

Fletching Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114503
Local Authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	289941
Inspection date	2 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Jacque Buttriss

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 on roll	
School	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Oxley
Headteacher	Maureen Fairhead
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2001
School address	Fletching Uckfield TN22 3SP
Telephone number	01825 722356
Fax number	01825 723626

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	2 May 2007
Inspection number	289941

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This village school is smaller than average, with pupils coming from the wider surrounding area. There are very few pupils of minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language. There is comparatively high pupil mobility. The headteacher has been in post for nearly two years. The school has been awarded a Basic Skills Quality Mark.

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 which provides a high quality of education and care for its pupils. Attainment on entry to the school is above national expectations in all areas of learning. Standards reached by learners at the end of the Reception year and at the end of Year 2 are above the national averages. Standards reached by the end of Year 6 are exceptionally far above the national average. Achievement is good. Progress is good across the school, with a significant minority of pupils making excellent progress, especially in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties are very well supported and demonstrate good achievement.

Personal development and well-being are good and strong relationships are evident throughout the school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They clearly enjoy their lessons and demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. Their behaviour is good in and out of lessons. The headteacher and staff have worked hard to raise the level of attendance and this is now close to the national average. There are good community links. Pupils actively contribute to enhancing the environment and improving the school through an excellent school council. They learn skills which equip them well for their future lives.

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. The quality of provision in the Reception year is good. As pupils move through the key stages, they benefit from carefully planned and well-paced lessons in which teachers express high expectations and motivate pupils well through stimulating learning activities. The good curriculum provides a wide and cohesive range of learning experiences. The care, guidance and support provided by the school are good. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties are particularly well supported through the wider network of trained professionals. Pastoral care is a strength of the school. However, academic guidance is less effective in that assessment and the tracking of pupils' performance lack consistency. These processes do not yet fully involve the pupils themselves or inform them how well they are doing with the result that they do not always know what level they are working at and what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management are good. The clear-sighted headteacher and strong staff team provide good direction for moving the school forward. Through the school's thorough self-evaluation, leaders identify and address issues successfully and impacts are being carefully monitored. The dedicated governing body gives good support to the school, fulfilling its responsibilities well and challenging the school effectively to improve still further. The key issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. The demonstrable improvement in writing skills, as a result of recent actions to raise standards, provides firm evidence of the school's good capacity to improve. Parents are unanimously supportive of the school. One parent wrote: 'What a great start to the long slog of education!'

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the use of assessment and pupil performance tracking data to involve pupils more and to help them know how well they are doing and what they need to do to further improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to the school is above national expectations and pupils' standards at the end of Reception and Year 2 are above national averages. By the time they are ready to leave the school, pupils' standards are well above national averages in English, mathematics and science. Pupils make good progress overall, with a significant minority of pupils making excellent progress, especially in writing, which has been a focus for improvement. Achievement is good. There is little difference between the achievement of boys and girls through the school. Pupils with learning difficulties are successfully helped to achieve well.

The school's targets set for the six pupils who took the 2006 national tests at the end of Year 6 were reached in English and mathematics at both Levels 4 and 5. The school had previously identified mathematics as an area of weakness for Year 6 and had bought in specialist support to raise standards in this subject. As a result, pupils' progress accelerated so that most made higher improvement than expected and the Level 5 target in mathematics was exceeded. Indeed, this small group scored significantly above the national average overall. Current initiatives to raise the standards of writing are proving successful, with very good progress throughout the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils show consideration and respect for each other and for the adults in the school. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and adopt healthy lifestyles. They enjoy their lessons, showing a lively interest and participating well in discussions.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils contribute actively to school assemblies. Through the highly effective school council, pupils demonstrate good social awareness. They contribute practical ideas that are acted upon and make a positive impact on improving the school, such as the quality of school meals.

