

East Oxford Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123046
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	359352
Inspection dates	8–9 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janice Gordon
Headteacher	Sue Widgery
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors saw 19 lessons and 15 teachers and practitioners were observed. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, and groups of pupils. The school's work and a wide range of documentation were reviewed. This included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school improvement plan, leaders' monitoring records and pupils' work. Questionnaires from staff and pupils and from 118 parents and carers were analysed and their responses taken into account.

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

- Are pupils, particularly higher-ability pupils, progressing well enough in their learning?
- How successful are the school's strategies to boost attendance?
- What are the features of assessment that are helping to boost pupils' progress?
- What role do teachers play in the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures?

Information about the school

East Oxford is a large, urban primary school which serves a diverse and multi-ethnic community. Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups with almost half being of Asian or Asian British, Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage with a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds. Over three quarters of the pupils speak English as an additional language with many having very little English when they start at the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is increasing and is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. Pupil mobility is exceptionally high. The school has gained Healthy School status. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a large unit which provides part-time provision for Nursery children and also for Reception age children. There is after-school care managed by the governing body which is included in this report.

The school is in partnership with the East Oxford Children's Centre. One of its three sites is at the school. This was not 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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. It continues to be a thriving and harmonious multicultural community in which pupils' personal development is supported well because there is a caring and inclusive ethos. Pupils are happy and behave well. They feel safe and get on well together. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They develop into mature and responsible young people by the time they reach Year 6. They enjoy exercise and have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy life as recognised in the school's national award. These strong aspects are not supported by levels of attendance which are low. Nevertheless, due to the good procedures put into place, attendance is improving rapidly although too many families continue to take extended holidays in term time.

Pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result of the effective emphasis placed on strengthening pupils' basic skills, their progress is accelerating rapidly and securely as they move through the school. While progress remains satisfactory, increasing numbers are now making more rapid progress as a result of more focussed support, particularly in reading and science. However, despite this, attainment remains low by the time that they leave the school, especially in writing. While teachers' are raising their expectations of what pupils can do, these are not always high enough, particularly for more able pupils, to ensure that they make the best possible progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from the help given by teachers and support staff and make as much progress as other pupils. The many pupils that are at an early stage of learning English make rapid progress because the support that they receive is exceptionally well tailored to their needs by both specialist teachers and workers that provide bilingual support. In addition, the school is particularly successful in supporting the many pupils, including vulnerable pupils, who leave and enter the school during the school year. These pupils say that they thoroughly enjoy school because there are good quality arrangements to welcome them. This, when linked to the careful assessments of these pupils' needs, ensures that they learn to speak English quickly and develop positive attitudes to learning.

Teaching is satisfactory but improving. Much of the teaching is good and teachers often use assessments well to meet the needs of pupils. However, there is a residue of weaker teaching which results in slower progress for pupils in a few lessons, especially in writing. Teachers generally ensure that pupils are clear about the purpose of lessons, although occasionally this is not the case and this confuses pupils because they do not know what is expected of them. Marking is not consistent. While there are some good examples in which teachers ensure that comments focus on what pupils need to do to improve, this is not always the case and sometimes comments are too vague and not related to the purpose of the lesson.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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The school makes a good contribution to the cohesion of its diverse community. The headteacher is held in high regard by the school community and she has ensured that there is strong teamwork amongst the staff. The close working partnership and commitment to improvement demonstrated by the headteacher and the senior leadership team are major features in the school's improved progress. There are now much improved procedures to monitor and evaluate the school's provision and pupils' learning. Improvements in the use of data enable senior staff to be more rigorous in holding teachers to account for the pupils' progress. The school's thorough and accurate self-evaluation procedures lead to a good quality development plan that provides a helpful tool for further development. This ensures that the school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress and lift attainment at the end of Year 6 by:
 - ensuring that teachers make the purpose of lessons clear to pupils
 - raise the consistencies of teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly the more-able
 - improve the quality of marking to ensure that teachers focus their comments on how pupils can improve their work.
- By January 2012, lift attendance levels to get them as close as possible to broadly average.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enter Year 1 with attainment which is well below average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although their progress is slower in writing than in reading and mathematics. The many pupils that are at an early stage of learning English develop their speaking and listening skills quickly. The school has recognised that some pupils need more help with technical vocabulary in mathematics and good programmes have led to considerable improvements in progress in this subject. The emphasis placed on strengthening pupils' writing skills is starting to pay dividends particularly for the boys. This is because teachers are mindful of writing tasks that capture the boys' interest. For example, in a good literacy lesson in which Year 5 pupils were learning about writing instructions, when the teacher said that the task was to write instructions on 'how to kick the perfect penalty', the boys were excited and keen to complete the task. This led to good progress being made in their learning. Despite the fact that attainment at the end of Year 6 remains low, a large proportion make good progress between Years 3 and 6. Nevertheless, too few pupils reach the higher level at the end of Year 6, especially in writing and science, although more do so in mathematics.

