

Estcots Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125945
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	340876
Inspection dates	19–20 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Timothy Feast

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 of pupils on the school roll	391
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Julia Peaty
Headteacher	Susan Percy
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 20 lessons, seeing 14 teachers teach. They spent nearly a third of the school day observing learning. The team held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils, including some of the school council, and talked with some of the parents. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at analyses of pupils' attainment and progress, records of governors' meetings, the school's monitoring records, development planning and a range of policies and procedures, including those relating to safeguarding, curriculum planning documents and work in pupils' books. The team also considered the information from 146 parental questionnaires. Inspectors analysed questionnaires from pupils in Year 2 to Year 6 and questionnaires from staff.

The inspection team looked at many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the level of challenge for pupils in lessons
- the progress of vulnerable groups of pupils
- the impact that school leaders at all levels have had on bringing about improvement
- the evidence for the school taking into account pupils' and parents' views
- the evidence of effective partnerships.

Information about the school

Estcots is a primary school which is larger than average. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with much smaller numbers from other ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, principally behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, is broadly average. The school holds the Healthy School and Sportsmark awards, and the Eco Schools award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Estcots Primary is an effective school, providing its pupils with a good quality of education. Pupils value their school and speak highly of it. Central to the school's work is the good care, guidance and support. One parent, in response to the inspection questionnaire, reflected the positive comments of many by saying, 'the school has a nurturing ethos and every child is valued as an individual'. Pupils' academic and personal development is good, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend and behave well. Their success is largely attributable to the good curriculum which meets their needs well and to the good teaching, particularly the very effective deployment of teaching assistants to accelerate the progress of those who have been identified as falling behind. The school has good systems in place to track pupils' progress and to target where intervention is necessary but teachers are not yet consistent in their use of assessment information to plan challenges that stretch pupils well in class, nor in assessing progress and amending work when needed during the lesson. There are limited opportunities to spread good practice by enabling teachers to observe this working well in other lessons. Monitoring of lessons is perceptive in its analysis of teaching but does not always focus enough on the impact of the teaching on pupils' learning, so opportunities to fine-tune advice are missed.

Until recently, children entered the school in the Reception class with attainment below that expected nationally and left Year 6 with standards that were usually at or above the national average. This represents good progress. The school's latest data and the work in pupils' books show they are making consistently good progress across all the year groups and are on track to maintain last year's positive picture. Children are now entering the school in Reception with attainment in line with that expected nationally; standards in Key Stage 1 reflect this and have risen since the last inspection. Since then the school has reviewed its curriculum which now combines a good focus on enhancing pupils' basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology by adopting a creative approach. However, there is more limited attention to giving pupils experience and understanding of cultural and religious diversity.

The leadership and management of the school are good. Leaders are successful in driving up standards and bringing about improvements in many areas. The governing body, which is led very effectively, is good at providing challenge to the school and providing support where necessary. Monitoring by senior managers is rigorous and systematic. It leads to secure self-evaluation ' school leaders and governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. School leaders have demonstrated a good capacity to improve since the last inspection and continue to show this through strong

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ambition and drive to secure high standards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by:
 - ensuring lesson activities are consistently challenging
 - ensuring teachers consistently use strategies to assess pupils' performance in lessons and use that information to adjust activities during the lesson where appropriate
 - providing more opportunities, during the Spring and Summer Terms 2010, for staff to see the good practice already in place
- giving lesson observations a closer focus on learning.
- Improve the pupils' awareness of cultural and religious diversity by planning activities in and out of school which extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures and religions beyond those found locally

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils achieve well and enjoy their learning. Their attendance is above average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are achieving as well as their fellow pupils as support is readily available from an early stage and is targeted precisely at the help that they need. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage progress well and establish a good foundation for their later learning.

When given the opportunity, pupils work well together, discussing their ideas and listening to each other. They respond well to practical learning; for example, in a Reception class lesson, children were all engaged, laughing and giggling during a phoneme hunt. They usually concentrate well and often work at pace, particularly in lessons where the challenge is fine-tuned to meet their needs.

Pupils feel safe and indicate that they are confident that should they have any problems, there will be adults there to help resolve them. Behaviour on the playground shows that pupils have been taught to play safely and how to treat people properly. Pupils do have a good understanding of the need to eat healthily and to take regular exercise. However, not all follow the advice they have received when bringing their packed lunches to school. Pupils contribute well to the life of the school. There is an effective school council and also a constructive eco-committee. Pupils take part in a wide range of activities that contribute positively to the local community, from art exhibitions to harvest festivals and carol concerts.

Pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education and the school equips them with the basic skills that should serve them well in later life, including the use of technology, accurate spelling and punctuation and being punctual. Pupils reflect well on moral issues, for example in assembly on the importance of liking oneself. They show good social skills in and out of lessons.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Very good relationships between the pupils and their teachers, teachers' excellent subject knowledge and the very effective deployment of other adults all help pupils to progress well and enjoy their lessons. The majority of teachers do use assessment information well to plan and clearly identify activities for specific groups and individuals, and pupils respond well to this work. Marking is conscientious and effective. Pupils know at what level they are working but do not always have clear targets to tell them what they need to do to improve to the next level.

The curriculum is effective in meeting the pupils' needs and pupils value the wide range of activities that are available to them. Pupils enjoyed the inspection week's focus on 'lost happy endings' and said that there were 'lots of things' that they found 'interesting to learn'. The curriculum is enhanced by additional activities and through strong links with the local secondary school across the road. Such links help pupils make the transition to secondary education smoothly. Care, guidance and support are effective in securing the good development of all pupils and are particularly effective in removing the barriers to learning for vulnerable pupils. Pupils are well known to staff and there is

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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effective help from the school's learning mentor. Pupils and parents comment positively on the care and support that is provided.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The tone for improvement since the last inspection has been set by the headteacher. More recently an effective leadership team has been established and their success can be seen, for example, in the development of the 'creative curriculum' which pupils really enjoy. This new team, in partnership with the governors, is focused on driving up standards further within the context of promoting equal opportunity, which the school does well. The schools' development planning has concentrated on appropriate priorities and weaknesses have been tackled. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and with it, academic results. Effective performance management and continued professional development of staff have all helped this process.

Governors challenge and support the school well and fulfil their statutory duties. The school's work to promote community cohesion is satisfactory. The school knows the context of the community well and has undertaken a range of procedures and events to help pupils contribute to the school and local communities, but links with the wider world are less developed. Arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe are good. The quality of the work with partners is good, for the benefit of all, including links with the local fire service, the local parish and local schools, including a special school. School leaders seek the views of parents and carers effectively but they are well aware that some parents feel views are not fully taken into account. They have plans to improve communication and better demonstrate to parents how their views have affected decisions.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2

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The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Most children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress towards their early learning goals, particularly in respect of their attitudes towards learning. Children make slower progress in their skills in writing than in other areas; opportunities are sometimes missed to give higher attaining pupils challenging activities to accelerate their progress. Children have good attitudes to their learning; they are happy and are appreciative of the effort staff make. They say 'Year R is always fun.' They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and to be healthy. Their behaviour is good and it is managed well. They play well together and share when they need to take turns.

The quality of the provision is good. The environment inside is stimulating and well-equipped, but the outdoor area does not provide such strong opportunities for purposeful learning activities. Teaching is good, with staff developing the curriculum around the children's own ideas and interests. Independent learning is promoted well. Procedures for tracking children's progress from day-to-day are good and provide adults with the information they need to plan each child's next steps. Adults promote children's welfare well.

The leadership has a good focus on ensuring children make rapid progress. The new leadership has had a good impact on improving the outcomes for children in 2009, working on areas for improvement highlighted in the 2008 results. Effective links are made with the parents and outside agencies and with teachers in Year 1. This helps to make transition to Year 1 seamless, as children carry on learning in the imaginative and independent style that they are used to.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

There was a good response by parents to the parental questionnaires. Parents overall have positive views about the school and their child's enjoyment of what is on offer. Inspectors agree with the parents' many positive views. Although some parents think that unacceptable behaviour is not managed effectively, the pupils thought that the very occasional inappropriate behaviour was managed well and the inspectors agree with them. A few parents felt the school does not take account of their views, and the school has plans to improve this.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Estcots Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 146 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 391 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	47	71	49	6	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	62	42	81	55	2	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	27	93	64	10	7	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	28	91	62	7	5	7	5
The teaching is good at this school	55	38	79	54	9	6	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	25	86	59	20	14	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	29	92	63	8	5	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	38	26	91	62	7	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	29	91	62	8	5	4	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	21	87	60	12	8	6	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	24	86	59	17	12	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	54	37	74	51	15	10	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	58	40	79	54	7	5	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



21 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Estcots Primary School, East Grinstead RH19 3TY

We would like to thank you all for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you at work in your classrooms and at play outside. We particularly enjoyed your singing in assemblies. We especially thank those of you who filled in the pupils' questionnaires and those who met with us to talk about your school.

We think Estcots is a good school. These are some of the positive things about your school.

- You enjoy school and attend and behave well.
- You told us you feel safe in school and we saw you are well looked after.
- You make good progress because of the good teaching you receive.
- The curriculum is good and you enjoy the many interesting activities.
- The headteacher and staff are good at their jobs and know how to improve the school.

We have asked the school to make some improvements. These are the things the school needs to do now:

- make sure you always get challenging things to do in lessons, even if it means changing the things teachers had planned. You can help by always trying your hardest. To help the school do this, we want teachers to look at your learning in lessons, including where you are learning well.
- give you more opportunities to develop your knowledge and understanding of other cultures and other religions.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Timothy Feast

Lead inspector

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