

# Mayfield Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114512
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	326025
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stephen Long HMI

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)	148
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>	Alan Nethercot
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Hooper
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 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>	Fletching Street Mayfield TN20 6TA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01435 873185
<b>Fax number</b>	01435 873553

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Mayfield Church of England Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The majority of its pupils are White British. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is higher. Since the last inspection, it has gained awards as a Healthy School, an Active School and as an International School.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Mayfield Church of England Primary School is a good school. It provides good quality education and care within a lively but well ordered environment in which all pupils are valued equally. The large majority of parents and carers feel the school does a good job for their children. As one parent commented, reflecting the views of many, 'My children enjoy coming to school. They are getting on well and I am kept well informed of their progress.'

Standards have improved since the last inspection and are above the national average. There have been fluctuations in overall standards and those in different subjects by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6. These fluctuations have been caused to some extent by differences in the ability of each year group but also by variations in the quality of teaching and the curriculum. In the past, standards in writing were weaker than those in other areas. The situation is now better because of actions taken to improve teaching and ensure the curriculum fosters pupils' enthusiasm for learning in all areas, including writing. Achievement is now good overall and is more evenly balanced between different subjects and year groups. Teachers make good use of assessment information to plan lessons which meet pupils' varying needs, to check they are on track to meet challenging targets and to trigger additional support if needed. The curriculum offers an effective focus on writing and makes interesting links between subjects through topic-based projects. Most lessons involve a stimulating range of activities and have a clear purpose which is communicated well to pupils. Some opportunities are missed to help pupils take the initiative in improving their work so as to meet their targets in different subjects. Pupils receive regular and often useful guidance for improvement through marking. However, pupils are not always expected to respond sufficiently and use the marking as a catalyst for moving their work on themselves.

Strengths in the school's care and support are reflected in pupils' good personal development, their sense of well-being and the above average attendance rate. The pupils' personal and academic developments are monitored carefully. The school has been successful in improving behaviour through a more consistent approach to sanctions and rewards. The good behaviour now evident among pupils testifies to the impact of these efforts and also to pupils' increased enjoyment of learning. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and adults are good and the pupils contribute well to the school as a community.

Since the last inspection, good leadership and management have devolved outward from the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Others are now undertaking leadership responsibilities effectively. Teamwork and common purpose are evident among staff. These enable relatively weaker areas of the school's work to be tackled with success and indicate good capacity to go further. The school knows what to do next but its development plans lack detail in respect of some priorities identified for action. The criteria for judging the impact of the steps to be taken are not clear enough in all cases.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The Early Years Foundation Stage provision meets children's needs well. Their attainment on entry shows significant variations within and between years. In some years, the majority of children join the Reception class with the expected skills, knowledge and understanding. However, in other years, their attainment is below that expected and there has been a consistent

weakness in their writing for a number of years. Children make good progress and a higher proportion than is seen nationally achieve or exceed the expected goals by the time they join Year 1. The introduction last year of a systematic approach for teaching early reading and more opportunities to write have increased children's progress in writing. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good so they are ready for the next stage of school life. The staff provide good care for the children and their welfare is a high priority. Staff know children well and work effectively with parents and carers so that the needs of each are met. The children's progress is monitored carefully. Teaching is well planned to cover the required areas of learning and provide a balance of adult-led and child-selected activities. However, on occasions, the range of activities from which children select are not planned carefully enough to help them make the best possible progress. The learning environment is welcoming and well organised. The outdoor area has been much improved in recent years, although its small size hinders the full exploitation of outdoor learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led so that the quality of provision has improved and teamwork among the staff is good.

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

- Improve Early Years Foundation Stage provision further by: - giving children access to more outdoor space to extend the range of activities and their subsequent learning. - ensuring the activities that children select for themselves are well planned to promote best progress.
- Develop pupils' independence in improving their work in all subjects.
- Ensure that the actions to be taken to improve the school are always linked to sharply focused success criteria so that their impact can be checked.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress. The standards achieved in speaking, listening, reading and mathematics are above average. Standards in writing are improving but are lower and in line with the national average because of pupils' weaker writing skills on joining Year 1. The progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6 is good. In most recent years, the standards have been above average at the end of Year 6. The current Year 6 pupils have moved on well in relation to their earlier attainment. Increased rates of progress since the last inspection mean that pupils are now reaching more challenging targets than in the past. Standards in English now lead those in science and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective support provided.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils learn and play well together, demonstrating good social and moral development. The comment of a pupil that 'most people are nice to each other' captures the view of the many spoken with. Many pupils are keen to take on roles such as those of school councillors, peer mediators, prefects or as 'buddies' for younger pupils. They are fully involved in the local community, including through the church, and in raising money for good causes. Some go into the local pre-school to help younger children. Involvement in these activities, alongside good academic progress, sets pupils up well for later life by enabling them to take on responsibilities. The pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. Many enjoy sporting activities and are proud of successes, such as in a recent swimming competition. They understand about eating well and like the healthy school lunches, although some think the food could be improved

further. The pupils know how to stay safe and when to seek the help of trusted adults. Year 6 pupils, for example, show good awareness of the potential dangers in online computer work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

