

Ecclesbourne Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	136566
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	382290
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Patricia Davies

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	428
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Smith
Headteacher	Rhian Swain
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 18 lessons and observed 14 teachers. Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders from the school, the Chair of the Governing Body and the vice-chair, the chair of the new Academy Trust Board and the executive headteachers of the Pegasus Academy Trust. Inspectors also spoke with a representative group of pupils and talked to pupils in lessons and at playtime. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including assessment and attendance data, monitoring information and pupils' work. They also scrutinised 200 questionnaires received from parents and carers and others from staff and pupils.

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

- The success of strategies to improve achievement in mathematics, and for different groups of pupils.
- The impact on pupils' learning of opportunities for first-hand experience, group work and discussion in lessons.
- The impact of improvements to assessment, particularly those for adapting learning activities to pupils' needs.
- The work of the governing body in supporting the school through its transition to academy status, and in checking and challenging its performance.
- The impact of middle and subject leadership on improvements to provision and academic outcomes.

Information about the school

Ecclesbourne is much larger than most other primary schools. It was formed in September 2009, bringing together pupils from separate infant and junior schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. Most pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and half of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery class. They are joined by new entrants when they move through into the Reception classes

Ecclesbourne is undergoing a large rebuilding programme. The school joined the Pegasus Academy Trust on 1 April 2011. Two other local schools are part of this trust, one an infant school and the other a junior school. The present headteacher was appointed for two years on a fixed-term contract when the school opened and there have been changes to staff in that time. A new head of school has been appointed for the start of the next academic year, to work under the direction of the two executive headteachers of the trust.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to academic achievement, the quality of teaching and pupils' attendance.

Despite requiring significant improvement, the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for increasing its effectiveness. Its priorities for development show accurate self-evaluation, based on a careful scrutiny of data. Senior leaders work diligently to monitor and improve the quality of teaching. Good expectations and common practices are growing and are already well established with regard to neat and tidy work in pupils' books and consistently helpful marking. Staff are receptive to feedback about their practice, in some cases making swift remedial changes. At its best, teaching is good and sometimes outstanding, and consistently so in Year 6 where pupils' progress accelerates markedly. However, the quality of teaching remains variable, with much of it no better than satisfactory and instances of inadequate teaching in Key Stage 1. As a result, pupils' progress is not yet increasing with sufficient pace and security across the school to lift attainment strongly above its present low levels, especially in mathematics. Consequently, pupils' overall achievement is inadequate. Attendance is low. Without regular attendance, pupils are constrained from developing essential understanding and skills to help them make the most of their future lives.

Improvements to assessment, and to the curriculum so that it gives interest and relevance to pupils' learning, are gradually making a difference to teaching, but are not yet sufficiently embedded in classroom practice to make a full and concerted impact on all lessons. For example, work is not always adapted sharply enough to pupils' different abilities, and too many opportunities are missed for pupils to discuss concepts and ideas in order to deepen and consolidate understanding. Where these weaknesses exist, pupils become restless and disengaged and progress slows.

There is a clear recognition among parents, carers and pupils of the school's growth over the last two years. For example, good levels of satisfaction are expressed by parents and carers through the inspection questionnaire. This illustrates the success of senior leaders in bringing the new school together as one community. Pupils confirm that behaviour has improved and that they feel wholly safe at school, expressing much confidence that staff will resolve any difficulties they might have. Relationships among pupils and with adults are cordial and respectful. Importantly, pupils are keen to learn and enthusiastic about their school. These features provide a positive climate for increasing the school's overall effectiveness. Improvements to provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage have

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brought about securely satisfactory progress, leading to a rising trend in attainment at the end of Reception over the last two years.

School leaders and the governing body are wholly committed to improvement. Expertise and support from the other schools within the academy's trust are already being shared with Ecclesbourne and plans are well ahead for the changes due in September.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress swiftly and securely across all year groups in order to raise attainment securely above its present low levels, especially in mathematics.
- Eradicate inadequate teaching and rapidly improve teaching and learning so that the overall quality is at least good, by:
 - ensuring that work is matched sharply to pupils' differing needs and abilities
 - providing many opportunities for pupils to discuss and explain their learning so that it is deepened and consolidated
 - giving lesson activities an appropriate context so that learning is consistently relevant and interesting
 - ensuring that time and resources are used to the full, including the deployment of teaching assistants
 - focusing observations of lessons as much on pupils' learning as on the quality of teaching, in order to focus staff on improving the impact of their work.
- Increase pupils' attendance so that all attend school regularly and gain the essential knowledge and skills to support their future economic well-being.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils' progress varies a good deal across year groups and classes within the same year group. This inconsistency affects all abilities and groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and from different ethnic backgrounds. Consequently, progress is not fast paced and robust enough to make a sustained impact on attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. However, due to accelerated progress in Year 6, pupils are currently on track to reach higher levels of attainment in English and mathematics than were gained last year. While this lift brings attainment in English closer to national averages, attainment in mathematics remains low. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress from low levels of attainment on entry.

