

# Icklesham Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114527
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	289952
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eira Gill

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	111
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nigel Kirton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pauline Higgs
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 May 2002
<b>School address</b>	High Fords Icklesham Winchelsea TN36 4BX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01424 814448
<b>Fax number</b>	01424 814448

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Icklesham Church of England Primary is a small school where most pupils come from a White British background and a very small minority speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well above the national average. More pupils have joined the school in the last two years than would normally be expected. The school serves an area where there are pockets of economic disadvantage.

Several awards have been gained in recognition of the school's work and include the Healthy Schools Award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Artsmark Gold, an Eco Award and an Activemark.

## 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 a strong Christian ethos. The personal development and well-being of the pupils is outstanding. Pupils display an exceptional understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle, with total regard for the safety of themselves and others. Parents recognise how successful the school is and say, typically, 'I am so pleased I picked Icklesham for my daughter as she has had a very positive time here – staff are very approachable and any problems quickly dealt with.' During the inspection, the pupils' behaviour was exemplary in lessons and at play. Pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average in English, and average in mathematics and science by the time they leave school. This is good progress from the pupils' standards on entry. A good start in the Reception class helps the children to settle in well and make good progress. The school is successful in ensuring the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A parent said, 'My child has needed a lot of extra time and patience and he has received this at Icklesham. He has improved greatly since we moved to this area.'

The school describes its vision for every child as 'Aspire, Believe and Care' and this is being realised admirably in practice. Good leadership and management have resulted in good teaching and learning and, consequently, standards and achievement have improved overall. The strengths in teaching lie in the close teamwork between teachers that effectively supports pupils' progress, the generous number of assistants, good planning and excellent relationships. Throughout the day, small groups of children can be observed working hard with assistants, perhaps catching up in an aspect of their learning or, at break times, sharing ideas in the nurture groups. Older friends in the village also contribute to the good progress pupils make, particularly in reading. Teachers' marking is good in English, where pupils are given a very clear idea of what they need to do to improve their work. In mathematics and science, marking is not as effective because teachers rarely write comments.

Care, guidance and support are good overall, with outstanding care being shown to pupils. Academic guidance and support are effective and pupils have a clear understanding of their targets in English because teachers make these very explicit: for example, a Year 3 pupil said, 'I've got to work on connectives; you know, "but" and "because"!' This is not the case in mathematics and science, however, because targets are too broad. An outstanding curriculum makes learning interesting and fun for the pupils. Good links are made between subjects, drawing well on visits and special events. A good example is a visit made by all staff to the National Gallery when pupils were given a very wide range of art and design experiences using different types of art media to produce their own versions of famous paintings. Music is given a high priority and there are many activities after school for pupils from Year 2 to Year 6. The curriculum is a key element in pupils' outstanding personal development because it has helped make pupils enthusiastic learners. The school demonstrates good capacity to make further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teachers adopt a consistent approach to setting stretching targets for pupils in mathematics and science and in marking their work so that pupils know what to do to improve their performance.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement at the end of Year 6 is good and standards are average overall, but better than that in English, particularly in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are in the early stages of learning English make good progress because of effective systems and good teaching in place. Children make good progress in the Reception class.

Standards were average in the work of Year 2 pupils in 2006 for reading, writing and mathematics, with more pupils attaining at the higher levels in reading than those nationally. This year, standards have improved considerably and are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics.

Pupils who left the school in 2006 made good progress in English but not in mathematics. Targets were not all met in 2006 and boys did not achieve as well as expected. Boys in the current Year 6 are making better progress in English and mathematics. Standards are above average in English, with more pupils than nationally reaching the higher levels. Standards are average in mathematics and science and this represents good progress from a below-average start on entry for this particular group. Pupils are developing a good range of literacy skills to prepare them for the world of work, and satisfactory numeracy skills.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. In assembly, pupils' concentration and their ability to be reflective are high. Their unusually well-developed emotional maturity is a direct outcome of the variety of broad opportunities provided by the school, such as the training to be peer mediators and members of the Eco-club who look after the environment. Pupils' social skills are very well developed, too. Pupils say that they like school because it's a safe place where they can relax and learn. Attendance is above average and is a natural result of pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils feel very valued, safe and secure, and they talk knowledgeably about healthy diets and safe lifestyles and apply them. Pupils take part in plenty of sporting activities and all can swim before they leave the school. They make an excellent contribution to the school community, participate in many village events and are developing a sound understanding of their future responsibilities. The pupils' behaviour in lessons, at play and around the school is exemplary.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good teaching is enhanced by the considerable number of skilled and well-trained teaching assistants. Teachers and assistants work effectively together in teams and this is having a considerable impact on the good progress all pupils make in each year group. Relationships are excellent and lead to pupils' great enjoyment in their learning. Even the very young pupils say, 'Writing is fun!' and a Year 3 child explained, 'I like maths. I can use it to add up in shops.'

