

Ellison Boulters Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120595
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	380071
Inspection dates	2–3 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	272
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Good
Headteacher	Jenny Wheeldon
Date of previous school inspection	11 September 2006
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 18 lessons taught by nine teachers. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. They also talked informally to parents and carers. They observed the work of the school and looked at a range of documentation, including information about pupils' progress, child protection and safeguarding procedures. They looked at samples of pupils' past and present work and scrutinised responses from 140 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 110 by pupils and 16 by staff.

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

- Do all groups of pupils make consistent progress in reading and writing and particularly the boys in Key Stage 1?
- Do teachers make full use of assessment information to provide interesting and challenging activities that meet the needs of all groups of pupils?
- Is the monitoring of the work of the school rigorously evaluative and used to inform planning for further improvement?

Information about the school

This is a slightly larger than average-sized primary school near Lincoln. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The percentage with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below that seen in most schools. These pupils who have a range of additional needs are not evenly spread across the school and are mainly within a small number of year groups. A few families have connections with local air-bases. A small number speaks English as an additional language. The school holds many awards including Artsmark Gold and Sing Up Gold and the Primary Science Quality Mark. The school runs a breakfast club.

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 is an outstanding school. It has made many improvements since its last inspection, chiefly because strong and determined leadership has driven development in a clearly focused manner. This, coupled with an enthusiastic and skilled staff team and an excellent curriculum, has ensured much success. Pupils say that they like school very much. Parents and carers are mostly delighted with what is provided for their children. One parent expressed the views of many commenting, 'Excellent staff = Excellent learning = Excellent progress = Happy Children = Happy Parents'.

Pupils make outstanding progress as they move through the school. Boys and girls achieve equally well. In Year 6 standards are high and have been significantly above national averages in all areas in recent years. This helps all pupils prepare very well for their future. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do particularly well because there is an excellent programme of very well-tailored support for them. Staff have high expectations of the pupils in their learning and behaviour which the pupils are keen to live up to. Behaviour in the classroom and at play is excellent. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and of how to keep themselves and others safe. There is a wide range of opportunities for pupils to contribute to the school and wider community. This has a very positive impact on their social and moral development and helps them become confident and responsible young citizens.

The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. Staff plan carefully to take account of mixed-age and ability classes, and when pupils are grouped by ability. Teachers use interactive whiteboards and resources well to provide interesting and practical activities. Staff explain things well. Occasionally, however, pupils are unsure whether they have individual targets and exactly what they need to do to improve further. A considerable strength and key reason for much of the recent success is the development of a stimulating curriculum that has a global emphasis. This provides memorable experiences and ensures strong cross-curricular links coupled with a focus on key skills. The care, guidance and support of pupils are excellent and pupils are looked after very well. Several parents and carers commented how happy their children are including one noting 'my child prayed 'Thank you God for my lovely teacher who helps me every day'. How priceless to a parent!.'

The headteacher and deputy provide outstanding leadership. They have embedded ambition in the whole school community. Everyone works very successfully together

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to identify what further improvements can be made. The governing body provides excellent and challenging support and take their role as 'a critical friend' seriously. The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school is rigorous and information, including assessment data, is used very effectively to inform school development planning. Because of excellent provision in all areas, and the school's extremely good track record based on a corporate determination that it will keep moving forward, there is outstanding capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils have a thorough understanding of what they need to do to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Children make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with skills and knowledge that usually exceed the nationally expected levels for their age. The progress that they make as they move through the school is maintained and is outstanding for all groups of pupils. Those of higher, average and lower abilities all achieve very well. A group of higher ability pupils in Years 5 and 6 made excellent progress, for example, when calculating the percentages of amounts when buying items from Beowulf's Anglo-Saxon shop. They were able to work out how the cost of an item would change if they used a discount ticket of 39% by using known facts, mental and paper calculations and a calculator to check their results.

The school has excellent systems to identify and support those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who consequently make outstanding progress and usually do better than similar pupils nationally. Pupils speaking English as an additional language are usually bi-lingual and achieve as well as their classmates.

While academic success is a key priority for the school, so is the personal development and well-being of everyone. Pupils are proud of their school and often say 'teaching is really fun'. They like 'Wow' days and how they have to find things out for themselves. Very occasionally some pupils are a little quiet in lessons and do not readily offer their ideas. Pupils say there is little bullying in school and that they feel really safe. They have a clear understanding that healthy eating, including packed lunch choices, is important. They enjoy a wide range of sporting activities and are generally very fit and active young people. Pupils enjoy taking on numerous responsibilities including as buddies, house captains, prefects and door monitors. Older pupils organise charity fund-raising activities and lead reading and writing clubs for younger pupils. The spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils is outstanding. The acts of collective worship are high quality and include the opportunity to sing complex three-part arrangements. While multi-cultural awareness is not at quite such a high level, the school helps pupils develop more awareness of life beyond their local area. Pupils' attendance is high, which reflects their great

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enjoyment of school and supports their learning very well.

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	1
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

How effective is the provision?

Much of the teaching and learning observed during the inspection was outstanding and none was less than good. The outstanding curriculum focuses on practical learning and ensures that pupils make excellent progress within individual lessons and over time. Pupils benefit considerably from the opportunities to learn several languages and to play musical instruments. A key feature noted by the pupils is that teachers are enthusiastic and ‘make learning fun’. For example the ‘Wow’ days at the start of a new topic and visits to places of educational interest really engage the pupils. This was observed in lessons when younger pupils enjoyed finding out more about water. They realised that if they wanted to transfer water from a tank to the ‘reservoir’ that they could not make it go uphill and therefore had to re-evaluate how they used the pieces of pipe. Very good use is made of opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas with a partner. Pupils all concentrate well when teachers take random names from a jar in case they are asked to share their ideas.