It is clear in lessons that pupils are eager to learn. It is only when too little is expected of pupils that they do not participate fully or become overly noisy. Good relationships among pupils foster willing cooperation. Where these factors are coupled with exciting tasks, pace and challenge, pupils work well together. In these circumstances, pupils are attentive, many sharing or checking their work with others, to ensure accuracy in mathematical calculations, for example. They confidently demonstrate answers in front of others, read out their work or explain their reasoning. Pupils' attention wanders, though, when they do not have any work to go on to, or they are required to listen to adults for too long.

Pupils are polite and friendly, and their warm relationships with others are reflected in instances of spontaneous applause for the achievement of others. Their exit from the

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school building was swift and sensible when the fire alarm went off during the inspection. Pupils show a good understanding of safety when using the internet and of being cautious with strangers. Their participation in healthy activity is enjoyed, using equipment at break times to keep fit or attending sports activities after school. Pupils readily take on responsibilities, such as representing their classmates on the school council. The council tested out the quality of packed lunches before they were adopted and were involved in planning the new dining area. Pupils also benefit from taking part in activities within the local community, such as singing in the local shopping centre and at a local concert venue. Their contributions wider afield are represented in collections for national and global charities.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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?

While assessment has been strengthened and the curriculum adapted so that it provides a sound foundation for planning lesson activities, these improvements have not been in place long enough to have a marked influence on teaching as a whole. Too often, pupils have the same tasks to complete and the more-able are sometimes left marking time. Time is also wasted on low-level activities, such as drawing out grids with a ruler, rather than getting on with mathematical calculations. On other occasions, teaching assistants have too little to do during whole-class discussions. In particular, the quality of teaching is

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fragile at Key Stage 1 with too much that is not good enough to ensure that pupils make satisfactory progress.

In contrast, the most successful lessons have clear objectives, based on an accurate assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding. As a result, pupils know exactly what they are doing and where it is leading. Pace is fast, but sufficiently well balanced that pupils also have time to think, while questions dig deeper into pupils' understanding. In these lessons, support for small groups has the same features, so that pupils with special educational needs, for instance, or who are learning to speak English as an additional language, learn at the same good or outstanding rate as others.

A range of strategies have been implemented to raise attainment in English and mathematics. Learning a systematic approach to mathematical calculation and careful preparation for written tasks meet the needs of pupils well because they give them a methodical way forward that leads to successful learning. Work to raise the profile of reading and writing and increase basic skills like spelling is providing gradual improvement in English. Additional booster sessions and support for individual pupils, have also contributed to a lift in attainment at Year 2 as well as Year 6.

Teaching and learning in mathematics are enhanced through projects, such as weekly competitions, but the promotion of this subject compared to English is relatively less well established. Visits are starting to act as a basis for giving learning activities a real-life context. A visit to a local theme park, for example, was used by pupils in Year 6 to skilfully design and cost their own park, and to tease out the visit's educational benefits for a piece of persuasive writing. Nevertheless, such work is not yet routine. Some tasks, in mathematics, for example, are more mundane and not linked with pupils' own experience.

Staff have a detailed knowledge of pupils' particular circumstances. The school can point to where its work with outside agencies has made a difference to pupils in vulnerable circumstances, improving their confidence, behaviour and quality of life. Valuable use is also made of the area's children's centre to 'signpost' families on to other services. Determined steps have been taken to raise attendance. In response to new arrangements for monitoring absence and working with families, attendance has increased and has been in the broadly average range in the last four weeks. This improvement is too recent, however, to influence figures for the full year.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and school leaders are determined to improve the school. Teaching and learning are monitored carefully, aided by senior leaders' clear understanding of what constitutes effective and inadequate practice. Feedback to staff following observations is detailed and helpful, although comment tends to focus more on teaching than identifying its impact on pupils' learning. Pupils' work completed over the course of this year confirms some success in lifting the quality of classroom practice. Nevertheless, satisfactory and better teaching and learning are not yet consistent features in all year groups. Consequently, equality of opportunity and absence of discrimination have not been sufficiently realised. These factors also signal that value for money is currently inadequate.

Middle and subject leadership is improving, and strongly so in English. This development along with the regular meetings with teachers to discuss the progress of pupils in their class makes a valuable contribution to school improvement. Information and data shared with the governing body gives a sound overview of the school's performance and a valuable means of monitoring and challenging outcomes. The school's leaders and managers have drawn on helpful support from outside partners since amalgamation and during the move to academy status. The governing body works in close partnership with the trust. Meetings have been held for parents and carers, with representatives forming part of a vision and planning committee.

Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements, including those related to recruitment. The school site is safe, training on child protection is up to date and there are sound procedures for assessing risk, although these reports are not always tailored closely to the particular circumstances being evaluated. The school understands the features of its community and the local area well. It widens pupils' experience through trips to London and the seaside, for example, and through links with a school in a rural setting. The school now plans to enhance its global focus and pupils' appreciation of other faiths, beyond their learning in the everyday curriculum.

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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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Despite being in temporary accommodation, staff are doing all they can to ensure a wide range of activities for children indoors and out in each of the Nursery and Reception classes. Children are busy at their activities, happy and confident. Those in the Nursery group, for example, play harmoniously alongside others, come up to chat with adults or talk about they are doing. Just occasionally, some are more reluctant to speak. Those in Reception also enjoy their learning, and the current topic about pirates is proving to be particularly popular. There is the odd moment of wonder in learning, for example, when a child was amazed that even with 30 plastic cubes in his pirate boat, it still did not sink. Sometimes, though, overly enthusiastic activity is not calmed quickly enough to ensure that noise levels do not rise and children remain focused.

Weaknesses in writing have prompted staff to introduce exciting themes in order to offer a stimulating context in which to develop early literacy skills. Although this strategy was primarily aimed at boys, it has proved equally effective with girls and, as a result, attainment in writing has risen. In the Nursery, adults coax children gently towards writing activities, like the chance to chalk on the ground or draw on the big whiteboard. Children are dextrous in their drawing, providing a chance to talk about the family members they have represented, and some boys are keen to show their writing achievements. Although adults provide close support to small group activities in Reception, children are not always targeted and drawn in as successfully.

Care is sensitively provided and informed by clear procedures. In the Nursery, and in response to some off-road 'driving', signs were quickly introduced to ensure that wheeled toys remained safely on the track. Links with parents and carers are growing. A workshop, for instance, provided an opportunity for parents and carers to stay and play with their children, while also getting tips on what to provide for a healthy breakfast. Learning

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journals give a wide range of information about children's achievements and, sometimes, parents and carers add in their comments.

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 Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The return of questionnaires from parents and carers was above average at 47%. The overall response was positive, with almost all agreeing that their children enjoy school and are kept safe. Written comments included praise for teaching, the progress made by children and improvements to the school. Written concerns covered a wide range of individual issues with no distinct pattern. The tick box return below indicated some concern about how well the school deals with unacceptable behaviour, and its response to suggestions and concerns from parents and carers.

Inspection evidence found pupils' behaviour to be satisfactory overall and children confirmed that it had improved. Where issues were seen they related to inattention and noisiness in lessons that were not always resolved. Where teaching is challenging and stimulating, behaviour is good and, occasionally, outstanding. Partnerships with parents and carers, particularly to involve them in their children's learning, are developing and are among the school's priorities for improvement.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ecclesbourne 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 200 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 428 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	123	62	73	37	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	105	53	92	46	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	96	48	90	45	8	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	77	39	110	55	10	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	96	48	91	46	7	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	90	45	95	49	11	6	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	79	40	105	53	9	5	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	68	34	100	50	12	6	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	63	32	114	57	12	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	78	39	97	49	15	8	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	60	30	114	57	13	7	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	75	38	103	52	9	5	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	97	49	91	46	10	5	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	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.



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13 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ecclesbourne Primary School, Croydon CR7 7FA

Thank you for being so welcoming during our visit to your school. You gave us some very useful information when you spoke with us. We were pleased to hear that you thought behaviour had improved and to see how keen you are to learn. Your parents and carers are also pleased you enjoy school and are safe there. Nevertheless, your progress is not yet fast enough for all of you to achieve as well as you should. Therefore, your school has been given a 'notice to improve' to help it get better.

Here are some other important things about your school.

- You have all come together as one community in your new school and get on well.
- Trips and visits are helping to make learning more interesting.
- Adults track your progress carefully, but do not always use this information well enough in lessons to match work to your needs.
- Those of you in Year 6 make rapid progress, but progress varies widely in other year groups.
- Adults look after you carefully and you said that you are confident that they will sort out any problems.
- Staff are already working hard to make things better and know what they need to do next.

These are the things your school has been asked to do to help it to improve:

- accelerate your progress so that your achievement is considerably better, especially in mathematics
- make sure that teaching is nearly always good or better so that time is not wasted, and always give you interesting work and many chances to talk about what you are learning
- see that you all come to school regularly so that everyone learns as much as they can to help them in the future.

You can all help by making sure you attend regularly, by keeping up the neat work that we saw in your books and always paying attention in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Davies

Lead inspector

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