

# Ellwood Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115552
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	357775
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rodney Braithwaite

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4– 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	123
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Helen Hawkins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Vicki Cole
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 July 2008
<b>School address</b>	Bromley Road Ellwood Coleford GL16 7LY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01594 833232
<b>Fax number</b>	01594 833232
<b>Email address</b>	admin@ellwood.gloucs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors saw 11 lessons or parts of lessons and observed six teachers. Meetings were held with senior leaders, representatives of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including: monitoring, evaluation and assessment records; policy documents; the school improvement plan; external evaluation of the school; and samples of pupils' work. Documents and records were scrutinised in relation to the safeguarding of pupils, including case studies of vulnerable pupils. Inspectors examined questionnaires returned by 63 parents and carers, 62 pupils and 19 members of staff.

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

- Do pupils capable of high attainment achieve well enough?
- How effective are the initiatives taken to improve learning and the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?
- Is the quality of teaching and learning improving throughout the school, as suggested by the school's self-evaluation?

## Information about the school

Ellwood is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, the largest group having moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has several mixed-age classes. The headteacher has been in post since September 2010, when two new teachers were also appointed. The Chair of the Governing Body and several other members are also recent appointments. This followed a period of instability in staffing and leadership caused by staff illness. The school holds the Royal Horticultural Society Benchmark Level 2 award, and the silver Eco-Schools award. There is a private nursery on the school site which was recently inspected separately.

**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

Ellwood Primary School is satisfactory. The headteacher is leading the staff with decisiveness and determination. Challenging targets are set for the attainment and achievement of pupils, guided by revised tracking systems and analysis of pupils' progress. Consequently, pupils' attainment in mathematics is rising throughout the school and, particularly, more-able pupils' progress is quickening. However, progress is inconsistent, especially in writing and the development of speaking skills. Pupils' behaviour is excellent, and they involve themselves well in the school and local community. The care, support and guidance of all groups of pupils are good, and parents and carers have confidence in the school's ability to provide a high quality of care and safety for their children. Sensitive support and intervention by staff are contributing especially positively to the good progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and their good personal development.

This is a friendly and welcoming school, and pupils cooperate exceptionally well with each other, particularly on the playground. The school's relationships and engagement with parents and carers are very positive, helping them to be fully involved in the education of their children. One typically commented, 'The pupils at Ellwood are always polite and well behaved, and the teachers are fantastic and have an extremely good relationship with the pupils.' The Chair of the Governing Body and the headteacher share the same ambitions for the improvement of the school, know its strengths, and have a clear picture of how it must move forward. These factors and the school's strengthening track record of achievement indicate that it has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

The school is taking decisive steps to develop the satisfactory provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by improving opportunities and resources for learning outside. Accurate self-evaluation has also identified the need for a more stimulating and exciting curriculum for pupils in the main school to enhance literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in order to raise attainment.

The rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher is contributing positively to better teaching. However, other leaders are not yet involved enough in monitoring and evaluating teaching in order to contribute to its improvement. Teachers manage their classes effectively and are well supported by teaching assistants. Sometimes pupils are uncertain how they can improve, for example, their writing. The school benefits from helpful partnerships, which contribute positively to pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

- Extend the good practice seen in mathematics to improve pupils' achievement and attainment in other subjects by:
  - strengthening the developing use of learning and tracking strategies to support the individual learning needs of pupils, especially the more able
  - ensuring that all pupils are clearly guided and understand how to improve their speaking and writing skills.
- Develop a more diverse and creative curriculum by:
  - expanding curriculum initiatives so that they are tailored to the particular needs and interests of the pupils
  - extending the effective use of English, mathematics and ICT across the curriculum to help raise attainment.
- Make middle leaders and managers more accountable for the quality of teaching and learning so that:
  - all have a clear understanding of their roles in monitoring teaching, learning and progress
  - leaders have suitable training to develop their monitoring skills.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils respond very positively to their lessons and behave exceptionally well in classrooms and outside. They cooperate excellently with each other and consider others' needs, especially in the playground. Members of the public frequently comment on pupils' excellent behaviour and helpfulness. Pupils' learning and progress are satisfactory overall, with variations year on year. The school's current analysis of progress shows clearly that the introduction of more effective intervention strategies by staff is resulting in good progress being made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities from their starting points. The progress being made in speaking and writing skills of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is currently exceeding that of other pupils.

