

Eldon Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101988
Local Authority	Enfield
Inspection number	355107
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Mary Summers

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	498
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judy Ellerby
Headteacher	Julie Messer
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 26 lessons and 17 teachers. They met with a governor, members of staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school policies and plans, records of pupils' progress, and analysed questionnaires returned by staff and pupils and the 66 questionnaires submitted by parents and carers.

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

- The achievement of Turkish pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- How successfully reading is being promoted and taught throughout the school.
- The impact of the new senior leadership team upon the school's effectiveness.
- The effectiveness of the school's work with parents and pupils to raise attendance levels.

Information about the school

Eldon Infant School is larger than most similar schools. Most of the pupils who attend come from the immediate locality. The large majority are from minority ethnic groups, the largest proportions coming from Turkish and Somali backgrounds. The large majority of pupils come from homes where English is not the first language and over half of these pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is very high. A higher than average proportion of pupils start or leave the school during the year, as their families move in or out of the area. The Nursery caters for 60 children and most of them transfer to the school's Reception classes. In addition, approximately 90 children start in the school's Reception.

The school shares its site with a children's centre, which is not run by the school's governing body. The neighbouring junior school is also on the same site and has very recently formed a collaboration with Eldon Infant School. An executive headteacher leads both the infant and junior schools. There have been other significant changes in staff since the last inspection, including members of the senior leadership team. The school has gained a number of awards in recent years, including the Intermediate International Schools Award and Healthy Schools status.

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

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving rapidly from 2009, when pupils' attainment dipped, and at which time the school suffered from a period of disruption because of staffing difficulties. Since then, the effective leadership of every member of the new leadership team has secured pupils' good overall progress. Although attainment remains low at Year 2, the gap between the attainment of pupils at Eldon Infant School and schools nationally is decreasing strongly.

Rigorous monitoring procedures and strong teamwork are having a good impact on the school's work and ensure clear and accurate self-evaluation. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have very positive relationships with pupils, resulting in a pleasant and productive atmosphere in classrooms. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in lessons through appropriately modified activities and through the very effective support provided by teaching assistants. This support enables them to make the same good levels of progress as others. However, more-able pupils are not always challenged enough by the activities and their progress is, therefore, sometimes relatively slower than others.

Pupils' behaviour is good and makes a positive contribution to their successful learning in lessons. They work and play well together, showing the successful impact of the school's work to recognise and value pupils' many different cultures, faiths and languages. Attendance has been low in recent years, but is now broadly average in response to the school's focused work with individual pupils and families. Nevertheless, the school realises that further work with parents in general is required to make them aware of the importance of children's regular attendance at school.

Pastoral support is strong and pupils feel safe and secure in school. Assessment systems have been strengthened to ensure that pupils who show signs of underachievement are identified quickly. Very effective additional support, particularly in literacy, ensures that these pupils make good progress in catching up. Senior staff have already identified that basic skills in literacy and numeracy need more focus in the Reception classes, especially during independent activities. Children in these classes make good progress in many areas of learning, although progress in reading, writing and mathematical development is not quite as rapid. Senior managers have also identified the need to adjust the Year 1 curriculum to provide more focused teaching of basic skills.

There has been strong improvement to the school's work and performance over the last year. Senior leaders have extremely high expectations of what can be achieved through the collaboration with the junior school and through further developments to the curriculum. This strong commitment, together with its success so far, the calm, effective leadership of the school's leaders and good support from the whole school community, shows the school to be well placed to continue to improve in the future.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 by ensuring that activities in lessons provide enough challenge for more-able pupils (by end of summer term 2011).
- Improve pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - providing more focus to independent activities in literacy and numeracy in Reception classes
 - ensuring that adults in Reception classes encourage children to choose literacy and numeracy activities for themselves to practise and refine their skills
 - ensuring a more focused input into developing basic skills in Year 1 classes.
- Work closely with parents to strengthen attendance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children's skills vary considerably when they start in the Nursery and Reception classes. Overall, they are much lower than those typical for their age. Good levels of progress throughout the school are securely lifting attainment and ensuring satisfactory achievement. The school has been quick to identify underachieving groups and has implemented successful strategies to support them. As a result, Turkish pupils and those from Bangladeshi families are reaching higher levels of attainment than they did previously. Somali pupils are also making good progress, their attainment having varied considerably in the past.

