



# Eythorne Elvington Community Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 118399  
**Local Authority** Kent  
**Inspection number** 291125  
**Inspection date** 18 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Selwyn Ward

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Church Hill
<b>School category</b>	Community		Eythorne
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		Dover CT15 4AN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01304 830376
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	116	<b>Fax number</b>	01304 831784
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Jakki Carswell
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Gillian Pasola
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 4-11	<b>Inspection date</b> 18 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 291125
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

In this smaller-than-average-sized school, pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. Close to half the pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties. The school has suffered from high staff turnover. There have been several changes of headteacher as well as changes of teaching staff. The current headteacher started in January 2006. The school is part of the Intensifying Support Programme, which is a national initiative aimed at raising standards.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This school has suffered from major staffing problems. The many changes of teaching and leadership staff have been a major barrier to school improvement. In the past, some pupils have had their learning disrupted by mid-year changes of teacher, and interruption to and changes in leadership have meant that the school has only quite recently introduced systems for keeping a close track on pupils' progress. These were among the factors contributing to the very low standards attained in 2006 by pupils in Year 6. Despite its difficulties, the school is now moving forward. Leadership and management are satisfactory because they are ensuring that pupils are receiving a satisfactory education and are achieving satisfactorily. The school has been successful in maintaining the confidence of parents. Several point particularly to the recent improvements in behaviour which 'at times, was not always as it should be'. One, for example, praised staff for having been 'very good in helping my daughter improve her behaviour'. With these recent improvements, pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Not enough has been done, however, to plan for greater continuity of learning in the event of any further staff changes so that they do not derail the recent progress made in setting appropriate targets for pupils and creating a positive climate for learning.

Provision in the Reception Year is satisfactory. From a below-average start, children make satisfactory progress in this Foundation Stage of their education, although most are below the expected standard by the start of Year 1. Standards are also below average in Years 1 to 6. There are signs from pupils' current work, and from the school's recent tracking data, that standards are gradually improving following the dip in 2006. Teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school, and teachers have been particularly successful at motivating pupils so that they are increasingly keen to learn. Pupils with learning difficulties make sound progress in lessons because they benefit from good support from teaching assistants. It is the most able pupils who do not always do as well as they should. This is because they are not always set challenging enough work.

The curriculum is satisfactory, with a good range of clubs on offer. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Staff work hard to look after the many vulnerable pupils at the school, taking good advantage of their productive partnership arrangements with outside agencies. However, academic guidance is not as effective because it is very new. Pupils now have individual and group targets that help identify what they need to do to improve, but these have not had time to have had an impact on raising scores in the national tests.

The headteacher, staff and governors have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and of what needs to be improved. The recent improvements show that it has a sound capacity to build on these and to continue to improve.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Put in place more robust systems to ensure that pupils do not have their progress disrupted in the event of any further staff changes and are still able to build on what they have learned before.
- Set more challenging work for the most able pupils.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards are below average but this represents satisfactory achievement as children start school with below-average skills. They make satisfactory progress in the Reception Year but, by the start of Year 1, most do not reach nationally expected standards. In the assessments taken at the end of Year 2, results have been consistently below average. Standards have mostly been below average in the Year 6 tests, but there was a steadily improving trend from the last inspection to 2005. The 2006 results were exceptionally low and represented significant underachievement in this class, although 70% of these pupils had learning difficulties. The disruptive effect on learning of the high staff turnover was an important contributory factor to this underachievement, as was the lack of assessment information to help staff monitor each pupil's progress. Work in the current Year 6, though still below average, is at a higher standard and indicates that pupils are not now underachieving and are making satisfactory progress. Pupils with learning difficulties are making similar progress to others because they benefit from helpful support in lessons. It is the most able pupils who are not doing as well as they could. This is because they are not always set challenging enough work.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, overall. The school has been successful in creating a welcoming environment where pupils' social and moral skills are developed well. Pupils have a good appreciation of belonging to a local and wider community. They value the opportunity of representing others on the school council and they undertake other jobs to help the smooth running of the school. They have a clear understanding of what constitutes anti-social behaviour. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils are now satisfactory. Pupils indicate that this represents a significant improvement since last year and means that they now feel much safer in school than they did before. Most are polite and confident and demonstrate mature attitudes as they take responsibility in the school. They enjoy coming to school, are increasingly enthusiastic in lessons, and say how much they like taking part in the clubs and activities that are provided. Attendance is broadly average.

