

# Elm Road Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110650
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	356790
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Colin Henderson

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>	226
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Edwards
<b>Headteacher</b>	Graham Lockwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Elm Road Wisbech PE13 2TB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01945 584591
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<b>Email address</b>	office@ElmRoad.cambs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 16 lessons involving seven teachers and 13 teaching assistants. Meetings were held with governors, staff, groups of pupils, parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school development plan, self-evaluation form and local authority reports. They also analysed 60 parental questionnaires, 122 pupil and 13 staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How successful are staff in improving boys' weaknesses in writing?
- How closely is pupils' attainment tracked and how well are assessments used to raise standards in English?
- Are pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities integrated well and do they make good enough progress?
- How effective are leaders and managers in evaluating what the school provides and improving standards?

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils come from the local area. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds has increased substantially and is broadly average. An above average proportion speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The school has achieved Healthy Schools' status and is part of the Wisbech Schools' Partnership. The school organises and manages a breakfast club before the start of school each day.

**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?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

Elm Road is a good school. It continues to provide a caring, supportive learning environment that promotes good relationships and a friendly, vibrant school community. Pupils and their parents and carers are justifiably proud of their school. This was reflected in the many positive comments; for example, 'my child has blossomed due to the professionalism, care and support given by all staff'. Pupils want to learn and the achievement of most pupils is good because of good teaching, an interesting curriculum and the nurturing care provided by all staff. Behaviour is good and pupils are attentive in lessons and concentrate upon their work. The enthusiastic drive provided by the headteacher, supported well by a cohesive team of staff and the governing body, maintains a clear focus on improving the school and raising pupils' achievements. For example, an increased focus on writing has led to improvement in the quality and range of boys' written work.

Good use of a detailed tracking process allows all teachers to check carefully on pupils' progress. An end of year target is set for each pupil and termly assessments are used well to check progress towards their targets and to identify those who would benefit from extra support. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are provided with extra support in lessons, and when they are withdrawn for more intensive individual or group work. Their progress is satisfactory overall as the support from teaching assistants is not always of a consistently good quality in every class. Procedures are not developed fully to allow the school management to evaluate how effective this support is in raising the standards of these pupils' work.

Pupils are eager to contribute to the school community, for example through the good work of the class and school councils and the help given by the playground buddies. They enjoy an interesting curriculum with increasingly effective use of cross-curricular themes, particularly in Key Stage 1. Teachers make good use of the local area, and trips to places such as the Houses of Parliament, to stimulate an enthusiasm for learning. Procedures to evaluate teaching are effective and have resulted in good quality with some outstanding practice in Year 6. Teachers know their pupils well and manage their classes carefully to ensure that they focus on their work. They plan lessons in detail, although the activities in some lessons are not matched closely to meet the full range of pupils' needs, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers use target sheets to assess pupils' level of work closely and mark their work constructively to show what they need to do to reach a higher standard. These practices, together with an increasing use of self- and peer-assessment, are helping pupils gain a better understanding of how well they are doing and improving their achievement, particularly in writing.

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Most children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities that are below nationally expected levels, although this varies and some intakes have been above these levels. Assessments show that they make good progress by the time they enter Year 1, especially in their personal and social development, because of good teaching. Good progress continues throughout the school. It is excellent in Year 6 where the teaching is outstanding - 'the best ever!' described one pupil. Pupils attain at least average standards. Where assessment data shows that they entered with average levels of skills and knowledge, they attain above average standards by the time they leave. Current data shows that an increasing number of Year 6 pupils attain above the nationally expected Level 4, for example in writing.

Since the last inspection, the senior leadership team, together with subject leaders, has established good procedures to check how well the school is doing. Subject leaders are benefiting from specific leadership time to evaluate their areas of responsibility and target areas for improvement. This is giving a sharper focus to the school's drive to improve further and sets them up well to sustain improvement. An influential and proactive governing body contributes successfully to strategic planning, evaluating what the school provides and using finances carefully to target improvement.

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

- Raise pupils' attainment by:
  - extending good practice to ensure all teachers use assessments to match activities to the full range of pupils' learning needs, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
  - improving the monitoring and evaluation of teaching assistants to ensure that they provide consistently good support to extend learning at all levels.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Pupils achieve well in lessons because teaching is good; they find lessons interesting and are keen to do as well as they can. For example, Year 6 pupils, particularly boys, eagerly responded to their teacher's challenge to use different sources of information on 'The Blitz' to research then choose their own way of writing a detailed description. Good use of assessment data helps teachers target weaknesses and most pupils make good progress. Many pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress, particularly when the school benefits from help from the local authority support service. They make satisfactory progress overall as the support they receive in lessons is not consistently good enough to extend their language skills. The achievement of gifted and talented pupils is good as many teachers challenge them successfully to extend their skills either in lessons or through the good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress as the support they receive in lessons is not consistently effective.

