

Louth Eastfield Infants' and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120458
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	380027
Inspection dates	18–19 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Barber
Headteacher	Sarah Akhurst
Date of previous school inspection	02 November 2006
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Age group	3–7
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twenty one lessons were observed. Twelve teachers were observed, most of them twice. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its methods for tracking pupils' progress, at a range of school documents, including its policies, minutes of governing body meetings, monitoring records, samples of pupils' work, and reports from the School Improvement Partner. Fifty six responses from parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire were received and considered, along with questionnaires completed by staff.

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

- How well does the school promote the progress of different groups of pupils?
- How well do leaders know what needs to be improved when very few priorities are identified in the school's self-evaluation?
- How well does the school support the significant proportion of its pupils who have statements of special educational needs and whose circumstances might make them vulnerable?

Information about the school

This is a larger than average-size infant school serving a small town community. The number of pupils on roll has risen since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. All pupils speak English at home. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average but the number with a statement of special educational need is comparatively high. A pre-school breakfast club operates on the premises under the responsibility of the governing body. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality mark.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It has outstanding strengths in the care, guidance and support it provides for all pupils, and in the partnerships its proactive and unrelenting work with outside agencies and other professionals generates. Every adult has the best interests of the pupils in the forefront of their thinking and actions. No stone is left unturned, or avenue not explored, in the school's relentless quest to ensure that every pupil is able to access and benefit from all that the school and its partners have to offer. This leads directly to pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes and ensures that all pupils, especially those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, are able to make consistently good and sometimes outstanding progress.

All groups of pupils achieve well. They reach broadly average levels of attainment by the end of Year 2, from starting points that are generally well below what is typical for their age when they join the Nursery. The Early Years Foundation Stage lays strong foundations and inspires both respect and consideration for others among the very youngest children. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are good and contribute to a safe, very harmonious, and often exciting environment for learning. Pupils report that they enjoy coming to school because, 'it's really nice to be here with all my friends'. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour, politeness and good manners. Their understanding of how to keep safe and live healthily is good.

The quality of teaching is good. Excellent relationships between adults and pupils are a very positive feature of all lessons. Good questioning encourages pupils to explain their thoughts, and this rapidly develops pupils' speaking and listening skills. Most lessons set a range of tasks which meet pupils' learning needs well. However, not all lessons reach this good standard. Occasionally, in a small number of lessons, teachers either talk for too long, or set the same task for all pupils, and learning slows. In addition, opportunities for pupils to extend their research and enquiry skills are sometimes missed. This is especially so in lessons where too much time is spent on introducing the work as it leaves less time for pupils to be actively engaged. A range of interesting visits and visitors adds to the curriculum which already links subjects together in themes. Pupils say they like the practical way mathematics is taught. This is reflected in the good progress pupils are now making in this subject.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate, because it is based on reliable assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do. Leaders, including the governing body, have a clear picture of what the school does well and where improvements might be

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made. They are aware that sometimes the monitoring and evaluation of learning in lessons is not rigorous enough and, in these instances, does not identify when learning has slowed a little. Nonetheless, with the successful actions leaders have taken to ensure improvements in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, and in care, guidance and support since the last inspection, the school's capacity to improve further is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress by:
 - ensuring that all lessons set work which accurately meets each individual pupil's learning needs
 - giving pupils in all lessons opportunities for active investigation, enquiry and research and ensuring that less time is spent explaining the work
 - improving leaders' monitoring and evaluation of teaching so that they all identify clearly when lessons are not promoting learning at a fast enough pace.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent and are a significant contributing reason for their good achievement. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson with groups of pupils working independently and with determination on different reading, comprehension and writing tasks. Each group had a different learning objective which enabled them to sustain their concentration well. High quality work in art is evident throughout the school and celebrates pupils' good efforts. All groups of pupils make good progress including those from minority ethnic backgrounds. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is particularly good and the result of carefully targeted, excellently sourced and well-delivered support on a small group or one-to-one basis.

Pupils' outstanding behaviour supports their learning and achievement most effectively. The school places high importance on all aspects of pupils' personal and social development resulting in many opportunities for them to develop their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils are sure that they are safe, and can explain why this is so, not least because 'all our teachers look after us'. They are even more sure that there is no bullying, though they know what to do if they see some. Pupils know they have to exercise and that they 'need to eat our vegetables' in order to be healthy. Pupils readily take on responsibility as, for example, school councillors, classroom monitors or simply tidying up after practical work. They are proud to be members of Eastfield and cooperate well to make the school a happy place. The breakfast club gets pupils off to a good start. Pupils leave at the end of Year 2 as well balanced, sensible and friendly young people satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their lives.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
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

How effective is the provision?

The school building is well presented and provides a bright and secure place for pupils to learn. All lessons are characterised by the excellent relationships between adults and pupils. Calmness, mutual respect, and the expectation that everyone will give of their best pervade the school. The large majority of lessons move forward smartly, challenging pupils to think for themselves. Many have an air of sustained concentration about them; this ensures that pupils learn well. Occasionally the pace of learning slows when all pupils receive the same explanation or task to complete. Pupils then wait quietly for the next task. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively and play a vital role in supporting different groups of pupils. This ensures that all groups of pupils make the same good progress over time, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Pupils are often given clear verbal advice about what they need to do next to improve. The marking of pupils work is regular and celebratory.