Pupils apply themselves well in lessons. They work successfully as individuals, in pairs and in small groups. In a literacy lesson in Year 2, for example, pupils worked hard to write a recount of their investigations into the school grounds. With ongoing support and searching questioning by the teacher, the pupils completed the task successfully. In another successful group reading lesson, the teacher's effective questioning helped pupils to read more expressively and with good attention to punctuation. Pupils whose home language is not English, benefit from effective modelling of tasks and language by teachers and assistants and make good progress.

Through the work done to gain 'Healthy Schools' status, pupils learn about the importance of healthy lifestyles and most adopt them. They make a good contribution to the school community through their work as school councillors and monitors. Effective links with the junior school are helping them to become peer mediators to further support their contribution to school life. Pupils' good spiritual and cultural awareness was seen in their excellent participation and sensitive reflection during an assembly about Diwali. These positive qualities and their good awareness of the world around them, gained through a comprehensive programme of visits to places such as the Bank of England, contribute strongly to their overall satisfactory preparation for the future.

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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	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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	3
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?

Pupils enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities and experiences through the curriculum. A recent review has made it more relevant to their interests. There are good opportunities, especially in Year 2, for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, for example in science, when they write reports of their investigations into melting candles and chocolate. Pupils develop secure computer skills through regular lessons in the computer suite where they learn to add illustrations to their written work and 'draw' pictures in the style of Mondrian. Pupils benefit greatly from an extensive range of visits to places of interest and from the many visitors to the school who teach them, for example, about the environment. The school organises an extremely wide range of clubs and activities for pupils at lunchtime and after school, with some targeted especially towards specific groups such as Turkish and gifted and talented pupils. All of these activities are very well attended. Pupils enjoy weekly music lessons from a specialist teacher. They participate in local festivals, recently winning a silver award in the 'Sing Up' competition.

Teaching is effective and captures pupils' attention and interest well. Teaching assistants are very well deployed and make a significant contribution to pupils' good progress in lessons and during extra support given in small groups. Six Year 2 pupils attending a reading group were extremely enthused by the teaching assistant's presentation and made rapid progress during the session. Good use is made of technology to interest pupils and

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maintain their concentration. Other strategies, for example question and answer and paired discussion, involve pupils practically and encourage those whose home language is not English to develop confidence and fluency. In many cases, expectations of the more-able pupils are not high enough to enable them to reach the higher Level 3 by Year 2. For example, sometimes activities for more-able pupils entail copying out words, rather than using them in sentences for themselves.

All adults provide good levels of care for pupils in and out of lessons. Pupils are known well as individuals and adults are quick to notice if any have a problem or concern. Prompt action follows, whether to reassure or to organise extra support if necessary. Close links with the junior school support pupils' transition to the next stage of their education. Staff work well with outside agencies, for example the children's centre, to organise support for specific pupils and families if needed. The school welcomes pupils who start mid-way during the year. Their needs are quickly assessed and support provided to help them settle in quickly and play a full part in school life. The school has employed an attendance officer who is working well with parents to increase their awareness of the importance of their children's regular attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher has quickly taken a firm steer to the school's work and has brought staff on board very effectively. Strong support from other senior leaders means there is a clear focus on securing improvement. Senior leaders were successful last year in implementing a number of initiatives, which have contributed well to improvements in better teaching and learning. The school had already identified the areas for improvement through this inspection, showing its clear understanding of the school's effectiveness and its consistent focus on driving improvement forward.

There are clear procedures to ensure that pupils are safe in school. Safeguarding practices are very effective, and checked by governors and senior staff regularly to ensure that they are working successfully. All staff are regularly trained in child protection and there are robust procedures to ensure that appropriate checks are made about the suitability of new staff. Staff promote equality of opportunity well. Racist incidents or any form of discrimination are rare, but procedures are in place to ensure that any which arise are tackled promptly. Partnerships with parents and carers are good and continue to improve. Bilingual Turkish and Somali speaking staff, for example, have been successful in developing a range of different groups to provide support and to encourage parents and carers to help their children at home.

