

Euxton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 119473 |
| Local Authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 363903 |
| Inspection dates | 4–5 May 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Sarah Drake |

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

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|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 208 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Rev John Riley |
| Headteacher | Mr Giles Storch |
| Date of previous school inspection | 11 January 2008 |
| School address | Wigan Road Euxton, Chorley Lancashire PR7 6JW |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 14 lessons taught by eight different teachers and held meetings with school staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, and groups of pupils; they also spoke informally with parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation relating to school management, including safeguarding, and pupils' attainment and progress. The inspectors also took into account the responses to the inspection questionnaires made by 77 pupils, 18 staff and 113 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 progress made by different groups of pupils with a particular focus on those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are more able and children in the Reception class.
- The extent to which all teachers use the whole range of assessment information to provide pupils with suitable levels of challenge.
- The rigour with which all leaders evaluate the school's success and then effectively take action to bring about improvement.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average-size primary school and serves a semi-rural area to the west of Chorley. Most pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible to receive a free school meal is low. A below average proportion have special educational needs and/or disabilities and a broadly average proportion has a statement of special educational needs.

The school has Healthy School status and holds the Activemark; it achieved the Financial Management Standard in Schools in 2009. It has recently taken over the running of the out-of-school club that caters solely for its own pupils.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This warm, welcoming school has improved continuously since its last two inspections under the excellent guidance of its senior leadership team so that it now provides its pupils with an outstanding quality of education. Parents and carers typically comment that they have 'nothing but praise for the school's safe, encouraging and happy environment'. Pupils' exceptionally positive attitudes to learning and high attendance demonstrate the great enjoyment that they find in learning. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is consistently high, with particular strengths in reading and mathematics. Pupils of all abilities make excellent progress throughout the school and achieve exceptionally well. This is in response to first-rate teaching, a vibrant curriculum and, at the very heart of the school's success, staff members' outstanding knowledge of and attention to pupils' individual needs.

The Reception class provides children with an excellent foundation on which to build their future learning. The majority join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills above those expected for their age and all build rapidly on their starting points so that most join Year 1 with well above average skills in all areas of learning. Pupils of all ages behave impeccably and have a mature awareness of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. This is because of the strong emphasis that the school places on promoting pupils' independent thinking skills and their ability to weigh up evidence before making choices. Pupils reflect on what they do and what they learn, so that they grow in self-esteem and develop the confidence to try different approaches. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

The school works well in partnership with parents and carers, and is especially successful in its support for families in crisis. However, there is room for further development in its more formal communications with them so that they can become even more engaged in their children's learning. Similarly, while the high quality teaching is firmly based on detailed assessment of pupils' progress, there are inconsistencies in the degree to which marking helps pupils understand how to improve their work. All leaders, including members of the governing body, are deeply thoughtful in their evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development and highly ambitious for each pupil in their care. This approach has underpinned the school's track record of improvement and provides it with an outstanding capacity to maintain its high quality and improve even further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all marking enables pupils to understand what they have done well, how they can improve their work, and the importance of carrying through the suggested actions.

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- Improve communications with parents and carers about what and how their children are learning in order to enable them to further support their children's education, by:
 - providing them with regular curricular information
 - encouraging more parents and carers to attend the workshops provided by school staff.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

'I am delighted with the progress my child is making at school and even more delighted to see that she enjoys herself so much when she is there,' exemplifies parents' and carers' satisfaction with the outcomes for their children. Pupils develop mature learning skills so that they listen intently to teachers' directions, questions and explanations. They make excellent use of opportunities to clarify their thinking through discussion with their neighbours, to consider their answers and to take care with their work. They are enthusiastic learners who say one of the school's greatest strengths is that 'it is really interesting because teachers make lessons fun.' Attainment is on a rising trend at the end of both key stages with impressive increases in the proportion of pupils working at the higher levels for their age. Standards in writing are above average and improving in response to the school's concerted actions although, as staff are well aware, there remain persistent weaknesses in a few pupils' basic spelling and grammar. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress alongside their peers due to high quality support and very close attention to their specific needs.