Pupils know about healthy lifestyles and particularly the importance of drinking water regularly and of taking exercise. The school is currently working towards the 'Healthy School Award'. Pupils co-operate and work sensibly together in teams. They make

reasonable progress in gaining their basic literacy and numeracy skills. This satisfactorily prepares them for the world of work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Most teachers have effective strategies to involve and encourage pupils and manage their behaviour. This is because recent whole-school initiatives to focus on improving pupils' behaviour have been successful. Teachers use questioning effectively in class discussion to extend pupils' understanding. However, where teaching is less effective, the pace of the lesson drops because too much time is spent in settling some pupils into orderly routines. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties are given good guidance and encouragement by effective support assistants. Opportunities are missed, however, for identifying ways of extending the more able pupils. Sometimes they are simply expected to do more of the same work as others rather than work that is more carefully tailored to their needs. Marking is good. Pupils benefit from work that is marked regularly and which gives them helpful feedback to help them to do better.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum focuses appropriately on the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills. The recent initiative to concentrate on writing across the school is leading to an improvement in standards in this area. Work on personal, social and health education is having a positive impact on pupils' personal development. Pupils say how much they like what the school provides. They are especially appreciative of the good range of extra-curricular activities on offer. One particularly praised the creative clubs at lunchtime while another was very pleased with the new chess club. The curriculum is being extended through the provision of French and through special themed weeks. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory, but some areas of the classroom are not imaginative or attractive enough.

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

#### **Grade: 3**

The care of pupils is good. The school provides a safe and secure environment and places an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' appreciation of their own community, for example, through the school council. All pupils receive encouragement to do their best in many ways, including earning 'house points' and gaining achievement awards.

The school works well with other agencies to ensure that pupils are well looked after. The needs of vulnerable pupils are met well. Child protection arrangements are effective and the headteacher is currently receiving up-to-date training. Statutory requirements

relating to appointing staff are met. Assessment data is being used soundly to set pupils learning targets in reading, writing and mathematics. However, much of this is relatively new, and is only just beginning to impact on raising standards.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Although the many changes in leadership have adversely affected the school's progress, things are now improving. The headteacher and staff are making good use of the Intensifying Support Programme to set appropriate targets in English and mathematics. This is still at an early stage but there are indications from pupils' work that it is beginning to have a positive effect on standards. School leaders' most obvious success is in creating a positive climate for learning at the school. This is evident in what pupils and parents describe as improved behaviour and in pupils' enthusiasm in lessons. As a parent put it, 'the children are happy and are enjoying what they learn'. This improvement has been achieved through ensuring much more consistent expectations of good behaviour throughout the school. The school is hopeful that its staffing situation is now more stable than it was, but this cannot, of course, be guaranteed. It has not yet done enough to put in place robust systems to ensure that any future changes in staff do not create the disruption to learning that has been the result of some past changes.

Governors are supportive of the school, although several are quite new. They have a realistic picture both of how far the school has come and of where further improvements are needed. They quiz staff appropriately about progress and have played an active role in the introduction of target setting.

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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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

I am writing to let you know how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you all for making us so welcome and helping us. We think your school is giving you a sound education. Teachers are helping you to make reasonable progress.

Here are the things that we think are best about your school:

- We were pleased to learn from you how much you think behaviour has improved and how you really enjoy your lessons.
- Your headteacher and staff have been successful in creating a climate where you want to learn and do well.
- Staff take good care of you.
- The targets you now have are helping you to improve your work.
- You like the good range of clubs and other activities on offer.

These are the things that we think could be better:

- The school should plan better to avoid your learning being disrupted when there are changes of staff.
- Some of you are capable of tackling more difficult work in lessons.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.