

Ecclesfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107001
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	356071
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Jim Alexander

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	400
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nick Kirk
Headteacher	Mrs Sophie Barton
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons taught by 14 teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including policies for safeguarding, the school's assessment records and school development plans. The 84 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were also analysed.

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

- Whether the school assessment records indicate that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress from their individual starting points, particularly the more- able pupils.
- Whether the quality of teaching has improved since the time of the previous inspection.
- How pupils' attendance and attainment relate to the school's view that care, guidance and support are good.
- The impact of leadership at all levels, on raising attainment and accelerating progress for all pupils, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average size primary school. Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds and those from minority ethnic heritage represent a very small part of the school population. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average but rising. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average. The school has gained a number of awards including Healthy School status, Activemark, Silver Artsmark and the Leading Parent Partnership Award.

The school has had a significant change in staffing since the last inspection. Nine new teachers have been appointed in the past two years, five since September. These new appointments also include members of the senior leadership team.

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

This is a satisfactory school. There is a caring and welcoming environment in which pupils' personal development is given a high priority. Pupils enjoy coming to school and say 'everyone is always encouraging'. They are well behaved, courteous and keen to talk about their work. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay fit and well. They make a good contribution to their community and many have roles and responsibilities that help in the smooth running of school life.

Attainment by the end of Year 6 had been on a rising trend since the time of the last inspection and was above average in 2009. Attainment fell in 2010 however, significantly so in mathematics, but remained broadly average. Attainment by the end of Year 2 has been more variable, but it too remains broadly average. This represents satisfactory progress from pupils' starting points at the school. Across the school the more-able pupils are not being challenged to reach higher levels of attainment. Although learning and progress in lessons is satisfactory overall, it varies. Whilst an increasing number of lessons are good and some outstanding, too many are satisfactory rather than good. As a result, progress in some classes is better than others. Up until recently, progress for a number of pupils in a few classes was inadequate. The school has successfully addressed areas of inadequate teaching and pupils are now being helped to catch up on missed work. The curriculum has been enhanced by introducing French and Spanish, for example, and pupils appreciate the many opportunities to attend a wide variety of clubs, including knitting and ballet.

Senior leaders have developed robust systems to track the progress pupils make. They have developed well thought through plans for improvement. However, the school has faced a significant change in staffing, which has slowed some of the improvements. Some leaders have only very recently joined the school and a new Early Years Foundation Stage leader has yet to be appointed. Senior leaders are aware of the need to ensure that these well developed systems and procedures are effectively coordinated to have maximum benefit on raising pupils' attainment and further increasing the consistency of teaching across the school. There is a shared determination to succeed. The governing body offers both support and challenge to the school, and ensures statutory requirements are met. There is clear evidence to demonstrate the schools' satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment across the school by:

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- – accelerating progress for all pupils, but particularly where teaching has been weak
- – increasing the proportion of more-able pupils gaining higher levels
- – increasing the opportunities to reinforce skills learnt in one subject by using them in other subjects.
- Ensure teaching across the school is as good as the best by:
 - – providing learning activities that are suitably challenging for more-able pupils
 - – increasing the pace of lessons so pupils spend less time listening to teachers talking and more time actively engaged in learning independently.
- Coordinate effectively the use of the increasing reliable information on pupils' progress and lesson quality, to steer the management of strategies for improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils enjoy school and achievement is satisfactory. They are keen to rise to the challenge when lessons are precisely pitched to their individual abilities. Pupils in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, for example, were helped to make good progress. Good relationships and finely-tuned challenge ensured everyone was fully engaged and able to ask for help when their understanding was stretched. Pupils supported and challenged one another saying 'right we've done that, what shall we do now to make it really tricky?' developing a genuine sense of success in their achievement.

The majority of children enter the school with skills that are broadly typical for their age; although some have skills that are lower than expected. Communication and language development is particularly low. By the time pupils leave Year 6, the majority attain broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils gaining higher levels, however, is low. Attainment across the school varies and is higher in English than mathematics. Progress by the end of Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall given pupils' individual starting points. Pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress similar to others in the school.

Pupils are helped to grow in confidence as they move through the school and they recognise that teachers are 'here to help us'. Consequently, by the time they leave Year 6 they are caring and independent young people. Many take an active part in school life. Peer mentors and playground friends, for example, have focused on creating enjoyable and caring playtimes. Pupils' behaviour is good. Those pupils who have been identified as having emotional or behavioural difficulties are effectively supported and rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour are managed well by staff. This enables the overwhelming majority of pupils to feel safe and happy.

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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	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
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?

Teaching is satisfactory overall and improving quickly. There remains, however, some variation in the quality across the school. In the best lessons, teachers make good use of the time available. They plan activities that interest and engage pupils of all abilities, developing their knowledge and enabling them to apply the skills they have learnt in a relevant way. As a result, these lessons move on at a cracking pace and much is achieved. In other lessons, however, the level of challenge is pitched more at one level and consequently more-able pupils find the work too easy. On occasions, teachers talk for extended periods of time and pupils become passive in their learning. This also limits the time pupils have to work independently or in small groups. Opportunities are also missed to reinforce skills learnt in one area across a range of subjects. The quality of marking has been a particular focus for the school and as a result, has improved considerably. In the majority of classes, pupils' good work is not only recognised but constructive suggestions are made on how the work can be improved. In other classes, whilst marking is good on some days it is less helpful on other days. The quality of teaching has improved considerably in Year 4 with the very recent appointment of a new assistant headteacher. Pupils are responding well to a more positive approach and are being helped to catch up with work missed. Teaching assistants are well deployed and ensure those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress in lessons similar to other pupils.

