

# Eastcombe Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115504
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	357763
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 December 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Edwards

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	71
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gerry Moutrey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Angela Ayling
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Dr Crouch's Road Stroud GL6 7EA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

The inspectors observed four teaching staff while visiting nine lessons or parts of lessons. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior leaders, teaching staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation, assessment and tracking information, minutes of governing body meetings, arrangements for safeguarding and pupils' work. Staff and pupil questionnaires were also scrutinised along with 47 completed by parents and carers.

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

- The progress made by pupils, particularly the more able, in their writing.
- How effectively the teachers use assessment information when planning lessons.
- The quality of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The pupils' awareness of people from other cultures and backgrounds.

## Information about the school

Eastcombe is a much smaller-than-average primary school. All pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most of these pupils have mild learning difficulties, although a small number have more complex learning needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage caters for children in a mixed Year 1 and Reception class. , There has been a high proportion of temporary staff over the past year through unavoidable circumstances but permanent staff have been in place since November 2010.

The school has Healthy Schools status and has gained the Activemark and International Schools awards.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Eastcombe provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It provides pupils with a happy learning environment where they feel safe, behave well and show enthusiasm for learning. Almost all parents responding to the questionnaire felt their children enjoyed school, and this was confirmed by the pupils.

Children enter the school with skills and abilities that are similar to those expected for their age. They get a good start in the Year1/Reception class before making satisfactory progress throughout the rest of the school. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average. Pupils' writing skills progress well, the result of an effective focus on this aspect of their work. While mathematical skills progress satisfactorily, pupils should do better. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress in line with their classmates. Gifted and talented pupils are well provided for through good links with the local secondary school. Teachers have good relationships with pupils who are keen to learn. They question pupils effectively, enabling them to develop their speaking and listening skills well. Although teachers' marking of pupils' work is regular and systematic, they occasionally miss opportunities to inform pupils how they might improve their work. While teaching is satisfactory overall, teachers' use of assessment information to plan lessons, particularly in mathematics, is inconsistent. As a result, pupils' progress is not as good as it should be. Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to find things out for themselves in mathematics, and activities occasionally lack sufficient challenge and excitement. Learning objectives occasionally lack clarity and they are often written in language not easily understood by the pupils. Teachers spend too long explaining tasks and this results in pupils having too little time to complete activities.

The satisfactory curriculum is enhanced by a good range of visits, visitors and clubs. Pupils have a good awareness of the need to eat healthily and a good number take part in a wide range of sporting activities to enable them to follow a healthy lifestyle. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are sensitive to the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. They participate in a good number of fund raising activities. Their understanding of people from other cultures and religions in the United Kingdom is underdeveloped.

There have been a number of staff changes over the past year, and, in such a small school, this has affected the school's ability to ensure it addresses areas for development. Self-evaluation is accurate and the headteacher has a clear picture of where strengths and weaknesses lie. The leadership rightly recognises that it to provide subject leaders with more guidance and support in analysing outcomes to ensure new initiatives have a greater impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Improved tracking procedures provide the leadership with a clear picture of how well pupils are achieving and regular progress meetings ensure all teachers are kept well informed. Teachers are becoming more secure

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in their assessments of how well pupils are progressing. Governors know the school well and they work effectively to hold the leadership to account for the progress it is making. There is a clear picture that the school has correctly identified areas for development and that it has satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvements.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics, by ensuring teachers:
  - make more effective use of assessment information to pitch work at the correct level, particularly for the more-able pupils
  - make learning objectives more specific and easily understandable for all pupils
  - ensure pupils are provided with sufficient opportunity to complete activities and time is not wasted listening unnecessarily to teachers' introductions and explanations
  - make activities more relevant, exciting and interesting.
- Develop the impact on the work of the school by leaders at all levels by increasing their confidence and ability to analyse data to ensure pupils are making the progress of which they are capable.
- Broaden pupils' awareness and understanding of people from other cultures, religions and backgrounds.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**3**

As a result of their good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's attainment by the end of the Reception Year is above average. National test and assessment information indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress in both Key Stages 1 and 2 and this was confirmed during the inspection. In lessons seen during the inspection, most pupils made satisfactory progress. They are keen to learn new things and are enthused when they are really challenged and interested. For example, following discussions with senior citizens, pupils' writing about life during the Second World War showed good attention to detail and demonstrated their interest in the activity. Pupils are attentive, listen carefully and are good at cooperating with their classmates. Work in books shows satisfactory achievement but there are too few opportunities, particularly for the more able, to initiate investigations or problem solving activities. Consequently, these pupils do not achieve their potential. Work in books shows satisfactory achievement and that boys and girls make similar progress.

The pupils' above average attendance is an indication of their enthusiasm for school. They say they are safe in school and are not aware of any bullying but know who to speak to should they have a problem. Pupils make an important contribution to the school, for example, sports leaders work with younger pupils and Year 6 pupils organise the daily 'wake and shake' sessions. Their involvement with the village community is good, regularly playing and singing for the senior citizens. Pupils' moral and social development is good and they talk sensitively about their efforts to raise money for charitable organisations. Although pupils recall being taught about people from other cultures and those who follow different religions, their understanding is relatively weak. Pupils' satisfactory basic skills,

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good attendance and good social skills prepare them well for their next stage of education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory, but there were good features. Throughout the school, relationships between staff and pupils are good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure, and they make effective use of questioning to extend pupils' understanding and this helps to develop their speaking skills well. Teachers' planning demonstrates they prepare work for different ability groups. However, previous assessment information is not used sufficiently well to ensure work is pitched at the correct level for all pupils and learning objectives are not always clear. Consequently, not all pupils progress as well as they should, particularly in mathematics. Occasionally, teachers do not allow the pupils sufficient time to complete tasks, spending too long on introductions and explaining what is to be done. Strategies such as 'talk partners' provide pupils with the skills to explain their thoughts to other pupils. Teaching assistants provide good support for those pupils with emotional or concentration difficulties and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are good arrangements to support children when they transfer from pre-schools and when they move on to their secondary school.

