Inspection of Etchingham Church of England Primary School

Parsonage Croft, High Street, Etchingham, East Sussex TN19 7BY

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Outstanding**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Outstanding**
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils delight in attending this caring village school. They uphold the school's values of friendship, tolerance and compassion in class and when at play. Playtimes are joyful. Pupils make up adventurous stories on the 'boat' and enjoy spending time in the playhouse.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They form positive and lasting friendships. When at play, they show a genuine care for one another. As one pupil said, 'This school is a great community where we are all united together.' Older pupils take on the role of 'reading buddies' and read with children in Reception class. Pupils are safe and happy. On the rare occasion when bullying happens, staff deal with this swiftly and effectively.

Staff have high expectations for all pupils. Children in the early years experience a great start to their life in school. They delight in the wide range of play activities on offer in their outside area. For example, they create mini assault courses and build their confidence in the outdoor performance area. Older pupils develop their interests and knowledge across a broad range of subjects well. They learn to be inquisitive and adventurous in class. Pupils develop resilience though activities in the 'forest school'. They develop their global awareness through the twinning link with a school in Malawi.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are ambitious. Since joining the school this year, the executive headteacher has made swift and decisive improvements. Leaders have clarified and strengthened the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders. This has led to subject leaders refining the curriculum. Subject leaders check that the curriculum is being delivered well. They share the impact of this with governors. As a result, governors have a strong understanding of this aspect of the school's work.

The curriculum meets the needs and interests of pupils well. This year, leaders have refined the progression of what pupils learn in many subjects. This helps teachers to be clear about what and when pupils need to learn new content. However, in a minority of subjects, leaders have not yet defined clearly enough how curriculum content builds over time. This means that some pupils do not deepen their learning as well as they could be.

The SENCo is knowledgeable and has trained staff to help them swiftly identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This helps teachers to provide the adaptations needed to support pupils in class. As a result, pupils progress well in most subjects. Leaders support teachers to manage their workload during this time of curriculum change effectively.

Children in the early years receive a very strong start to their education in this school. Staff are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They create an inspiring curriculum that reflects the children's interests. Staff provide a wealth of opportunities for children to explore their learning both inside and outside the classroom. This prepares children well for their transition into key stage 1.

Teachers help pupils to remember what they have learned. They use questioning to encourage pupils to recall relevant knowledge. This supports pupils to make sense of new learning. Staff in the early years regularly check what children know. They share children's learning with parents daily. This helps to keep parents informed about the progress their children make. Teachers encourage older pupils to complete tasks that allow pupils to review what they can remember. This enables teachers to recognise and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge quickly.

Teachers enable pupils to become confident, fluent readers. Subject leaders provide staff with helpful training. This ensures that there is a consistent and effective approach to the teaching of phonics. Teachers check that pupils understand what they learn in phonics lessons. They help pupils who fall behind in their reading to catch up quickly. Leaders are refining the approach to teaching reading in key stage 2. As a result, while reading outcomes in national tests were below expectations in key stage 2 in 2022, standards are now improving and pupils are achieving well.

Staff support pupils to behave exceptionally well in class. They provide clear expectations for behaviour. Children in the early years listen attentively and play collaboratively with one another. Teachers help children to learn how to talk about their feelings. They help older pupils to learn how to be respectful of the views of others. As a result, there is an extremely positive atmosphere in class and across the school.

The school develops pupils' interests and experience beyond the curriculum well. Pupils learn about diversity and equality. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss local and global news stories. Pupils learn about working as a team and how to problem-solve during their outdoor learning sessions. They attend a wide range of clubs on offer at the school that are accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide training that helps staff to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. They make sure that volunteers in the school know what to do if they have a concern about the safety of a pupil. Leaders carefully check that all adults in school are safe to work with pupils. They respond to concerns raised about the safety of pupils swiftly. They draw on outside agencies to offer support for pupils and families.

Staff help pupils to learn about the potential dangers of being online. They create a happy and relaxed atmosphere in school where pupils are comfortable sharing any worries they may have with adults.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a minority of subjects, leaders have not yet identified clearly enough the curriculum content and how this builds progressively. This means that there are some minor inconsistencies in how subjects are taught and pupils' learning is not as deep as it could be. Subject leaders need to clarify the progression of learning in all subjects and ensure that teachers implement this consistently.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use Ofsted Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further guidance on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	114502
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10256280
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Beverley Waldis (co-chair) Louise Reader (co-chair)
Headteacher	Cherane Marshall
Website	www.etchingham.e-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 January 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher joined the school in January 2023.
- The school is part of the Riverside Federation with Bodiam Church of England Primary School. The two schools share one governing body.
- The school is part of the Battle and Robertsbridge Alliance, a collaborative group of ten primary schools.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders, and a range of staff at the school. The lead inspector met with the chair of governors and members of

the governing body. The lead inspector met with representatives from the local authority and the diocese.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art and design, history and science. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of documents, including those relating to the governance of the school.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents and carers through their responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspectors spoke to staff and pupils during the inspection and took account of their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and considered safeguarding documents and records. This included the school's records and plans for supporting pupils who have been referred to outside agencies. Inspectors also talked to pupils, staff, governors and parents.

Inspection team

Graham Chisnell, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sara Wakefield	Ofsted Inspector

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