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The governing body has been instrumental in securing the school's stability following an unsettled period. It has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and holds the school firmly to account for pupils' attainment. School leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the context of the school and many strategies are in place to promote effective community cohesion within the local area and beyond. The impact of this work is especially successful within the school, where there is a particular focus on ensuring that the different groups in the school's own community are recognised and celebrated through assemblies and displays. Regular coffee mornings have been especially successful in promoting effective relationships between Turkish and Kurdish groups.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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 settle in quickly to the Nursery and Reception classes and begin to develop their confidence and independence, although many entering Reception have had no pre-school experience. The atmosphere is warm and inviting and children come into school happily each morning, ready to engage in all the activities provided for them. They make good progress so that the majority reach broadly average levels in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development by the time they transfer to Year 1. A few reach national averages in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical skills and understanding.

Children from different cultures work and play happily and safely together, sharing toys and equipment. They have very positive relationships with adults, with whom they are happy to share any concerns. Behaviour is good in and out of classrooms. Children have a good knowledge of how to keep safe and healthy, enjoying the healthy snacks offered

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throughout the day and using the wide range of climbing and other equipment enthusiastically.

There is a good balance of activities that are directed by adults and those that children choose for themselves. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well in class groups. In one Reception class, the children eagerly sounded out words starting with or containing the the sound 'a', encouraged by 'Ali the Alligator' the class puppet. However, few children in Reception choose literacy or numeracy activities for themselves during their independent time. Adults do not encourage children to engage in such activities well enough to ensure that children receive as many opportunities as possible to practise and refine their skills.

Leadership and management are good. There is a good overview of all aspects of the provision. Children are kept safe and secure and their progress is carefully tracked over time. Resources are well used to support children's development, including the outdoor area, which contains a range of stimulating equipment and is used in all weathers.

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

The questionnaire was returned by a very small minority of parents and carers, and the proportion was much lower than the national average. Those who responded are generally positive about the school's work. They agree that their children enjoy school and are kept safe and that their children's needs are met effectively. They are happy about the teaching and agree their children are making enough progress. These positive views were supported by evidence from this inspection. A few parents think that they do not receive enough information about their children's progress, that the school does not do enough to help them support their children at home and that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with effectively. These views were not supported by inspection evidence taken from observations of lessons in every class, the examination of the school's systems for reporting to parents and the opportunities for parents and carers to find out how to help their children at home.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Eldon Infant 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 66 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 498 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	71	18	27	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	56	28	42	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	39	59	22	33	4	6	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	45	31	47	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	53	28	42	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	75	25	38	7	11	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	45	31	47	5	8	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)	27	41	26	39	3	5	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	33	34	52	1	2	5	8
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	41	30	45	5	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	41	30	45	4	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	50	28	42	3	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	40	61	24	36	1	2	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). 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.



26 November 2010



Dear Pupils



Inspection of Eldon Infant School, Edmonton N9 8LG



Thank you so much for welcoming us recently and telling us about your school. Your views, along with everything else that we saw, helped us to get to know your school and how well it works. You go to a satisfactory school and these are some of the important things we found out about it.

- All the adults take good care of you and help you if you have any problems.
- You understand what it means to be healthy, and many of you enjoy the nutritious school lunches and take part in sport after school.
- You support and respect each other well.
- Your behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- You work hard in lessons and try to do your best.
- The children in Nursery and Reception settle into school quickly and enjoy all the activities organised for them.
- The teaching is good and helps you to make good progress.
- The people in charge are doing a good job in helping the school become even better than it is now.

Although your school is improving well, there are a few things that could be even better. We have asked your school to make sure that lessons give you enough challenge to ensure you all make even better progress. We have also asked the staff to give you better opportunities to practise your reading, writing and mathematics skills in Reception and Year 1. You also need to make sure that you attend school regularly so you continue to make good progress.



You can all play your part in helping your school to become even better by making sure you continue to work hard and do your best in lessons.



Yours sincerely



Mary Summers
Lead inspector

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