Throughout the school, effective planning ensures that individual or small groups of pupils can be taught in the several small spaces to learn at an appropriate pace with a skilled assistant.

Most teachers are skilled in helping pupils to become independent learners and use questioning well to ensure all groups of pupils develop a good understanding. However, occasionally, teachers' questioning skills are not always honed appropriately to meet the different learning needs of all groups of pupils. There are examples of very good marking that give a clear indication of how work could be improved. This is especially the case in English, where pupils' progress is good. Marking is not as good in mathematics and science.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's outstanding curriculum is one reason why pupils' progress has improved and their personal development is outstanding. Very successful strategies have been put into place to improve the pupils' writing, art and design, and design technology. Teachers value pupils' work and promote it well in the high quality displays which enrich the accommodation. Pupils' cultural understanding is being widened by activities such as whole-class groups learning to play the recorder, instrumental lessons that are available after school, and French, which is taught by a native speaker to each class. A strong emphasis is placed on sport and pupils swim every day in the summer. A wide range of after-school clubs enriches the curriculum. Links with the nursery that is accommodated within the school are outstanding. Excellent links with other schools ensure pupils take part in many sporting and creative events. Two pupils have just won second prize in the Southern Regional Final for their joint engineering design technology work.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Effective induction procedures ensure that children in the Reception class make a confident start and make good progress. Each child is allocated a 'buddy' from Year 6 who supports them at playtime. Child protection procedures are well established and proper checks are in place for all adults working in the school. Health and safety procedures are rigorous. Care is outstanding because of the close and effective way the school works with parents, particularly those with children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Similarly close relationships exist with other agencies. Vulnerable pupils are identified early; they are well supported and their progress is tracked very carefully. Teachers' use of the targets they set for pupils to improve their work has been very effective in English. However, in mathematics, the targets are very wide, such as 'learn tables', and this is one of the reasons why pupils' progress in mathematics and science is not as good as it is in English.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of leadership and management is good. The role of the subject leaders in driving curriculum development and learning is good and, in this small school, they each carry considerable responsibility. Leaders of core subjects, such as English and mathematics, have been successful in improving pupils' progress, particularly in writing, by introducing innovative systems and improving teaching techniques. Subject leaders' main focus has been to check teachers' planning and the quality of work in pupils' books. Monitoring of teaching by the headteacher is regular and identifies areas that need to improve but subject leaders rarely evaluate teaching and learning in lessons. Efficient tracking systems highlight any pupils who may not be making sufficient progress.

Self-evaluation is generally accurate and has been used effectively to put improvements into place, particularly in English. Leaders have worked exceptionally well to ensure that the curriculum is enriched further to include art, design and music and this has had a considerable impact on pupils' personal development. The school enjoys positive partnerships with parents, the church, the local authority, colleges and the community and these help to ensure that pupils' growth and development is rounded and successful. Governors are well informed and are fully involved in school planning and in monitoring the school's effectiveness. They have also ensured that improvements have been made from the previous inspection.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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**

29 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Icklesham C of E Primary School, Icklesham, East Sussex, TN36 4BX

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We really enjoyed talking with you and observing your lessons. You were all very polite and helpful throughout the day. Your headteacher has created a good school where you feel very safe and well looked after.

- Here are the things that we found to be best about your school:
- you are all making good progress in your work
- you are being taught well
- your headteacher, senior leaders and the governors take great care of you
- your behaviour is exemplary and you have exceptionally good attitudes to your work
- you enjoy school and attend very regularly
- your ability in assembly to think about all sorts of things sensibly is very good
- the way you take responsibility, for example, as peer mediators and as members of the Eco Group, is excellent.
  
- Here are the things that the school could do better:
- make sure that the teachers give you targets and mark your work in a way that helps you to know how well you are doing and how you can do even better, particularly in mathematics and science; you can help by thinking about how you have improved in lessons and then helping set the targets.

With best wishes

Eira Gill ? Lead inspector