected of you in class and that you were better behaved because of this.

Until recently, more of you could have been achieving better but we think this is now improving. Those of you who find work too easy are being given work that you find more challenging and this is helping you to gain higher standards. We think this is likely to improve now there are better systems for checking your test results and from the new half-termly assessments that are given to you.

Your teachers provide you with suitable work and we have taken note of the point you made about there being too many changes of teachers. We have asked if this can be changed in the future.

You told us you feel safe and well cared for. We agree because we can see that all the adults know you all as individuals. It was very noticeable how friendly it was in the playground and during lunchtime.

Your new headteacher has worked hard to improve the opportunities at your school. She, along with your deputy headteacher, has many exciting things planned for the year ahead. We think these will make an improvement and ensure that you all achieve as well as you can.

Finally, can we wish you all the best for your time at Mayfield and hope that your future life brings you all you want.