

# Etchingham Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114502
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	326022
<b>Inspection date</b>	7 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacque Buttriss

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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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>	
School (total)	116
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Geoff Lucas
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gill Knox
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 June 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Burgh Hill Etchingham TN19 7PB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01580 819218
<b>Fax number</b>	01580 819186

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the current progress made by all the younger pupils, especially in writing
- how effectively the school helps pupils to know how well they are doing and how to improve their work
- the impact of the developing roles of subject co-ordinators on pupils' achievement.
- how effectively the Reception children's outside learning environment is used across all the areas of learning.

Inspectors gathered evidence from discussions with pupils, staff and governors, from lesson observations, and from looking at pupils' work, the school's documentation and progress data. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a small school in a rural area outside the village. Fewer pupils than usual have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are all in the class of Reception and Year 1 pupils.

## 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. It has some outstanding features. Children join the school at the beginning of the Reception Year with attainment above national expectations. By the time pupils are ready to leave the school at the end of Year 6, standards are well above average and exceptionally high in mathematics. Achievement overall is good. Progress is satisfactory in the Reception Year and accelerates as pupils move up through the school so that the oldest pupils achieve outstandingly well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported very well, so that they also make good progress in their academic work.

Outstanding personal development and well-being enable pupils to speak confidently and articulately. They have an outstanding awareness of how to be healthy and keep safe. Their attendance is well above average and their behaviour is exemplary. Pupils have highly positive attitudes to their learning and say they thoroughly enjoy all aspects of school life. Indeed, one parent commented that 'it's often hard to get the children to leave school and come home!' Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and pupils are highly involved in the community, both within school and beyond. Older pupils enjoy their 'buddy' roles to help younger ones and they confidently take on a wide range of responsibilities. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education and later life.

Teaching is good with many strengths, particularly the excellent teaching of mathematics for Years 3 to 6. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they generally have high expectations of what their pupils can do. Lessons are well paced and fun and meet the needs of most learners well. The imaginative curriculum gives pupils many opportunities to use writing and information and communication technology well across other subjects. The curriculum is enriched by a good variety of visits, visitors and additional activities, so that pupils really enjoy their learning. However, planning for the younger mixed-age classes does not always fully meet the needs of both age groups.

Pastoral care is a particular strength. As one parent put it, 'I feel very privileged that my children go to such a caring, nurturing school.' Good links with outside professionals help to ensure that all vulnerable pupils are able to gain confidence and achieve as well as their peers. Pupils in older classes know how well they are doing and help to set their own learning targets, although this is not as strong for younger pupils. Some teachers' marking and feedback provides pupils with good advice on how to improve their work, but this is not consistent in all subjects across the school.

Many parents express strong praise for the 'well respected and loved' headteacher and the 'dedicated' staff team. Leaders set clear direction to move the school forward. There have been good improvements since the last inspection, especially in writing, where standards have risen considerably so that pupils now achieve very well. This demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve still further. Highly challenging targets contribute to the high standards achieved in English and mathematics. Subject co-ordinators' roles are well developed and have a good impact on pupils' achievement in the core subjects. The headteacher and governors have a good grasp of the school's strengths and correctly identify appropriate areas for development. Governors undertake their monitoring roles effectively so that they are able to provide a good balance of support and challenge to help the school move forward.

Community cohesion is good. 'There is an exceptional sense of community within the school', as one parent put it. There is strong involvement in the local community. Links with another

UK school are being arranged and pupils enjoy their longstanding partnership with a school in Malawi, exchanging letters and experiences of each other's lives. In this way, pupils are helped to develop a good understanding of how children of different cultures, faiths and socio-economic circumstances live their lives.

Parents 'work very hard to support the school' and are highly positive about all aspects of life in this 'fantastic school' ... 'like a little bit of heaven on earth'. One parent reflected the view of many in the following comment: 'We feel very fortunate to be a part of Etchingham School.'

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 3**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, with some good features. The teaching of literacy skills is particularly good. The school says that children come into the Reception Year with skills above national expectations. They make satisfactory progress so that when they join Year 1, they are attaining above average standards. However, the school makes insufficient use of the outside learning environment, where activities and resources do not currently meet children's needs fully in all the areas of learning. The indoor learning environment is more lively and inviting and children have a good variety of activities but in many classroom lessons, children are expected to sit for too long at a time. This has the result that learning is not as active as it could be and there are not enough opportunities for children to explore and make choices. The school is aware that the leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has been unclear. One result of this is that the assessment of pupils' attainment on entry to the school has not been formally recorded and it is therefore difficult to gauge children's individual progress.

The personal development and well-being of Reception children are good and welfare arrangements are fully in place. Children settle in quickly and enjoy their time in the Reception Year. As one parent put it, 'Confidence is nurtured in a happy atmosphere.' Parents feel well informed and involved and many praise the friendly and caring welcome they and their children receive.

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

- Develop the Reception children's outside space to make it more inviting and to provide more opportunities for children to make choices of activities across all areas of learning.
- Strengthen planning for the younger mixed-age classes in order to increase these pupils' achievement.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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



**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

8 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Etchingham Church of England Primary School, Etchingham TN19 7PB

Thank you for being so friendly, polite and helpful when we came to inspect your school. You made us feel very welcome indeed. We very much enjoyed talking with you. Yours is a good school. It helps you to do excellent work and cares for you very well.

These are the things we especially like about your school.

- You make good progress and achieve very high standards in your work. Well done!
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- Everybody in the school looks after you very well and you enjoy taking responsibilities and being buddies for each other.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to be healthy and stay safe.
- Your teachers work very hard to make your lessons exciting and fun.
- You very much enjoy coming to school.
- Teachers set very challenging targets for you, to help you reach such high standards.
- Your school has good partnerships with many local schools which give you opportunities to take part in a lot of extra activities to extend your learning.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors lead the school well.

This is what we think your school could do even better.

- Reception children need more resources and opportunities to help them make greater use of their outside area and make more choices in their learning.
- Teachers could improve their planning for the younger mixed-age classes to help these children make greater progress.

You can help the school by continuing to work hard and enjoy your lessons. I would like to wish you lots of success in your future learning. Keep up the good work!

Yours faithfully

Jacquie Buttriss

Lead inspector