In most lessons, teachers explain clearly the purpose of tasks and are good at capturing and sustaining pupils' interest. Lessons are typically characterised by good discussions. These use and develop pupils' strong speaking and listening skills and are made possible by their good behaviour. Teachers plan lessons carefully to meet pupils' differing needs, notably in English and mathematics, for which they have very detailed information about attainment and targets. Classrooms are well organised and good use is often made of interactive whiteboards to support learning. Activities are well paced and teachers manage resources and time very well. However, teachers are less effective at enabling and challenging pupils to think for themselves about how to move their work forward. Good examples, such as a Year 1 lesson where pupils looked at each other's writing and the teacher skilfully helped them suggest the next steps, are not routine practice. Teaching assistants are effective in helping pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in small-group and whole-class sessions.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The redesigned curriculum is central to raising standards in areas such as writing and boosting pupils' interest in learning. While some subjects are taught separately, links between subjects through topics add much to learning by the connections made and the exciting events such as visits which are often involved. For example, as one pupil said about why he enjoys writing more: 'It's not boring writing, it's for a purpose.' Many pupils take great pride in their work. Nevertheless, the blending of subjects means the pupils are not always clear about how much progress they are making in each or about what they need to improve on. A wide range of arts activities supports good creative development. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. The pupils have a satisfactory awareness of cultural and ethnic diversity in the United Kingdom, although their direct experience of such diversity is limited. The school's international work, including linking with a school in Africa, is broadening their experience of global communities. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning, including through a 'virtual learning environment'. This enables pupils to access and store work from school and home, to carry out research and communicate with each other.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' care and welfare are taken seriously by the school and procedures for safeguarding them meet requirements. Staff know pupils well. Pupils who are vulnerable or require additional support are well supported and their progress is monitored carefully. Communication with parents in these circumstances is good and the school works effectively with external agencies if specialist resources are needed. High expectations of behaviour and a more consistent approach by staff have helped improve behaviour, including for some pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This has enabled all pupils to focus more on their learning. Academic guidance has improved. Marking in books is regular and most is useful in moving pupils forward.

In the best examples, the feedback is detailed, makes good reference to pupils' targets and pupils are expected to respond to what is written. However, this is not consistently the case so that the pupils are sometimes too passive in taking responsibility for their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well with the staff team wherein everybody leads on at least one aspect of the school's work. Monitoring and evaluation give them a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through reference to a wide range of evidence. Logical next steps are identified in development plans. However, for some development areas, the intended impact is not defined well enough to check if the desired effect is achieved. Staff are held to account and supported effectively in fulfilling their roles. The school works well in partnership with other organisations to develop the curriculum, support staff development and care for pupils. The governors monitor the school well. There is a better flow of information to them than at the time of the last inspection. They conduct regular visits and ask probing questions. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory but is recognised as a priority for school leaders. The school is a harmonious internal community and enjoys close links with the community surrounding it. There are good plans to ensure pupils gain broader awareness of ethnic and cultural diversity at home and abroad.

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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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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/or disabilities make progress	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.

## Personal development and well-being

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

<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	2
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?	3
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**

13 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mayfield Church of England Primary School, Mayfield TN20 6TA

This letter is to thank you for your participation in the school's recent inspection and to tell you what I found out.

Yours is a good school which provides a good quality of education and care for you, and these are its main strengths.

- Most of you enjoy school and try not to miss any days so that attendance is better than in many schools.
- The Reception class gives you a good start at the school.
- You make good progress with your work and reach above average standards.
- Behaviour is good and most of you get on well with each other. You told me that behaviour has really improved in the last few years because the staff are much better at helping pupils behave properly.
- You feel safe at school and know you can turn to adults if you need any help or have any problems.
- Teaching is good so that most lessons are interesting and help you learn well.
- The staff have worked hard to improve the quality of your writing and standards have risen.
- You told me you enjoy the topics. The examples I looked at showed how hard many of you work on these and how rightly proud you are of the work you do.
- The staff work well as a team with the headteacher to think of ways to improve the school and care very much about how each of you gets on.

Even in good schools like yours, there are areas which could be better, and I have asked the adults to work on the following.

- Increase the outside space available for the Reception class and make sure the children learn well during the times when they choose activities for themselves.
- Help you to become more responsible for improving your work yourselves. You can help with this by thinking hard about what to do to meet your targets and by following advice your teachers give when they mark your work.
- To make sure that the adults check carefully that the things they do to improve the school are actually making the differences they hoped for.

Good luck for the future and thanks again. Yours faithfully

Stephen Long

Her Majesty's Inspector