

Egerton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118702
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	291219
Inspection dates	16–17 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Don Mason

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John King
Headteacher	Christopher Dale
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2001
School address	Stisted Way Egerton Ashford TN27 9DR
Telephone number	01233 756274
Fax number	01233 756274

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is a little above average. Pupils moved into the new school building in September 2006. The school has nearly doubled in size in the last three years and is oversubscribed. The school now has one class for each year group.

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 that enables pupils to achieve well. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their education. This is confirmed by their good attendance and endorsed by parents, who are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Many agree with the view that, 'Children are encouraged academically and their emotional needs and well being are paramount'. Pupils' good personal development is reflected in their high levels of self-discipline and the positive attitudes they display towards their work. Pupils' achievement and standards are good. A mix of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities ensures that children in the Reception class make good progress in all the areas of learning. Most exceed the levels expected for their age by the start of Year 1. The Reception and Year 1 teachers work closely together, ensuring that this very good start is successfully built on in Year 1. Good progress is maintained in the other year groups so that pupils reach above-average standards at the end of Year 6. Standards in English have been exceptionally high over the last three years. The quality of teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. In the latest Year 6 tests, results in mathematics, although average, were disappointing because more able pupils did not achieve as well as expected. Teachers have worked hard to improve the achievement of higher-attaining boys. Thorough assessment systems have been put in place enabling staff to check pupils' progress and, where necessary, to provide support in intervention groups.

The curriculum is good, with provision for information and communication technology (ICT) becoming a strength of the school. The curriculum is successfully enriched by an extensive range of opportunities in art, sports and other events in and out of school. The care, support and guidance provided for pupils are good. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils ensure that all individuals feel safe, adopt safe practices and know that someone will help them if there is a problem. In lessons, pupils are given good advice about how to improve their work. However, the use of personal targets is not as effective as it should be. Marking is not always helpful enough because it does not consistently refer to pupils' personal learning targets or indicate to pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils with learning needs make good progress because their needs are identified at an early stage and appropriate support provided. Teaching assistants are well trained and are fully involved in school life. Pupils make a good contribution to the community through the school council, church events, performances and charity fund raising. Pupils with special responsibilities in school take their duties seriously.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has successfully managed the recent and rapid changes in the school's development. He provides strong leadership and is supported by a conscientious, enthusiastic staff team. A new senior leadership team and a series of subject focus groups have recently been established and are developing well. Staff have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to bring about further improvement. However, it is recognised that, with the increase in the school roll and number of staff, there is scope to develop further the leadership role of individual members of staff by giving them more responsibility for making further improvements in the areas for which they are responsible.

What the school should do to improve further

- Promote the pupils' understanding of how to improve their work by improving the use of personal targets and the quality of marking.

