

Elm Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	109117
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	377874
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2012
Lead inspector	Christine Huard

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	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Chrystal
Headteacher	Debbie Williams
Date of previous school inspection	9–June 2009
School address	Nicholls Lane Bristol BS36 1NF
Telephone number	01454 866750
Fax number	01454 866751
Email address	elm.park@southglos.gov.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	26–27 January 2012
Inspection number	377874



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Christine Huard

Additional inspector

Nicholas Capron

Additional inspector

Stephanie Matthews

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 16 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 11 teachers, Observations totalled eight hours.

Meetings were held with groups of pupils, teachers and governors. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as documents provided by the school, in planning the inspection. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's systems to track the progress of pupils, records of monitoring of the quality of teaching, the school's improvement plans and minutes from meetings. Inspectors analysed the 197 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as those returned by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Elm Park is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are 11 classes in the school and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two discrete Reception classes. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is broadly average. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is also broadly average. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school meets the current floor standard.

A new acting headteacher and substantive deputy headteacher were appointed from September 2011. The headteacher was offered the substantive post from December 2011.

The school has a 'drop-in' breakfast club run by the governing body which was included in this inspection. There are also breakfast and after-school clubs offered in the Greenfields Centre with whom the school shares a site. These are run privately and did not form part of this inspection.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. After a year of considerable disruption which led to attainment and progress both falling, the school is rapidly improving and all underachievement has been eradicated since September. Pupils are now making at least the progress they should and achievement is satisfactory.
- The leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher has been very strong. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of how well the school was doing at the start of the year enabled them to identify key weaknesses in teaching and learning quickly. They put in place strategies to address these and raise attainment once again. The setting of pupils for mathematics at the top of the school was a particularly effective action which has seen all pupils in Years 5 and 6 make more than the expected progress over the year so far. Leaders acknowledge the need to develop the monitoring and evaluation roles of middle managers.
- Good or better teaching was observed in all key stages, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children get a good start. However, there are too few opportunities for free flow for Reception children between the indoor and outdoor areas. The school’s monitoring records show clearly how teaching has improved since the start of the school year and inspection evidence confirms this. Over half the teaching observed during the inspection was good or outstanding. However, this is not yet consistent enough to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress throughout the school.
- Pupils behave well across the school. They are responsive and cooperative in lessons and remain well focused on the work they are given to do. They understand how to keep themselves safe, are aware of what constitutes bullying and say that this almost never happens at their school. They are confident that if they have a concern they can discuss this with an appropriate adult, and it will be dealt with quickly.

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

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that 80% is good or better by July 2012 by:
 - ensuring that the pace of all lessons is brisk, particularly during input by teachers
 - making sure that tasks closely match the individual needs of pupils.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - fully establishing the monitoring and evaluation role of middle leaders
 - implementing the planned programme of learning walks for governors to enable them to monitor the performance of the school effectively.
- Provide more opportunities for free-flow activities between the indoor and outdoor areas in the Reception classes.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children get a good start in the Reception classes and make good progress in all the areas of learning, especially their early writing skills. Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage because teaching is consistently good. The good focus on children learning the sounds that letters, and combinations of letters make (phonics) means they are well prepared for reading and they gain a real enthusiasm for stories and books. Rooms provide a good range of activities across all the prescribed areas of learning, but the large and exciting outside area is not always used effectively enough.

In Years 1 and 2 the teaching of phonics continues to be of high priority and consequently attainment in reading is above average in both Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrate that they have acquired good strategies to tackle unfamiliar words in their reading books and have gained a good level of independence in their reading. This pattern continues throughout the school so that by the time pupils leave school in Year 6 reading is of a high standard with a high proportion of pupils reading at above average levels. Pupils' attainment in writing is broadly average and they achieve satisfactorily. Recently pupils' progress has been carefully tracked and monitored so that teachers know what needs to be done to move their pupils forward. As a result it was clear in lessons observed that pupils are beginning to learn more effectively. Teachers encourage pupils to experiment with vocabulary and imagery so that they develop a feel for words. This was particularly evident in a Year 1 lesson where pupils were writing descriptions of the wolf in fairy

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

tales and one wrote: 'his starving tummy rumbles with hunger'. A good focus on handwriting and presentation means that pupils take a pride in their work. Across the school achievement in mathematics has improved significantly during this year. The underachievement that occurred last year has been wiped out and all pupils are now attaining at the appropriate levels for their ages; pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach higher than average standards. This progress has been possible because teachers are confident with the subject and the curriculum has been adapted to ensure that pupils also have good opportunities to use and apply the knowledge and skills they are gaining.

The school tracks the progress of all pupils well. As a result there is very little difference in the progress made by different groups. Staff identified that higher attaining pupils and pupils with more severe special educational needs were not making as much progress as their peers. They have reviewed and adapted the curriculum to ensure they are now appropriately supported or challenged. All pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs are now making similar progress to their peers. Almost all the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire think that their children make good progress and are helped to develop skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics.