In addition to its successful focus on building pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics, the curriculum seeks to inspire pupils' curiosity, raise their aspirations, and build the foundations for a love of learning. Themed topics such as 'The Victorians' encourage pupils to apply and practise different subject skills such as art, history, writing, and mathematics within the same theme thus enabling them to make links across different subject areas.

The school knows the community it serves, its pupils and their families, very well.

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

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Regular consultations underpin the strong and positive links between school and home. The school does its utmost to make sure that all pupils are given every opportunity to be happy and to achieve their best. Excellent links with external agencies and other schools complement the school’s unceasing efforts to support pupils, and where relevant, their families. All adults accept their responsibilities fully, they share the same philosophy and, in pulling together so well, give remarkable support to every child in the school. The outstanding care guidance and support which the school provides contributes strongly to the good outcomes pupils reach.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The calm and clear-sighted leadership of the headteacher underpins the good work in this school. Her ambition and relentless drive ensures that staff are well motivated, highly committed and feel part of a good team. Adults promote equality for all pupils through their accurate tracking of the progress made by different groups of pupils thus ensuring that no group or individual underachieves. Some aspects of development planning, and the monitoring of teaching and learning, lack crispness and precision.

There is no evidence of any sort of discrimination in this inclusive and happy place. Safeguarding procedures are implemented well. They are regularly updated and rigorously applied. In consequence, the safety and safeguarding of pupils pervades the school’s life. This is reflected in the views of pupils and in the positive responses from the very large majority of parents and carers.

Governance is good. Members are committed and active, knowledgeable and supportive. They hold the school to account for its performance with increasing rigour. Members work hard in carrying out their responsibilities for ensuring general safety and the safeguarding of pupils. They give very good attention to the welfare of pupils and staff. Excellent partnerships, initiated by the school and built on integrity and trust with other local schools, community groups and a wide range of external professionals, support all pupils' learning outstandingly well. These most effective partnerships ensure that every individual pupil, including those whose medical and other needs make them vulnerable, is able to access and benefit from all that the school has to offer. They lead directly to pupils’ outstanding behaviour, the excellent relationships they have with each other and their marked recent improvement in attendance.

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Community cohesion is promoted well within and outside the school. The school’s leaders have a thorough understanding of the needs of the community they serve. Celebrations of, for example, Hannukah and Diwali, help pupils to learn about ethnic and cultural diversity. The international dimension of the school’s work is currently under review.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Close links with parents and carers help children to settle into the school very quickly. The school encourages parents and carers to support their children by coming into school with them. They value this opportunity along with what the school offers their children and recognise the good progress the school helps their children to make. Good teaching, with a strong emphasis on building communication and personal skills, ensures that children make consistently good progress from their well-below-average starting points in all areas of learning. By the time they leave the Reception class, much ground has been covered and some children have reached the early learning goals. Though most are still working towards these goals, children are much closer to age-related expectations than when they began. There is a good range of opportunities for children to choose their activities and develop the skills for independent learning both inside and outdoors, but the balance between self-chosen and teacher-led activities is still developing. Nonetheless, children gain a sense of togetherness, enjoyment in learning and personal discipline. This stays with them as they get older and underpins their good learning in later years. They can sustain their concentration well, sharing their thoughts, ideas, and toys as they work and play in complete harmony.

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Leadership and management are good. The different skills of adults are deployed well to give consistently good outcomes for all children. Accurate assessment of what children know and can do enables adults to plan interesting learning opportunities. Adults use this information very well to give excellent support to those children who require significant additional help. Resources are good and well used in imaginative role play. Staff take good care of children to ensure their health and welfare.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire was relatively low in comparison with other schools. The overwhelming majority expressed strongly positive views about the school. A few had individual concerns about aspects of the school. Inspectors followed these up by examining the school's systems and procedures, speaking with staff and governors and with children in both formal and informal settings. Inspectors' conclusions are expressed in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Louth Eastfield Infants' and Nursery 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 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 257 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	70	16	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	80	10	18	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	34	61	19	34	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	63	16	29	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	37	66	17	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	40	71	14	25	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	55	24	43	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)	30	54	18	32	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	35	63	14	25	4	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	48	23	41	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	46	22	39	4	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	61	17	30	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	37	66	17	30	1	2	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



20 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Louth Eastfield Infants' and Nursery School, LOUTH LN11 8DQ

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful to us when we inspected your school recently. We were really impressed with your excellent behaviour and how well you all get on together. We found that the Early Years Foundation Stage (that's the Nursery and Reception classes) gets you all off to a good start and ensures that you all know the school rules very well. You all pay close attention in lessons and obviously want to learn as much as you can.

We found that Eastfield is a good school which helps you to make good progress. The adults in school, together with many others outside, take excellent care of you. However we also found that the school could do some things even better to help you reach higher standards. So we have asked the adults to do the following:

- make sure that the work you have to do in lessons is just right for each of you, neither too easy nor too hard, so that you can all learn lots of new things
- make sure that all lessons get you started practicing or working things out for yourselves as soon as possible, rather than sitting listening to explanations as you sometimes do
- check more closely that you are all learning as well as you should be in lessons and point out clearly when you are not.

Please continue to be the calm, happy and considerate young people you already are. Best wishes to you all for the future.

Yours sincerely

Terry McDermott
Lead inspector

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