- Enhance the leadership role of senior teachers and subject leaders by giving them more responsibility and opportunities to monitor the quality and standards in their subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress, especially in English, throughout the school to reach above-average standards at the end of Year 6. Children receive a good start to their education in Reception and enter Year 1 above the nationally expected levels in all areas of learning. Trends in achievement in Years 3 to 6 are positive, although in the most recent Year 6 national tests, girls outperformed boys in English, mathematics and science. The school has taken appropriate action to address this situation and the information gained from the new assessment arrangements is showing that the action taken is having a positive impact on the progress of all pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good personal development is mirrored in the self-confident and proud manner in which they speak about their school. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are conscious of their obligation to care for one another. They display positive attitudes to their learning, and their behaviour during the inspection was outstanding. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The strong connection with the local church and continuing links with a school in India contribute well to the pupils' good understanding of other faiths and cultures. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and the importance of regular exercise. The school serves the pupils well in developing skills which they will require in their future lives. They make generally good progress in literacy, numeracy and ICT and have frequent opportunities to discuss their work in pairs and groups, thereby developing the ability to exchange ideas and work together productively.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The good quality of teaching is ensuring that pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress. Lessons are well planned and teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work. Pupils respond well to these expectations. They generally enjoy their lessons, especially the practical activities. In English, where pupils make particularly good progress, skilful teaching ensures that they become enthusiastic readers and well-motivated writers. In mathematics, an emphasis on developing the pupils' problem-solving skills is promoting pupils' interest in mathematics and is beginning to have an impact on improving achievement, particularly for boys. However, some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain. For example, the quality of questioning varies from class to class with the result that, when teachers are talking to the whole class, the level of challenge does not always meet the needs of all the pupils well enough. The quality of marking is not always as good as it should be. Too much of it is congratulatory rather than offering clear advice about how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. There is a strong emphasis on developing their skills in reading, writing, numeracy and ICT. In recent months teachers have begun to provide more activities which make links between subjects. This is beginning to further increase pupils' enthusiasm for learning and enjoyment of lessons. For example, in Year 6, English work on the play, *Romeo and Juliet*, linked with geography work about Italy. Pupils produced beautiful leaflets, full of interesting information, about the country. Specialist teaching in art, music, physical education and German makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and achievement. Pupils are appreciative of and take full advantage of the wide range of after-school activities available to them. The school's recent receipt of the Healthy School award is recognition of the pupils' good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. In the Reception class, the activities provided successfully promote the children's learning in all the required areas and are especially effective in helping the children to become independent learners.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

In this caring school, adults know the pupils very well, with the result that they thrive. An indication of this is the way that a group of boys was given 'pastoral support plans' which successfully improved their self-esteem and enabled them to approach their lessons with more self-confidence. Policies to ensure pupils' safety are securely in place and regularly reviewed. New assessment arrangements have been introduced which enable the school to monitor the progress of its pupils more effectively and to plan work which is better matched to the pupils' needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives, which are discussed with the pupils, who are given good, general advice about the next stage in their learning especially in English. Pupils also have personal targets in English and mathematics. However, these are sometimes too general and not always related to the work in hand. The quality of advice given to pupils in marking is variable and does not consistently refer to the pupils' individual targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

There is a calm, purposeful atmosphere in this happy school which stems from effective day-to-day management procedures. Staff respond well to the strong leadership of the headteacher, who has a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve even more. A new senior leadership team and subject focus groups have been established, and these are beginning to have a positive impact on school improvement. The school acknowledges that there is scope, within these groups, to develop the leadership skills of individual teachers by giving them more responsibility and opportunities to set and monitor further challenging targets for improvement.

The school works well with other agencies to promote pupils' development. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is very well managed because of the strong leadership of the co-ordinator. Links between play groups and the Reception class are particularly strong, ensuring that these children settle into school very quickly. Governors are loyal and supportive and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They share the school's desire

to see achievement improve even further and are well placed to support this endeavour. The school's capacity to improve is good, evidenced by the improved assessment arrangements and the improved motivation and achievement of boys in mathematics.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	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	2
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	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	3
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

Dear Children

Inspection of Egerton C of E Primary School, Egerton, Ashford, Kent TN27 9DR

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so helpful and friendly. We particularly enjoyed visiting your classrooms, seeing the work you were doing and talking to you about your school. We find that your school provides you with a good education.

What you do well

- You make good progress in your work and standards are above average at the end of Year 6.
- Your attendance is good. Your behaviour during the inspection was outstanding. You enjoy your lessons and get on very well with your teachers.
- You are enjoying your mathematics lessons more because the teachers have better resources and you find the problem-solving activities interesting.
- You enjoy, and are appreciative of, the many extra activities which the school provides for you in and out of school.
- The adults in school take good care of you.
- The headteacher and teachers check your work regularly so that they can give you extra help if you need it.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Make sure that your personal targets relate more to the work you are doing at the time and give you better advice when they mark your work.
- Help the teachers to become even better leaders of their areas of curriculum responsibility.

You can help by continuing to work hard and looking after each other.

We wish you very well for the future.

Mr D Mason Lead inspector