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The curriculum provides pupils with good opportunities to practise literacy skills in other subjects. For example, there were good links with history, with older pupils demonstrating improving writing skills in the work on the Second World War and with the work by younger pupils in their study of the Romans. The pupils' enthusiasm for learning is enhanced through activities such as their participation in the Cheltenham Festival. Pupils' scientific understanding was enhanced well during the Bubble Week when they found out the answers to such questions as, 'Can a bubble be created in a vacuum?' The regular teaching of French and links with a school in France provide pupils with a satisfactory awareness of life in a European country.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

All staff are keen to improve the school's provision. However, there has been a high proportion of temporary staff over the past year through unavoidable circumstances and this has resulted in a lack of continuity of subject leadership. Self-evaluation is accurate and the headteacher has a clear picture of what needs to be done. Systematic tracking of pupils' progress and an analysis of their needs are undertaken. However, the leadership team is at an early stage of ensuring the information is analysed and utilised effectively by all staff to ensure pupils make the best possible progress. Monitoring of teaching and learning is undertaken and the leadership has made effective use of local authority expertise to highlight areas for improvement. Subject leaders are not yet sufficiently skilled in identifying how staff might improve their planning to ensure the rate of all progress is accelerated, but there is a determination among all to improve the quality of the school's provision.

The school is rigorous in ensuring there is no discrimination. Staff are careful to ensure all pupils have equality of opportunity and gaps in achievement between boys and girls have been closed. Members of the governing body provide good support to the school and are effective in holding the leadership to account.

The school looks after its pupils well and care is taken to ensure their safety. At the time of the inspection, all safeguarding procedures were in place. There are good links with other primary schools in the area and the school is seeking ideas as to how local expertise in subjects can be better utilised. Effective links with outside agencies ensure good support for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school's planning and evaluation for community cohesion, based on their careful audit, is at an early stage. The school's International Schools award is a reflection of its links with a

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school in France. It is beginning to reach out to the wider community to provide pupils with a good understanding of other cultures and religions.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are enthusiastic learners and enjoy taking part in the good range of activities on offer. They are well behaved and quickly learn how to share and cooperate with each other as they learn and play together. They are confident and very happy because there is a good emphasis on developing their social and personal skills. Staff plan a good range of child-chosen and teacher-directed activities. Significant improvements to the provision since the previous inspection are helping to ensure that children now make consistently good progress and so enter Year 1 with above average attainment. Good assessment strategies provide a detailed picture of how well the children are progressing. Parents contribute to the assessment process and this contributes to the children's good development.

Children are provided with a good foundation in basic skills, their enthusiasm evident during a letter sounds (phonics) session when they confirmed their good progress in recognising letters and blends. Staff know the children very well and arrangements for ensuring their health and safety are well embedded into school routines. Outdoor space is very limited and the lack of a covered area limits its use. However, the school has rightly identified this and plans are in place to install a canopy. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed and there is a clear picture of improvement.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Links with parents are satisfactory. While most parents who responded to the questionnaire are generally happy with the school and how it provides for their children, a few expressed concerns with how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that during the inspection behaviour overall was good and there are appropriate strategies in place to deal with any poor behaviour. A small minority expressed concerns regarding communication between school and home and with the quality of leadership. The school is providing regular weekly bulletins to keep parents better informed and the establishing of a parent group is helping to identify their concerns. The school rightly acknowledges the need to improve the school's leadership to drive forward improvement.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Eastcombe 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 47 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 73 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	64	16	34	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	60	19	40	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	13	28	29	62	5	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	32	27	57	5	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	8	17	34	72	5	11	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	30	28	60	3	6	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	47	25	53	0	0	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)	14	30	28	60	2	4	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	32	27	57	4	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	17	30	64	9	19	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	30	23	49	9	19	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	9	19	27	57	8	17	3	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	30	28	60	4	9	1	2

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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



3 December 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Eastcombe Primary School, Stroud GL6 7EA**

Thank you for making us welcome and talking to us when we visited your school recently. Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education and this letter is to tell you what we found out about your school and what we have asked the school to do to improve.

- You go to a happy and welcoming school.
- Children in the Reception class make a good start to their learning.
- You know how to keep healthy, you behave well and you enjoy school.
- You look after one another and work together well.
- There is a satisfactory range of activities that help you to learn and a good range of sporting activities, visits and visitors that make learning more interesting.
- Your school works well with other schools and organisations to improve your education and you are well looked after.
- Those in charge of the school are leading it satisfactorily.

In order to improve your school, we have asked your headteacher and senior staff to do the following.

- Help teachers make better use of the information about how well you are doing when planning their lessons, particularly in mathematics, so that more teaching is good.
- Develop the leadership of the school so that it helps you to make better progress.
- Give you more opportunities to learn about people from other cultures, religions and backgrounds, particularly in the United Kingdom.

You can help by telling your teacher if you find work is too easy for you.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards  
Lead inspector

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