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The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides a wide variety of trips and visits out. It has been developed recently to enable the teaching of topics across a range of subjects. This is more developed in some lessons than others. Pupils are finding this creative approach 'interesting and fun'. The school places a strong emphasis on providing a warm and welcoming atmosphere, which fosters pupils' respect for one other. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported through structured individual plans and tailored programmes of work. The school works very well with families of these pupils to ensure they make similar progress to others in the 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?

Staff and the governing body share the headteacher's commitment and determination to raise achievement further. The school has recently appointed teachers with a good track record, recognised their strengths and equipped them to lead specific aspects of school improvement. The school's systems to monitor the quality of teaching and to track the progress pupils make, have been developed thoughtfully. The implementation of these improved systems and procedures is yet to receive careful monitoring to ensure there is the desired impact in raising attainment and accelerating progress for all pupils, especially the more able.

The school makes sure that pupils of all backgrounds and abilities have equal opportunities for their academic and personal development. It ensures there is no discrimination. The school has effectively evaluated its provision for community cohesion. The school recognises that, whilst it is a caring and nurturing community, more is needed to enrich pupils' appreciation of life in a multi-faith and ethnically diverse world. Consequently, there are plans in place to improve this aspect over the coming year. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has worked effectively to improve the partnership with parents and carers, and it is now good. This was recognised when the school achieved the Leading Parent Partnership Award in July 2010.

The governing body cares greatly about the school, and together with the headteacher, has worked to secure a firm foundation for future improvements. The staffing situation is now much more stable. The school has accurate self-evaluation procedures and sound development plans for future improvement. Safeguarding is good and the governing body has ensured that best practice is adopted. As a result, leaders respond quickly to any concerns and pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

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

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are adequately prepared for Year 1. They are helped to settle quickly, understand the routines of school life and generally behave appropriately. The increasing numbers of children who have been identified as having specific emotional or behavioural issues are being well supported. Children talk happily to visitors and explain clearly what they are doing. School leaders have worked successfully to create a well resourced and attractive learning environment and children are able to access outdoor provision freely. Children make satisfactory progress, although opportunities to extend learning activities and accelerate progress at a faster pace are sometimes missed. This limits what the children can achieve. Currently, the Early Years Foundation Stage is without a specific leader, although one is soon to be appointed. During this period the school's senior leaders have worked effectively in partnership with another local provider to support provision at Ecclesfield. Assessment procedures are much improved. This is providing school leaders with a more accurate picture of what the children are able to do.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

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

Stage	
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Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire express positive views about the school. They say their children enjoy school and a very large majority believe the school keeps their children safe. A small minority of parents and carers do not feel the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found behaviour to be good and that the school deals effectively with rare incidents. A very small minority of parents and carers also feel that their children are not making enough progress. Inspectors found that pupils make satisfactory progress over their time at school. Progress is, however, better in some year groups than others. A very few parents and carers also raised individual concerns over specific issues. Following the correct procedure and taking suitable care to ensure confidentiality, inspectors investigated these concerns thoroughly.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ecclesfield 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 84 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 400 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	52	36	43	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	44	41	49	5	6	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	38	46	55	6	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	38	42	50	6	7	4	5
The teaching is good at this school	33	39	45	54	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	39	44	52	6	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	32	51	61	5	6	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)	28	33	43	51	6	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	39	38	45	9	11	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	33	33	39	14	17	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	27	43	51	13	15	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	25	30	42	50	11	13	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	43	39	46	7	8	2	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



23 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ecclesfield Primary School, Sheffield, S35 9UD

Thank you for your very warm welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. I would like to let you know our views of your school. Ecclesfield is a satisfactory school and you are helped to make sound progress in your work. This enables you reach standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 6. We have asked the school to help you attain even higher than this as we are sure you are capable of more! You are given many opportunities to contribute, for example, through being school councillors and playground friends. You have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy.

We saw how hard your teachers are working to ensure all your lessons are enjoyable. Some lessons, like the mathematics lesson in Year 6 that I saw, are better than others. We have asked the school to make sure all of your lessons are as good as the best so that you can make even faster progress to reach higher standards by the time you leave school.

The school has a large number of new teachers and your headteacher is working with them to plan more improvements. The school has developed a good way to track the progress you are making. There is also a new system to monitor how good teaching is in lessons. Everyone will now need to ensure these systems are implemented well and so I have asked the leaders to keep a very careful eye on how it is going.

You obviously enjoy school and we were impressed with how polite, friendly and caring you are. Thank you for completing the pupil questionnaire and taking time to talk with us. Your contribution to the inspection was extremely helpful.

Yours sincerely

Jim Alexander
Lead inspector

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