

# East Meon Church of England Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116284
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312245
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	George Rayner

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

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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	51
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Phillipa Tyrwhitt-Drake
<b>Principal</b>	Mrs Sharon Taylor
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 February 2004
<b>School address</b>	Chapel Street East Meon Petersfield GU32 1NR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01730 823218
<b>Fax number</b>	01730 823933

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<b>Age group</b>	4-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This village school is much smaller than most schools. Pupils' socio-economic circumstances are generally advantaged. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with none at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. The headteacher is very new to the school, with the inspection taking place during her second week.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This satisfactory school is beginning to show clear signs of improvement. Parents say that the school's central role in village life and its close-knit family community are important ingredients in the happiness, security and confidence of their children. Pupils say emphatically that they enjoy school. They show this through their enthusiasm in joining in with all that it has to offer. Pupils live active lives and know why this is important. They speak knowledgeably about why they need to eat and drink sensibly. Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for. They know who to turn to for help and are confident that this will be willingly given.

Satisfactory teaching and learning and a curriculum that is satisfactory overall, but with good features, lead to satisfactory achievement. Standards are broadly average in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. While teaching and learning is quite often good, it is not consistent enough to secure good achievement. Whilst the high attainers progress satisfactorily, teachers' expectations of what they can do, and the resulting level of challenge, are not consistently high enough to always bring out the very best in them. The school is developing cross-curricular links to boost pupils' opportunities for developing independence, by using their skills to carry out tasks in a variety of situations. For example, pupils are able to think about healthy diets while growing and preparing food in a joint science and design technology activity. There are too few such opportunities however.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. While pastoral care is good, the systems for tracking pupils' progress are not well organised. This makes it difficult for staff to gauge the effectiveness of their teaching, identify pupils making less progress than they should be, and give them help to catch up.

While leadership and management are satisfactory overall, they are beginning to develop strengths. Because the headteacher's appointment is so recent, she has not yet had the opportunity to have an impact on the school's performance. Nevertheless, her clear vision, energy and leadership skills have quickly gained the confidence and support of staff, governors, parents and pupils. She has swiftly formed an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Strategies, well thought out for raising standards, are speedily being put in place. For example, work has started on transforming the systems for tracking pupils' progress, to make them more consistent and accessible across the school. The past record of maintaining achievement at the level it was, at the time of the last inspection, leads to a judgement that capacity to improve is satisfactory. Recent developments however, are putting the school in a strong position to accelerate its rate of improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children make a satisfactory start in the Foundation Stage. They arrive with standards at expected levels for their age in most areas of learning. However, several are weaker than expected in using language to communicate. Following satisfactory progress, pupils enter Year 1 secure in most areas, although some have yet to fully catch up in their communication skills. Children are happy and the adults care for them well. An appropriate balance of adult-led activities and opportunities to find things out for themselves ensures that children make sound progress in their basic skills and develop their independence. The adults keep careful records

of each child's progress. These are not well enough organised, to be helpful in analysing the effectiveness of teaching methods and identifying where improvements are needed.

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

- Ensure that lessons provide consistently high expectation and challenge for the more able pupils.
- Increase cross-curricular links so that pupils have more opportunities for independently using their skills in a variety of situations.
- Improve systems for tracking pupils' progress, to make them more effective in helping those who are falling behind.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils achieve satisfactorily and standards are average in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Their targets have satisfactory challenge and pupils generally reach these. In all three subjects, pupils develop sound basic skills. In English however, few pupils become really confident and proficient in mastering a wide range of writing styles to use for a variety of tasks. In mathematics, pupils' weakest aspect is in independently using their skills to solve problems. In science they are relatively weak at finding things out for themselves by carrying out their own investigations. Due to careful identification of their needs and effective individual support from teachers and teaching assistants, pupils with learning difficulties make as much progress as their classmates.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are very conscious of their school's role in the village community and participate enthusiastically in local activities, such as the project to make their community 'greener'. They make a good contribution to school life. They say that their views are always listened to, and are proud that the ideas for compost bins and other playground facilities were theirs. Pupils say that one of the best things about the school is that the children care for each other and always volunteer help when others need it. Pupils develop a good knowledge of other cultures, helped by a link with a Ghanaian school. They are concerned that pupils there do not lead such privileged lives as themselves and are eager to help by for example, raising funds to improve the quality of their water. Pupils' progress in their main subjects prepares them satisfactorily for their futures. Almost all behave well and treat each other with consideration, although a small number do not always do so. Although most pupils come to school regularly, the attendance rate is a little below average because a few are absent more than they should be.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Pupils say, 'Our teachers are kind and work hard to make lessons fun'. This ensures that relationships are good and that pupils work willingly, so that little time is wasted. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that activities are appropriate for age in their mixed-year classes. However, they do not identify well enough the intended learning outcomes. This means that they do not clearly enough identify what is expected from each pupil, resulting in the expectation and challenge not always being high enough for the most able. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that pupils who need additional help to keep up with the pace of work quickly receive this. In some lessons, pupils have good opportunities to work independently. This was seen when Year 4 pupils worked in pairs, using their mathematical skills and vocabulary to plot routes. In other lessons, activities are more mundane and too teacher-led. While marking is generally encouraging, the quality of guidance on how to improve work varies. Sometimes this is detailed and well focused on what pupils need to learn, at other times it is too infrequent and brief to be helpful.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