When teaching is stimulating and matched to their needs, all pupils learn effectively and make good progress. This was observed several times during the inspection, notably in the Years 4/5 class when pupils worked on money-solving problems using decimals. Effective use of an electronic whiteboard helped pupils to learn quickly how to round up a number with 10 decimal points. However, even when teaching is more mundane, pupils' behaviour and respect remain impeccable and they continue to try their hardest.

Children enter the Reception class with skills broadly average for their age. They make satisfactory progress to the end of Year 2, where their attainment is generally average, although few pupils reach above-average levels. By the end of Year 6, currently, progress is accelerating and more pupils are reaching above-average levels, especially in mathematics. Improvement in the current academic year shows little difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

Pupils are cheerful and polite, and get obvious enjoyment from school; one said, 'I look forward to it every morning.' They feel very safe in school, and are prepared to use the

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worry box when they have a problem. The school council is very active and is proud of 'getting the bike shed repaired after we wrote a fabulous letter to a local sawmill'. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and try hard to lead healthy lives. They are also pleased that their interest in the environment has led to awards as an Eco- School and from the Royal Horticultural Society. Attendance is average, but is adversely affected by the persistent absence of a few pupils, despite the school's efforts to improve their attendance. Pupils are involved positively in activities in the local community and further afield, and are steadily improving their basic skills in preparation for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Although the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, much is good. The improving attainment in mathematics and reading, and the good progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, due to individual personalised interventions, point to the improving picture in teaching. The headteacher is giving well-focused support and guidance to teachers in the development of their teaching skills and their ability to analyse data on pupils' prior attainment so that they have a better understanding of the individual needs of each pupil. The use of performance data and the tracking of pupils' progress in class are improving but have not yet had a full impact on the long-term attainment and achievement of pupils.

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Relationships between pupils and adults are consistently good and teachers manage pupils effectively. This promotes good motivation and full engagement by pupils in lessons. An example was observed in Year 6, when pupils were thoroughly absorbed in using imaginative, descriptive vocabulary in their preparation of planning a story. However, pupils sometimes spend too long on the carpet listening to their teachers and, although regularly questioned, are not guided sufficiently to develop good speaking skills. More-able pupils, for example, are known to teachers, but are not consistently given enough opportunities to attempt extended and more difficult learning tasks.

School leaders are correct to recognise the curriculum lacks sufficient exciting and interesting activities which are matched to the needs and interests of all pupils. The curriculum is enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities, including gardening, chess, creative-dance and gymnastic clubs. An outdoor classroom is in the course of development in conjunction with the Forestry Commission to help pupils have a greater understanding of their immediate surroundings. Enrichment opportunities for learning much help the development of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Opportunities for developing English, mathematics and ICT are provided across the curriculum but do not have a sufficiently significant impact on improving pupils' basic skills.

The school provides a welcoming and happy environment for pupils, which is reflected in their almost unanimous enjoyment of school. There are good arrangements for the care and support of pupils, especially those in potentially vulnerable circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities who benefit from a good range of links to outside support agencies. There are satisfactory systems in place for transition to secondary education, and children happily transfer from the Reception class to Year 1 as they are already very familiar with the class.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

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

The headteacher is establishing a management team which shares her ambition for the positive development of the school. Priorities are strongly focused on the learning and personal development of pupils, supported by more effective strategies for the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress and driven strongly by the new coordinator. All staff are responding positively and enthusiastically to the clear-sighted leadership of the headteacher. The thoughtful, experienced and very determined Chair of the Governing Body, together with other members with specific skills, is supportive and, increasingly, challenges leaders and managers to account for the school's performance. The governing body ensures that safeguarding, including child protection procedures, is rigorously

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applied, and that pupils are effectively helped to understand how to keep safe, and their parents and carers agree they are safe at school.

The school is satisfactorily promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination by analysing pupils' attainment and addressing any underachievement. In particular, the school has recognised that more-able pupils have not achieved their potential in progress and learning and is working to remedy this weakness. The introduction of more challenging targets for pupils' attainment is actively improving the achievement of all groups, although practice is not yet fully consistent in every year group.