Pupils are unfailingly polite, helpful and appreciative of others' efforts. The rich relationships that they build with each other and adults mean that they are exceptionally supportive of each other, especially those who are more vulnerable. Their excellent behaviour contributes strongly to the school's happy atmosphere and to their own outstanding progress and achievement. Pupils readily volunteer to take on responsibilities such as playground buddies or school councillors and are keen fund-raisers for charity. As yet, their role in contributing to whole-school decision-making is less strong. Pupils greatly enjoy physical activity; some lead the lively early morning 'wake and shake up' sessions. They understand how this and a balanced diet contribute to good health and also understand the importance of acting sensibly to keep themselves safe physically, emotionally or when using information and communication technology (ICT). They develop high quality academic and personal skills with which to support their future well-being.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 1 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 1 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 1 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 1 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 |

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 school's high quality provision is summed up by a parent's comment that it operates as, 'a friendly supportive learning environment where every child feels special.' Teaching is consistently outstanding or of very good quality and instils in pupils of all ages a zeal for discovery and understanding that leads to their rapid progress. Planning takes into full account pupils' prior learning and different needs, while subtly adapted questioning and sensitive support during lessons, ensure that pupils of different ability make equally valuable use of available time. Imaginative activities, combined with teachers' excellent subject knowledge and clarity about the purpose of each lesson, ensure that pupils sustain their concentration and keen interest. High quality resources and skilful use of ICT create different atmospheres in the classroom according to the lesson content and led to, for example, one Year 2 pupil delightedly exclaim 'It looks like a crocodile's skin!' when independently using an electronic microscope to look at the surface of a leaf. Active, purposeful teaching assistants are especially effective in ensuring the inclusion and excellent progress of pupils with specific disabilities. Some marking is of the highest quality, clearly outlining particular strengths in a piece of work and giving guidance about the next steps to take but this is not consistently the case. In an otherwise highly positive response from pupils to their questionnaire, only 70% agreed that they know how well they are doing at school.

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Close analysis of how well the curriculum supports pupils' learning means that it is constantly evolving and outstandingly well adapted to their needs. A strong focus on mathematics at Key Stage 1 and writing throughout the school, has led to significant improvements in both these previously less strong areas. Daily, half an hour silent reading sessions contribute to pupils' exceptionally high attainment in this subject, which provides the key to future learning and enjoyment. They also provide very useful opportunities for teachers to consolidate the understanding of those who are struggling with specific concepts or skills. There is an increased concentration on the development of thinking skills. This has brought more coherence to activities that enable pupils to work with enthusiasm and creativity, and has promoted a greater proportion of pupils attaining at higher than expected levels for their age. Activities, such as the study of a text written by an Australian author or learning Bangra dance moves, help pupils to broaden their horizons. Special events, a wide range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities add even more opportunities to fire the pupils' imagination.

The palpable family atmosphere that pervades Euxton is that of a much smaller school. Staff's exceptional knowledge of individuals enables them to provide the sharply focused care, guidance and support that allow all pupils to flourish. No detail escapes unnoticed so that pupils have every confidence that any concerns will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively. Highly effective systems help the few who find self-discipline difficult to achieve, to understand how to help themselves. The school is proactive in developing excellent partnerships with outside agencies that lead to high quality provision for vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The decision to undertake the running of the out-of-school club has reaped many rewards in terms of pupils' enjoyment and continuity of care.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff are unanimous in their appreciation of the exceptional headteacher and leadership team. Typical of their comments is that they feel 'proud to work in such a forward thinking school that places the child firmly at the forefront of all we do.' A unique combination of thoughtfulness, sensitivity and rigour underpins all decision-making and actions, instilling in all staff the determination and self-confidence to improve. Close scrutiny of individual pupil's progress and of whole-school performance in each subject, leads to immediate action followed swiftly by evaluation of its impact. Staff work as a very closely knit team, with responsibility for pupils' eventual attainment shared equally and highly effectively throughout the school.

