



# Itchingfield Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 125838  
**Local Authority** West Sussex  
**Inspection number** 293375  
**Inspection date** 31 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Eileen Chadwick

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 address</b>	Itchingfield
<b>School category</b>	Community		Horsham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		RH13 0NT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01403 790204
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	135	<b>Fax number</b>	01403 791457
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Merve Goddard
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise Swann
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2001		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This small primary school serves the villages of Itchingfield, Barns Green, Christ's Hospital and surrounding areas. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. Attainment on entry is above average although there is a broad range. The school is situated on a split site with the infant and junior departments one mile apart. The headteacher took up post one year ago.

## **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 outstanding features. Care, guidance and support for pupils are excellent. Pupils' personal development is outstanding and they achieve well. They make remarkable progress in mathematics in which they reach exceptionally high standards by the time they leave the school. The rich and exciting curriculum enables pupils to develop their academic, artistic, sporting and practical skills to high levels. The headteacher provides strong leadership and direction with a clear focus on raising standards. Much emphasis has recently been given to improving the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, teaching is consistently good and sometimes excellent. This is having a significant impact on raising achievement. Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children progress well with many exceeding the standards expected by the time they begin Year 1. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and standards have risen over the past year. By Year 2 they are exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils progress well in Years 3 to 6 with rapid progress in mathematics at the top of the school. By Year 6 standards are exceptionally high in mathematics and well above average in science. In English, standards are also well above average and pupils have exceptionally good skills in reading. While pupils' written work is also good, the school has identified and started to tackle aspects that could be better. As a result, punctuation, spelling and grammar have improved in the last year. Pupils write well in many subjects. However, their creative writing is not as effective as their factual writing. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning and school life contribute significantly to their success. Close links with the community and the Church play a significant part in developing pupils' spiritual development, well-being and self-confidence. Pupils feel very safe and understand how to keep healthy. Academic assessment is excellent through improvements made in the last year. The curriculum is broad and particularly strong in art, music, sport and information and communication technology (ICT). These subjects provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their creativity and problem solving skills. However, opportunities for pupils to express their creative ideas in their written work are not as innovative or exciting. Leadership and management are good and are a key factor in the school's success. The headteacher is having an excellent impact on raising standards, particularly in Years 1 and 2 and improvement since the last inspection has accelerated since her arrival. The school's monitoring and evaluation of its work are excellent. Governors fulfil their responsibilities very well and are closely involved in the school's management and its work. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

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

- Raise standards in writing by improving opportunities for pupils to write creatively.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' overall achievement is good. Children's attainment on entry is above the level expected. They make good progress through the school so that they reach standards that are well above average in English and science and exceptionally high in mathematics by the end of Year 6. In Reception, children make good progress in literacy and numeracy and across other areas of learning. By the time they begin Year 1, they have often exceeded the standards expected. Pupils' good progress in Years 1 and 2 enables them to reach very high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in Year 2 improved significantly in 2006 due to more rigorous monitoring of teaching, assessment and target setting. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' progress in relation their starting points is good. Pupils make particularly good progress in reading and mathematics and, by Year 6, standards are very high in these subjects. Standards in writing are well above average, but the school has rightly identified that there is scope for a bit of improvement. More rigorous systems for teaching spelling, punctuation and grammar are already having a good impact. Throughout the school pupils write fluently for many purposes but their creative writing is not so advanced and an area for improvement. More capable pupils' progress is good. Systematic enrichment and rigorous subject teaching, especially in mathematics in Years 5 and 6, boost their achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because they are given good support to help them achieve their targets.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils take great pleasure in all aspects of school life. They flourish in the school's strong family atmosphere and the way that each pupil is cherished. Relationships are excellent. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they display very good manners in class and around the school. Their excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and enjoyment in keeping physically fit are really nurtured and stem from excellent provision to promote these areas. They know how to keep themselves safe and their attendance is good. The curriculum and close links with the Church support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. For example, through music and art, pupils reflect on the beauty and meaning of the work of others before creating their own compositions. Pupils have a good understanding of other lifestyles. They know that racism and bullying are unacceptable. They have a well developed sense of social and moral responsibility towards the wider community and are effective in raising funds for charities. Pupils' teamwork, leadership, decision making and enterprise skills are good. These are now being systematically developed throughout the school, especially through the science and technology curriculum. Pupils are well prepared for their economic wellbeing because of their good progress in developing basic skills and applying these to problem solving work in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT).