The staff work hard to develop good engagement with parents and carers. The headteacher, for example, is very visible around the school. One parent commented, 'Every morning without fail, raining, windy, snowing, icy cold, the head is in the playground to greet the children and is on hand for any chats with the parents.' The school has built a good range of partnerships, especially with cluster schools and high schools, which is proving successful in developing learning opportunities for design and technology and 'maths challenges'. Partnerships with outside services, for example the speech and language service, and local community police and street wardens are particularly effective in supporting the safety and health of learners, including those in potentially vulnerable circumstances, and add greatly to the quality of care, guidance and support that pupils receive. The school also has effective support from a Family Liaison Officer.

The school is aware of the priorities of its local community. Partnerships with several schools in Europe in Crete, Italy, France and Sweden through the Comenius project are contributing strongly to the school's good promotion of community cohesion. The extended school status and varied programme of school assemblies also contribute positively to pupils' opportunities to learn and reflect on other cultures and faiths and the world around them.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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



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## Early Years Foundation Stage

On entry, boys' language and communication skills are the least well developed of the range of children's skills. Children make satisfactory progress overall, and although new strategies for the tracking of children's progress have been introduced, they have not yet had sufficient effect on learning in order for all children to be making good progress. This is because children's skills are not always matched closely enough to their specific needs.

Teaching is satisfactory and, sometimes, good. Adults work well together as a team and have good relationships with the children. However, occasionally, teachers talk for too long and give too little opportunity for children to speak. Children enjoy their learning, behave well, are kept safe and are gaining in self-confidence. When fully engaged in their activities, their learning is purposeful and they concentrate well. This was observed when some built roads with wooden blocks and others tried to land bean bags on particular numbers in the playground. The school is gradually developing the resources and learning activities in the outside area to enhance children's opportunities for learning.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving with the constructive support of the headteacher. Safeguarding of children is robust, and teachers have good engagement with parents and carers who are welcomed to the classroom daily. The school has established an effective partnership with the privately run Nursery sited next to the Reception class.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
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 Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

Just over half of the parents and carers returned questionnaires, which is above the average response for primary schools. Parents and carers have very positive views of the school, and there is strong agreement for all statements, particularly regarding the safety of pupils, and the quality of teaching and leadership and management. A typical comment from a parent is: 'There is a lovely caring atmosphere at the school which my child loves attending.' There were a few concerns, especially relating to how the school can help parents and carers to support their children's learning. Inspectors looked carefully at this issue and the school leadership agreed that this aspect will be improved.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ellwood 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 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 123 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	43	33	52	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	57	26	41	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	32	40	64	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	38	36	57	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	30	41	65	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	30	37	59	6	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	41	33	52	2	3	1	2
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)	15	24	38	60	4	6	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	33	35	56	5	8	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	25	41	65	5	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	25	40	64	5	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	30	41	65	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	43	34	54	2	3	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



16 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Ellwood Primary School, Coleford, GL16 7LY**

Thank you so much for making us very welcome when we recently visited your school. We were very pleased to hear how much you enjoy going to school. We could see this, especially at playtimes with all those experts playing with diabolos. It was good to hear how you enjoy taking responsibility, especially looking after children who are feeling sad. We congratulate you on your excellent behaviour throughout the whole inspection, and on your politeness and cheerfulness when talking with us.

Your school is a satisfactory one, and you are kept safe and looked after well. Those of you who have particular difficulties are doing very well. You keep healthy and are learning a lot about the environment, shown by your awards.

We think your headteacher is doing a good job. We have suggested to the school leaders how we think it can do even better. Although you are learning more, especially in mathematics, we want you to do equally well in your writing. We want your teachers to help you to speak more when you answer questions and at other times. Also, we want those of you who learn quickly to have more challenges. Finally, we have asked that the curriculum for the whole school has more exciting and interesting activities for you, so you can help by telling your teachers what you want to learn about. In this way, we want your skills to improve in English, mathematics and ICT.

We hope that you will have a good, enjoyable summer, especially in your lovely school grounds.

Yours sincerely

Rod Braithwaite

Lead inspector

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