The school has strong links with its local community and participates regularly in regional arts festivals. A constructive link with a school in Kenya is being developed, enabling pupils to broaden their understanding of other cultures. However, pupils have limited awareness of the diversity of British culture. Pupils raise funds for a range of charities and learn about financial skills through the school council. This, together with their high standards of basic skills, ensures that pupils are well prepared for success in their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The good teaching in this school leads to good learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of their pupils and they pace lessons well, so that pupils enjoy their learning and are eager to achieve. Teachers and teaching assistants encourage pupils to become independent learners, but this does not yet extend fully to pupils evaluating their own progress. This results in pupils not knowing what levels they are achieving through the year. Most teachers plan their lessons well, providing a good framework for teaching. In one outstanding history lesson, pupils took a keen interest in the stimulating activities provided for them and became

engrossed in their learning. In a minority of lessons, children spend a little too much time on the carpet, with the result that a few lose attention. New teaching approaches have been successfully introduced to develop pupils' writing skills and these have resulted in raised standards.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good, with provision appropriate to children's ages and stages of development. The school provides a good balance of curricular experiences for all its pupils. The basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are well planned to interlink with all the other subjects in a cohesive way. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is well developed. The strong links with Sheffield Park Garden and the local secondary schools give access to additional opportunities to enrich the curriculum. Lessons are well planned to take account of the differing needs of pupils in mixed-age classes although in occasionally planning lacks consistency across literacy and numeracy sets. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties and there is additional provision to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils. Opportunities for pupils to participate in activities beyond lessons have improved since the last inspection. The school creatively addresses the lack of a large hall for physical education and good use is made of the available facilities and resources.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a caring, safe and healthy environment for its pupils. Arrangements for child protection are good. There is extensive cooperation with outside agencies to ensure the provision of very good support and care for vulnerable pupils and this is a strength of the school. Teachers set challenging individual and group targets for pupils in literacy and numeracy and pupils have a good understanding of these targets. However, assessment is a development focus this year across the school, as is the tracking of pupils' performance. There is still insufficient continuity in the way assessment and tracking outcomes are shared with pupils and used to help raise standards still further. In particular, most pupils do not know what levels they are working at and what progress they are making. This knowledge would help them to understand what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the school with clear vision and direction, shared with the leadership team. Strong and cohesive teamwork is a feature of this school. Together, the headteacher and staff are successfully taking the school forward, promoting a high quality of care and education. The school's self-evaluation processes are good overall and provide an effective basis for school improvement. Governors fulfil their roles and responsibilities enthusiastically and challenge the school effectively to promote continuing improvement. Subject leaders undertake detailed monitoring, including lesson observations in their subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Recent actions to address the other key issue from the last inspection, the development of writing skills, are now having demonstrably positive impacts, with most pupils making increased progress and a significant minority of pupils making excellent progress in

writing. This improvement in writing, together with raised standards in mathematics and the raising of attendance rates, demonstrates that the school leadership team is successfully improving the quality of education and care provided for all its pupils.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

3 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Fletching Church of England Primary School, Fletching, Uckfield, TN22 3SP

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we came to inspect your school. You made us feel very welcome and we enjoyed talking with you. Yours is a good school that helps you to do well in your work and cares for you very well.

- These are the things we especially like about your school: ?
- You are friendly, polite and helpful and your behaviour is good – well done. ?
- The headteacher, teachers and staff all work hard to give you a good education and help you to enjoy your learning. ?
- You have a good understanding of the need to stay safe and healthy. ?
- Your teachers make lessons interesting for you and help you reach high standards in English, mathematics and science. ?
- You have an excellent school council that helps make your school a good place to be. ?
- Your school is well led and one of the parents said: 'Over the last two years all the children and the staff have been the happiest I have seen them for a long time'.
- These are the things we think your school could do even better: ?
- The teachers could make more consistent use of the information they collect about the progress you make and share this with you and help you to assess your own work, so as to help you achieve even more.

We would like to wish you lots of success in your future education.

With very best wishes,

Mrs Jacquie Buttriss Lead inspector