Good use of incentives and rewards has enabled the school to improve attendance considerably to nearly average levels. Pupils feel safe and adopt healthy lifestyles, for example through their active involvement in a good range of sporting activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Social and moral aspects are particularly strong and pupils' spiritual and cultural development is enhanced by visits and

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visitors, for example when a parent explained the festival of Diwali and demonstrated some Indian cooking.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</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 is good with some outstanding practice. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to interest pupils and involve them in their learning. For example, Year 3 pupils reinforced their phonics (the sounds that letters make) knowledge through using the whiteboard well to identify key sounds in words. A brisk pace, regular reminders over time and high expectations are key features of the best lessons, and pupils, for example in Year 6, respond excellently. There are some examples of outstanding partnerships between teachers and classroom assistants that ensure all pupils are fully involved and significantly promote their learning, for example those who speak English as an additional language. However, this high quality support is not evident in all lessons. Teachers use assessments to monitor pupils' progress closely, although they do not use them consistently to match activities to the full range of learning needs, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The curriculum offers a good range of interesting activities and is enhanced well by extra-curricular clubs, visitors and visits, for example to the Isle of Wight. Cross-curricular topics boost the interest of pupils, especially in Key Stage 1. Such topics provide some extra opportunities to extend their key skills, for example, writing at length about important

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historical events. Similar opportunities are not developed fully for Key Stage 2 pupils. Good links with schools in the Wisbech Partnership provide further opportunities to extend pupils' learning. For example, links with a local secondary school provide good opportunities for pupils to use their facilities in a broad range of sports. A well-run breakfast club provides an enjoyable and healthy start to the school day for some pupils.

Care, guidance and support have been maintained at the good quality reported at the last inspection and reflect the high priority given by the school. Excellent procedures for child protection ensure that the school provides 'a sanctuary' for many children. The school's good partnership with parents and carers and effective links with local agencies ensure that pupils are supported well and grow in self-esteem. Pupils benefit from a welcoming environment and effective support in class activities, although this is not always of a consistently good standard. The induction processes when pupils join the school and when they move to their next school are good and provide good continuity to their education. Older pupils, in their roles as 'playground buddies', help younger ones to make friends and feel safe.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

There is a strong team approach that enables and encourages staff and governors to work together closely and share ideas and initiatives that could improve the school. The headteacher's supportive and enthusiastic personal style is reflected in many aspects of the school's success. He is accessible and approachable and parents and carers confidently share their views with him. This encourages a communal sense of purpose to continue to improve the school. Improvements in the roles and contributions of key stage and subject leaders have sharpened the school's self-evaluation procedures. Teaching is monitored regularly, although the work of teaching assistants is not evaluated carefully enough to ensure consistently good support to pupils' learning.

The school is successful in tackling any discrimination. It promotes equal opportunities satisfactorily, although pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are not always effectively included in some lessons. It has a good partnership with parents and carers which contributes successfully to their children's learning. Safeguarding procedures are good, reflecting the school's own self-evaluation, with clear policies in place meeting all current requirements. Staff and governors are proactive in ensuring that the school is kept safe and secure and passionate about the care they provide for vulnerable pupils. All staff are suitably trained in child protection and there are excellent systems for recording any concerns. The school is successful in promoting cohesion within the school and local

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communities, for example working with the mayor and town council to be actively involved in such community projects as bulb planting and the local Rose Fair. Working with a local Traveller storyteller has produced drama to encourage community cohesion and break down any prejudice. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of communities in other parts of the world is enhanced satisfactorily through curriculum topics but not through direct links with schools abroad.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Reception Year children make good progress because they benefit from a well planned and organised programme of activities, despite some limitations on space and the use of the outdoor area during inclement weather. Staff plan carefully to include all required areas of learning and use assessment increasingly effectively to identify and support those children not making expected progress. Recent involvement in a learning project has been particularly successful in making learning fun, especially for boys, and enhancing their progress. Staff provide a good balance between activities which are led by adults and those that the children choose to do themselves. Relationships are good. Staff know the children well, and have a good understanding of their different interests and how they learn. Teaching is good. Children are encouraged to contribute their ideas, although opportunities to extend children's language are not always taken.

Good leadership and management maintain a strong focus on checking carefully on how each child is doing. Careful planning and assessment help match pupils' work to their ability, for example in phonics.



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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	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about the school. One commented 'I would recommend this school to anybody without a second thought'. They value its friendly, caring and supportive approach and are confident about approaching the school if they have any concerns. They feel that their children are safe and really enjoy school. Parents and carers are pleased with the quality of teaching, the interesting curriculum topics, the range of sporting clubs and the progress being made by their children. Inspection findings support these positive views.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Elm Road 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 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 226 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	68	19	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	80	12	20	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	67	20	33	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	65	20	33	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	67	20	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	60	23	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	70	18	30	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)	37	62	19	32	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	62	20	33	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	62	21	35	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	50	25	42	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	46	77	14	23	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	72	17	28	0	0	0	0

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.**



1 December 2010

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of Elm Road Primary School, Wisbech, PE13 2TB**

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. After spending two days with you, talking with you about what you do and hearing your views, looking at your work, watching you learn, and talking to your teachers, we have judged that your school is good.

You clearly enjoy school and we were pleased to see how well you get on together. Your behaviour is good and this means that teachers can get on with the job of helping you learn. It was interesting to talk to school councillors about how they contribute to your school community. You told us how much you enjoy the different trips out of school and the good range of clubs. Your teachers provide interesting lessons that help you to enjoy and improve your work. We have asked them to plan carefully to help those of you who find learning difficult to be fully involved in the activities.

You are keen to improve your achievement. Many of you, particularly the older pupils, use your target sheets and helpful marking by your teacher to improve your work. Some of you benefit in class from good support from teaching assistants. We have asked the headteacher and his staff to check on how helpful this support is for you and to try to help everyone get good support when they need it.

Thank you again for helping us to find out about your school and we hope that you will continue to be happy and to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Colin Henderson

Lead inspector

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