In most lessons, activities enable the pupils to collaborate in their learning. This enables pupils to develop good-quality skills in speaking and listening as well as their inter-personal skills. Even though their writing and mathematics skills are much below expected levels at the end of Year 6, they are suitably prepared for their move to secondary education. Pupils are proud of their school and they enjoy taking on responsibility such as through membership of the influential school council, supporting younger children and buddying new pupils into the school

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

The majority of lessons are of good quality. This is a key factor in accelerating pupils' progress. Learning is supported well by the pupils' positive and mature attitudes to studying and these are encouraged well by teachers throughout the school. In all lessons, teachers manage pupils well and create a calm and purposeful atmosphere. Teachers use a variety of teaching styles and this contributes well to the good personal development of pupils. Interactive whiteboards are used well to explain new concepts and bring learning alive. However, a small minority of teaching is weaker. This is because, in these few lessons, teachers do not make the purpose of lessons sufficiently clear to enable the pupils to know what they need to do to succeed.

A creative and innovative curriculum put into place recently is beginning to have an impact on capturing pupils' imagination, particularly in providing many opportunities for them to practise literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across many subjects. The curriculum is enriched well by a wide range of visits out of the school and good use is made of Oxford's many museums and galleries. In addition, there is a good range of clubs, and pupils also benefit from residential visits. However, there has been too little emphasis placed on developing curricular opportunities for pupils that are gifted and talented and to extend more able pupils.

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Pupils are well cared for. This is confirmed by parents and carers who are almost unanimous in saying that their children enjoy school and are kept safe. They also say that they appreciate the good quality after-school care provided. There are especially good arrangements to ensure that the many newcomers to the school are quickly helped to settle and feel secure. The school supports vulnerable pupils well and the work of the learning mentor and home-school link worker also supports their families. These staff are also centrally involved in the school's drive to lift attendance. There are good strategies in place to raise attendance and these are having a positive benefit and, for example, in the summer term of 2010, attendance was much higher than in the past. Furthermore, the teachers ensure that many pupils that take extended holidays are provided with packs that are tailored to meet their needs for them to complete when away from school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school based on her twin commitments to maintaining the positive and inclusive ethos and strengthening achievement. Nonetheless, the school's drive for improvement is satisfactory because, as yet, the improvements in learning have not yet transmitted to the strengthening of attainment, particularly in writing. Self-evaluation is good and there is close monitoring of teaching and learning by senior staff and those with subject responsibilities. This is resulting in strengthening teaching and learning with the increasing proportion of good teaching. Nonetheless, more remains to be done in order to remove inconsistencies in the quality of lessons. The governing body supports the school well and ensures that statutory responsibilities are met. Arrangements for members of the governing body to check the school's provision are less well developed and this limits their ability to provide appropriate challenge for school improvement.