All pupils are clearly valued, cared for and respected by the staff. Procedures to support them permeate the work of the school and are highly effective. The open-door policy ensures that parents and carers feel comfortable to share information with staff. For example, if family members are due to be posted for service overseas, staff are aware and can respond appropriately. There is swift identification of pupils’ individual needs. Intervention strategies of the highest quality include in-school

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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support from skilled teaching assistants and well-organised links with a range of external agencies. This ensures that the needs of pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable are met very well. Transition arrangements into and from the school are effective in helping pupils feel confident and happy. Pupils attending the breakfast club are well looked after and well known by staff who provide a range of activities that are suited to ensuring a calm and purposeful start to the school day.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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?

Senior leaders, the staff team and governing body all share a vision for making what was already a successful school even better. The complementary skills of the headteacher and deputy headteacher and the tight focus on improvement have been driving forces. In the school's quest to further raise standards, leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning and the progress of each pupil with impressive tenacity. This has resulted in greater consistency in practice. Strategic planning is underpinned by the precise analysis of data to measure progress on key priorities. The outstanding governing body is very well led and fully informed at first-hand of the work of the setting through visits and monitoring activities.

The school has very effective and open engagement with parents and carers who readily identify what they believe works well or could be improved. Partnerships with other schools and external agencies are extensive and make a strong impact on provision for all pupils, including through curriculum enrichment. Safeguarding procedures are extremely robust, meet requirements and follow best practice. Procedures for child protection training are particularly effective. The school site is maintained to a high standard and provides a safe, attractive and stimulating learning environment. The school is very strongly inclusive and ensures pupils all feel valued as individuals. The school promotes community cohesion well especially in the local area and at an international level. Links with other schools and communities in a different social and cultural context to Scothern are not quite as well developed. But has been identified for further development by the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and	1
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driving improvement 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	1
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	1
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

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding in all areas because staff have an excellent understanding of what constitutes effective practice. There is an excellent balance of adult-led tasks and activities chosen by the children. This ensures both the teaching of basic skills and the development of imagination and investigation. The curriculum is a model of what is appropriate for children of this age and provides lots of stimulation, leading to great interest, fun and learning. Children enter the Reception class or the mixed Reception and Year 1 class with skills and knowledge that are often above the expectations for their age. They are generally chatty and confident young individuals who want to do what their friends and siblings do. They are eager and enthusiastic learners and join in discussions with a partner in an animated fashion. When finding out more about water, they enjoyed investigating what equipment and actions made the biggest bubbles. They held pieces of ice with rapt attention to see how quickly it melted and they got to the treasure inside. When making their own container from construction kits they quickly recognised the container needed a liner if it was not to leak. The infectious enthusiasm of the Early Years team leader and the very high level skills of other staff, including those in support roles, ensure that children are continuously challenged in their learning.

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

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Views of parents and carers

An above average proportion of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. The very large majority is delighted with both the quality of care and education provided. Numerous comments of appreciation and warmth include 'our daughter loves going to school and comes out every day 'buzzing''. Similarly another notes 'Academic development is very important but all the children's talents are valued and encouraged which is wonderful'. Of the small number of parents and carers who disagree with some aspects of the schools work, these include that the school does not help pupils develop a healthy lifestyle or deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. There is a small number who have strongly held opinions that the school fails to listen to their concerns and suggestions and does not communicate well with them when there are disagreements. This includes a belief that the school does not allow girls to wear trousers and concern about mixed-age class arrangements. Inspectors judge that the extent to which the pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and behaviour are outstanding. Discussion with senior leaders and governors indicates the school does not have formal 'school rules' about uniform but has made suggestions based on advice from health professionals. The school continually reviews the arrangements for mixed-age classes and how it informs parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ellison Boulters Church of England 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 140 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are pupils 272 registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	112	79	27	19	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	109	77	28	20	4	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	92	65	44	31	5	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	91	65	43	30	5	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	105	74	31	22	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	97	69	38	27	3	2	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	92	65	43	30	6	4	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)	90	64	38	27	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	95	67	38	27	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	79	56	53	38	6	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	77	55	55	39	4	3	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	97	69	34	24	1	1	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	109	77	26	18	5	4	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.



4 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ellison Boulters Church of England Primary School, Lincoln, LN2 2UZ

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. A special thank you goes to the group of pupils who shared their views about the school with us. I really liked hearing you sing and especially seeing how much fun the youngest children had in their investigations with water. The inspection team judged your school to be outstanding. Hurrah! Well done everyone.

Here are some of the things your school does particularly well.

- When you leave Ellison Boulters the standards you reach are high which helps you grow in confidence and prepare very well for your future.
- You make excellent progress in your learning and have a lot of fun.
- The curriculum features many interesting and exciting things to do.
- Your teachers provide a very good mix of information and opportunities for you to find things out for yourselves.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you know how to keep safe and lead a healthy lifestyle.

To improve your school further, I have asked those in charge to make sure that:

- you always know what you could do to improve your work even further.

You also all have a part to play in helping your school by making sure that you always join in discussions and continue to do your best.

Thank you very much for welcoming us, we really enjoyed our time with you all.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall
Lead inspector

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