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Thorough planning for the Foundation Stage ensures children make good gains in their learning. Activities are well structured and show a good understanding of how young children learn. Leadership promotes good teaching through comprehensive programmes for monitoring lessons and strengthening teachers' subject knowledge. As a result, teachers plan well and provide interesting work. This enables pupils to learn through a good balance between direct instruction, investigation and problem solving. Teachers are particularly good at keeping to time deadlines. There are some outstanding lessons in Years 5 and 6 where subject skills are rigorously taught and pupils of all abilities learn rapidly. However, in lessons in other year groups, the most capable occasionally mark time when the level of challenge drops. Specialist teaching in music throughout the school promotes pupils' skills and appreciation of this subject. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties by helping them to progress in small steps in learning literacy and numeracy skills.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

In the Foundation Stage there is a good balance between teacher-directed activities and purposeful play. In Years 1 to 6, the strong emphasis on literacy and mathematics within a broad and relevant curriculum promotes good learning. Provision for ICT is good. The use of the local environment, visits, visitors and links with other schools enrich pupils' learning very well. The curriculum is enhanced by an excellent range of clubs, which improves pupils' personal, academic, musical and sporting development. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is good. These pupils are catered for particularly well in mathematics, sport, art and music where there is much rigorous subject teaching and opportunities for pupils to pursue particular talents. Crosscurricular work is increasing. There are some relevant links between science, mathematics, design and technology, ICT and art. Pupils write for a range of purposes in English and other subjects. However, the curriculum for promoting creative writing is less imaginative than it is for many other areas. Opportunities are missed to develop skills in this area through work across the curriculum.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The pastoral care of pupils is outstanding. Parents value the warm, caring and friendly environment and the way all staff make sure the pupils feel secure and happy. Health and safety procedures are excellent and pupils confirm they feel very safe and secure. There are robust procedures for risk assessment and child protection. The governing body has a strong commitment to ensuring provision is of a high quality and provision has much improved since the previous inspection. Assessment procedures are excellent

and there are rigorous checks on pupils' progress. This helps teachers to spot and remedy any underachievement. Pupils receive regular guidance to help them improve and their targets help them to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Close links with external agencies strengthen support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher has built on the school's strengths and accelerated the rate of progress since the last inspection. She has an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She is very effective in her management of the infant and junior departments and as a result cohesion between the two staffs has much improved in the last year. Parents are delighted with the changes being made. In particular, they value the headteacher's close involvement with the infants and better communication channels. Much improved systems for checking teaching and monitoring pupils' progress have already led to improvements in standards for Year 2 pupils. Honest, rigorous and accurate evaluation of the school's performance has resulted in the identification of what is working well and what is in need of improvement. This process of self-evaluation involves other staff well. This is because the headteacher has successfully sought to give them the opportunity to monitor and manage their areas of responsibility. However, the school realises there is a way to go before all subject leaders have a secure overview of the whole school picture. Governors are fully involved in the monitoring of the school and this enables them to have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement.

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## Inspection judgements

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

<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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### 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>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<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.

## 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	1
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**

- Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I was very impressed by your excellent behaviour throughout the day. I enjoyed talking with you. The school gives you a good education and really helps you learn. These are some of the good things about your school:
- You make good progress and you reach high standards, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- All adults take superb care of you and ensure that you are safe.
- You really enjoy school, get on very well with each other and you are a credit to your school.
- Good teaching makes sure you make good progress.
- You have really good opportunities for learning sport, music and art.
- You are developing good teamwork and problem solving skills and this prepares you well for your future working lives.
- Your headteacher, teachers and school governors are working hard to make the school even better. Here is an area I am asking the school to change:
- Improve opportunities for you to show your imaginative ideas when you are writing. You can help your teachers by thinking up ideas for improving your imaginative writing and continuing to work hard at your spelling and punctuation. Thank you again for your help and for being so friendly.