All pupils, including those in Reception, have regular French lessons from a visiting specialist. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' social development. Although accommodation for physical activities is limited, effective action is taken to minimise the impact on learning. Pupils say that they enjoy visiting the nearby village hall for lessons in dance, movement and gymnastics, taught in partnership with a local sports specialist secondary school. There has been good improvement in planning for information and communication technology (ICT). This has ensured that the school now meets its legal requirement. The school recognises that the quality of current computer resources and the way in which these are scattered across the school, make it difficult for teachers to promote good learning. Significantly improved resources are on order for delivery this term. Curricular planning does not provide enough cross-curricular links. This limits pupils' opportunities to carry out scientific investigations, develop their writing skills for a variety of purposes, and their independence in solving mathematical problems.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

All pupils are very well known by the adults, and feel very secure as members of a close-knit community. Systems for ensuring pupils' safety and welfare are diligently implemented. A teaching assistant is trained to support pupils with emotional difficulties. The school maintains good links with specialist agencies to ensure that pupils who need care that it cannot provide receive this. Pupils with learning difficulties receive effective support. They help to devise their own learning plans, which boost their endeavour in meeting their targets and their pride when they succeed. Systems for tracking pupils' progress lack uniformity across the school. This makes it difficult for teachers to share information and identify pupils in danger of underachieving, so that they can quickly be helped.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Staff working at all levels share a strong sense of support for the headteacher's clear vision and commitment towards improving the school's performance. Staff know that the quality of self-evaluation has been reduced by subject leaders not being sufficiently involved in monitoring by for example, observing lessons. Sound progress during the last term, has given all a clear view of what needs doing to improve their areas. This has already led to better provision and higher standards in ICT. In most cases though, the resulting strategies are at an early stage of implementation. Governors acknowledge that they have not always been sufficiently rigorous in monitoring the work of the school, nor involved enough in strategic planning. They have demonstrated their commitment to the school by energetically undertaking training, which has helped them to significantly improve their skills and organisation. Staff report that this is already having considerable impact upon their roles as critical friends.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<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
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### 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>	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
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	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.

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

29 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of East Meon Church of England Controlled Primary School, Petersfield, GU32 1NR

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently. I enjoyed meeting you. I am grateful for the help you gave, by talking to me and showing me your work. I was able to see that yours is a satisfactory school.

I enjoyed seeing such a happy school. You help this a lot because you are cheerful, well behaved and willing to join in. Some of you said that one of the best things about your school is the way in which the children all help each other. When I talked to some of you, it was clear that you know how lucky you are. You are considerate about other people. You said that you want to help children in the school in Ghana to have better lives, by improving things like their water.

You make satisfactory progress in your learning. Your teachers want to make this even better and are working hard to think of ways that this can happen. I have asked them to make sure that they always give the most able pupils difficult enough work. This will help you to show what you can really do. I would also like them to give you more chances to use your English, mathematics and science skills in different subjects. This is a good way for you to learn to be independent. The third thing that I have asked them to do is to improve the way in which they check on how well you are making progress. This will help them to make sure that, if any of you start to fall behind, you are quickly helped to catch up.

It was clear that things are happening in your school that are beginning to make it even better. I could see that all of the adults and children are excited about working with your new headteacher to do this. Well done to you all and very best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully,

George Rayner

Lead Inspector