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Members of the governing body demonstrate unusually detailed knowledge of the school, are prepared to take well-calculated risks in their decision-making, such as the funding for extra teaching assistants, and provide the leadership with high levels of challenge and support. Good arrangements ensure pupils are safeguarded from harm, with staff's excellent care and guidance balancing out a few glitches in administrative detail. Exemplary inclusion of all pupils and the very well calculated adaptation of provision to their individual needs, lead to total equality of opportunity and similarly outstanding progress for all groups of pupils. The school promotes community cohesion well, particularly in the local area, but it has yet to develop wider partnerships at a national level or to evaluate the impact of its actions. Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school and appreciate the ease with which they can approach staff, but some would welcome more information about what, and how well, their children are learning and how they can help them at home.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

A parent's comment that, 'I wouldn't have wanted my child to have started anywhere else', sums up the success with which the Reception class caters for young children's needs. Excellent teamwork between the leader and nursery nurse, with regular discussion and careful planning based on their observations of individuals' interests and needs, means that children receive high quality provision throughout the day. The staff make increasingly good use of the restricted outside space to ensure that children's learning is promoted equally well inside and outdoors. High expectations and skilful questioning encourage children to think about their learning, whether this is led by an adult or chosen independently. This leads to their making outstanding progress in all areas of learning but especially in writing, a relatively weaker area when they join the school, and calculation, which has been a weaker area in previous years. Children's very mature personal

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development for their age means that they work and play extremely well together, fully include those with disabilities and sustain their concentration for long periods. Comprehensive arrangements to support children's first days at school, combined with close working with parents and carers, mean that their welfare is very well assured. Productive liaison with the out-of-school club supports the individual needs of the children, helping them to move smoothly from one setting to the next.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |

Views of parents and carers

More than 50% of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires, which is a high level of response. A small number expressed specific concerns which the inspectors shared with the leadership who took careful note. Given the school's prompt response to any weaknesses it identifies, inspectors are confident that it will take action to deal with the points raised. Inspection findings bear out the highly positive views held by parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Euxton Church of England Voluntary Aided 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 113 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 208 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 81 | 72 | 29 | 26 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 93 | 82 | 20 | 18 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 65 | 58 | 43 | 38 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 74 | 65 | 38 | 34 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 87 | 77 | 25 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 72 | 64 | 38 | 34 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 76 | 67 | 37 | 33 | 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) | 70 | 62 | 36 | 32 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 78 | 69 | 33 | 29 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 70 | 62 | 39 | 35 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 63 | 56 | 41 | 36 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 92 | 81 | 21 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 90 | 80 | 22 | 19 | 1 | 1 | 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 | 46 | 48 | 6 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 47 | 40 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 12 | 39 | 38 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 28 | 49 | 19 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 45 | 31 | 10 |
| All schools | 10 | 46 | 37 | 7 |

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



6 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Euxton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School,
Chorley, PR7 6JW**

The other inspectors and I thoroughly enjoyed our time at Euxton. Thank you very much indeed for your warm welcome and willingness to help us understand why it is that you enjoy your school so much. You go to a school that offers you a high quality of education; in fact it is so good that we have judged it to be outstanding. Here are some of the reasons why.

Children in the Reception class get off to a really good start so they have very well developed skills by the time they move into Year 1. From then on you all continue to make rapid progress in your learning so that by the end of Year 6 you are working at well-above average levels for your age. This includes pupils who find learning more difficult because they, too, generally reach much higher standards than similar pupils elsewhere. As you told us, your teachers plan very interesting things for you to do that make you want to learn. They are also highly skilled at giving you just the right amount of challenge and support so that you think hard about what you are learning. Some marking gives you excellent support to improve your work; we have asked the senior leaders to make sure that this happens all the time and for every class. This should help more of you to feel that you have a better understanding of how well you are doing at school.

We were extremely impressed by your excellent behaviour, attendance, relationships and understanding about how to stay safe and healthy. We know your parents and carers help you with this but also consider that it is due to the outstanding care all the adults give you in school. The senior leaders have a very good understanding of how to improve the school which is why it is so successful. We have asked them to provide more information for your parents and carers about what you are learning so that they can help you even more at home.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Drake

Lead inspector

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