There are robust procedures in place to ensure that pupils' health and safety is secured, and, in addition, all regulations for the safeguarding of pupils are met. In many respects, the school works effectively to promote equal opportunities. The rich and varied heritage of the many ethnic groups is celebrated very well. In addition, discrimination of any sort is not tolerated and racist incidents are very few with an ethos of tolerance and harmony permeating the school. Nevertheless, the academic achievement of all groups of pupils remains satisfactory and more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.

The school provides a very cohesive community and there are effective partnership links with local schools, the Children's Centre and also with parents and carers. The school hosts a Farmers' and Community Market every Saturday and this brings many members of

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the local community into the school to purchase goods and to take advantage of the caf . There are excellent links with the many local mosques, temples and also the Buddhist centre and Jewish house. Pupils' understanding of different communities globally is starting to be developed through links with a school in Italy and there are plans in place to build on the visit of a headteacher from Mumbai.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter the Nursery with levels of skills that are very low, especially in communication, language and literacy. The support for the many who enter the school speaking little or no English is effective. The children are cared for with great sensitivity.

Children get off to a flying start, making rapid progress in their personal and social development. This is because staff place a high priority on children's welfare and having carefully planned arrangements for them when they start school. This results in the Nursery children being settled and secure. Lively teaching ensures that activities are vibrant. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, children learn to listen attentively, share toys and take turns. Staff provide well-resourced opportunities for children to explore the world around them and to develop their language and number skills. As a result, children enjoy learning, and their curiosity, independence and concentration are developed well. However, despite the good progress they make, skills in communication are well below average, especially in linking sounds and letters with writing. The curriculum provides a good balance between activities that are led by adults and those that children select for themselves. Staff provide sensitive and well-targeted support, based on a good knowledge of the children. They also benefit from a well-resourced outside area. Activities here are also well planned to develop all areas of learning.

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Assessments are thorough and provide a good platform for staff to ensure that children's development is recorded effectively. The enthusiastic staff work closely as a team and are led well by the knowledgeable Foundation Stage Unit leader.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They are almost unanimous in saying that they are happy with their children's experience at the school. Many parents and carers made positive comments. These are summarised by the parent or carer who wrote: 'The staff are motivated and work hard to create a loving and vibrant environment with values that reflect the community's needs. This is a culturally rich environment in which individuals are valued. It is a joy that my daughter comes home with a deep and clear understanding that everyone is equal and the school makes sure that they are equally respected.' Inspection findings confirm this view.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at East Oxford 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 118 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 296 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	79	67	38	32	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	67	57	49	42	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	58	49	54	46	2	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	54	46	54	46	5	4	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	69	58	42	36	3	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	47	49	42	8	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	59	50	51	43	4	3	1	1
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)	48	41	59	50	3	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	52	44	58	49	5	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	57	48	49	42	7	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	40	59	50	8	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	69	58	41	35	4	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	69	58	45	36	2	2	1	1

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



10 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of East Oxford Primary School, Oxford, OX4 1JP

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to tell you about the findings of your recent inspection and to thank you for taking the time to talk to us. Yours is a satisfactory school which means that you are helped to do some things well, though there are areas that need to be improved. We were very impressed to see how well you get on together and enjoy school. We realise how proud your school councillors are because they helped to plan your brilliant new middle playground! You are able to learn in a really friendly atmosphere where the adults take good care of you. You behave well and play together sensibly. The teachers make lessons interesting for you but sometimes they do not provide you with work that is challenging enough, particularly for those of you that find learning easy.

You make satisfactory progress. Your progress is better in reading and mathematics than it is in writing and we would like to see you making as much progress in writing as you do in reading. We have also asked that teachers make sure that their marking always helps you to know what you have to do to improve. This is also the aim of your headteacher and teachers who have made many improvements recently. Finally, and this is an area where all of you can really help, we have asked that levels of attendance should improve. Please make sure that you attend school every day and that you are only absent when you are ill. This will help you in your learning.

We enjoyed being in your school and we can understand why you like school and learning. We hope that you continue to enjoy your education.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector

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