Quality of teaching

The great majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire think that the teaching is good in the school, and many commented that they thought it had improved this year. Teaching in the Reception class is good and ensures that children are provided with a range of activities to promote their learning in all areas of the curriculum. The curriculum has a very positive impact on pupils' progress, in particular the many opportunities offered across different subjects for pupils to refine their basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Curriculum themes are used well to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils developed their understanding of the culture of ancient Egypt when exploring information books in guided reading and literacy lessons.

In many of the good or outstanding lessons observed there was a consistency of approach which led to pupils making good or better progress. In such lessons, pupils made the best progress when they were actively involved in their learning, and interaction between teachers and pupils was strong. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make consistently good progress in their learning and achieve well because teaching, particularly in mathematics, is consistently good and often outstanding. In these lessons, teachers' brisk input is punctuated by short-burst tasks which not only help to keep pupils focused, but also enable teachers to keep a close check on how effectively all pupils are learning. Explanations are very clear and learning builds carefully on what has gone before. Teachers' skilful questioning and astute analysis of pupils' responses mean that learning is tailored well to pupils' ability. Even when working with a group, teachers build in time to patrol the class to ensure that all

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

pupils are confident with what they are doing.

However, this good practice is not yet sufficiently widespread. In lessons that were satisfactory, the pace was not so brisk. Teachers were occasionally sidetracked by their pupils when delivering the introduction to the lessons. Sometimes there was a mismatch between the abilities of the pupils and the work set; when this occurred pupils became fidgety and restless and were not so interested in their learning. Across the school, marking is generally good and tells pupils clearly what they need to do to improve their work.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour of pupils in all the lessons observed was at least good. A few parents and carers expressed concerns that their children's lessons were disrupted by poor behaviour, although the great majority felt that overall the behaviour in the school was good. Many parents and carers indicated that they felt that the behaviour had improved noticeably since September. The school's own records show that although there had been some problems in the playground with unkind behaviour at the time of the last inspection, this has now been eradicated. Behaviour in lessons has been consistently good over a period of time. The procedures that the school has in place to deal with any incidents that might occur are comprehensive and records show these to be highly effective in preventing any disruption to other pupils' learning.

Pupils have positive attitudes towards school and their learning. There are strong relationships between the pupils and adults in the school and a mutual respect clearly exists between them. Attendance is above average and the school has worked hard with the tiny minority of pupils who find punctuality a problem so that this has improved greatly. Pupils say bullying is extremely rare although they are aware that it has been an issue in the past. They clearly understand that there are different types of bullying and are confident that any bullying would be dealt with effectively. There are very positive relationships across the school and pupils say that they feel safe. They are taught how to keep themselves safe and an 'internet safety' project has ensured that pupils have a good awareness of the dangers of social network sites on the internet.

Leadership and management

The leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is strong. Since taking up post in September they have successfully pursued opportunities to improve provision and raise achievement. They have worked hard with the staff to motivate and enthuse them and provided training, especially in mathematics, to help them become more confident and proficient. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Significant improvement in mathematics across the school and in the progress made, particularly by higher attaining pupils and those with more pronounced special

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

educational needs, demonstrates the school's capacity to improve further.

Leadership by middle leaders is satisfactory. The school has some good practitioners but as yet their skills have not yet been fully developed to enable them to take a full part in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of their areas. The governing body is very supportive and has recruited a number of new members. Although they have been through the basic induction training they have not yet had the chance to visit and monitor the work of the school. The school has planned a series of learning walks to familiarise them with the school but have not yet implemented these. The school is rigorous in ensuring that children are safe and secure and all statutory requirements regarding safeguarding and child protection are fully met.

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and appeals to the pupils, meeting their individual needs and motivating them to learn. The impact of the school's curriculum review is being seen in the improvements made by higher attaining pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs. The promotion of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are taught to be thoughtful and reflective and consider the needs of others. The school ensures that there is no discrimination by carefully tracking the progress of all groups of pupils so that there are no gaps and all make at least satisfactory progress. The exceptionally high return of questionnaires by parents and carers demonstrates their degree of interest in, and concern for, the school and their children's learning. They feel that they are well informed and many commented on the positive improvement in the school during this school year, particularly in terms of the leadership and management.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



30 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Elm Park Primary School, Bristol BS36 1NF

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. You were really polite and friendly and helped us to learn a lot about what you do and what you enjoy. Your school gives you a satisfactory education and is rapidly improving.

What we found about your school

- You achieve well in reading and make satisfactory progress in writing and mathematics.
- You enjoy coming to school and behave well.
- Your teachers usually plan interesting lessons and most mark your work well so that you know what you have to do to improve.
- Your headteacher and teachers are working very hard to help you do better.

What we have asked your school to do now

- We have challenged your teachers to make even more lessons really good and exciting.
- We would like the subject leaders to take more part in checking up on what is happening in their own subjects.
- We have asked the new governors to find out even more about the school by coming and visiting you in your classrooms.
- We think that the children in Reception need to have more opportunities to choose what they want to do and have more chances to play outside.

We are sure that you will do all you can to help all adults who work with you to make your school even better.

Yours sincerely

Christine Huard
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**