

Queen Eleanor Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Unique reference number | 122645 |
| Local authority | Nottinghamshire |
| Inspection number | 380506 |
| Inspection dates | 14–15 June 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Glynn Storer |

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

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|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 55 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ann Williams |
| Headteacher | Jeremy Bingham |
| Date of previous school inspection | 3 July 2008 |
| School address | Station Road Harby Newark NG23 7EQ |
| Telephone number | 01522 703428 |
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| Email address | office@queeneleanor.notts.sch.uk |

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Introduction

Inspection team

Glynn Storer

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed seven lessons and in doing so, saw all of the school's three teachers on more than one occasion. He held informal discussions with parents and organised meetings with groups of pupils, governors and staff. He observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement planning and pupils' performance data. The inspector considered the views of the 41 parents and carers who returned inspection questionnaires, as well as those of pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Of the very few with minority ethnic heritage, none is at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus is above average. These pupils experience a range of difficulties that includes dyslexia, autistic spectrum disorders and behavioural and emotional difficulties. None of the pupils has a statement of special educational needs. The school meets current floor standard, which set the minimum standards expected by the government.

Since its last inspection, the school has entered into an informal federation with a group of schools that all feed the same secondary school. Two years ago, the school appointed an executive headteacher, who also leads another neighbouring primary school. These schools work in close partnership but retain separate governing bodies.

The school has gained the following: Dyslexia Friendly School accreditation, Healthy Schools (gold) status, Activemark and Eco-Schools (silver) award.

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 | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 2 |
| Leadership and management | 2 |

Key findings

- This is a good school. Provision and outcomes have improved during the last two years. This is not an outstanding school because a legacy of underachievement in writing that had affected some pupils in previous years, which though diminishing, has not yet been eradicated.
- Pupils of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs, achieve well. Overall standards are above average because almost all pupils make, and many exceed, the expected amount of progress from their starting points. Pupils' achievement in writing is improving but, over time, is somewhat lower than in reading, or mathematics.
- Teaching is good. This is especially so in upper Key Stage 2, where progress accelerates. Pupils regularly benefit from lively, engaging lessons that really make them think. Nevertheless, inconsistencies in teachers' marking, day-to-day assessments and the use of objectives and targets occasionally slow pupils' progress.
- Pupils' good behaviour and relationships with others foster a safe and harmonious atmosphere that pervades the school. Pupils readily rise to the challenge of tasks that make demands on them. Their positive approach to learning improves the progress which they make.
- The curriculum promotes effective learning in most subjects but the development and use of information and communication technology (ICT) skills is not fully embedded. Consequently, standards in ICT are somewhat lower than those in other subjects and pupils have too few opportunities to use ICT to aid learning.
- Recent appointments have strengthened leadership and management. The effective management of teaching in all phases, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, is responsible for improvements that are evident throughout

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the school. Federation arrangements benefit the school. The executive headteacher's robust management of the performance of all staff successfully maintains the pace of improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2013, raise standards in writing by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write at length during literacy lessons
 - extending good practice in the marking of writing to the marking in all subjects
 - ensuring that pupils receive and act upon regular advice on how to improve their work.

- By July 2013, raise standards in ICT and improve further pupils' learning in all subjects by:
 - embedding the teaching of ICT skills throughout the curriculum
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use ICT as an aid to learning in all subjects.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

In a high (90%) questionnaire return, parents and carers, including those whose children are disabled or have special educational needs, were unanimous in the view that their children are making good progress. One commented: 'We feel that (our son) has come on in leaps and bounds... He is much more confident and his results have improved.' Such views are consistent with inspection findings.

Attainment on entry varies enormously because cohorts are exceptionally small. For a considerable proportion of children, attainments in early literacy and numeracy are well below those normally expected of four-year-olds. Nevertheless, almost all children in the current cohort have made good progress from their various starting points. Most have come close to the early learning goals, and higher attaining children are beginning to work at levels normally expected in Year 1.

Attainment, including in reading and mathematics is above average by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The results of national tests show that pupils regularly make good progress in Key Stage 1 and attain overall standards that are above average. This continues to be the case. Attainment and progress in Key Stage 2 have been more variable and occasionally were no better than satisfactory. However, the impact of improved teaching and of federation initiatives, for example to boost the progress of gifted and/or talented pupils, is increasingly evident in pupils' good achievement. Almost all pupils in the current Year 6 have made good progress in Key Stage 2 and,

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for some, progress in reading and mathematics has been excellent, with pupils attaining high proportions of above average Level 5 or exceptionally high Level 6 scores. Teaching in upper Key Stage 2 makes significant demands on pupils by strenuously reinforcing the levels at which they are working, and what is expected of them. For example, when calculating perimeters, pupils capable of above-average levels of performance were immediately expected to devise algebraic formulae to express their mathematical reasoning. Because a strong work ethic prevails, pupils rise to this challenge and their progress accelerates. In both key stages, standards in writing are lower than in reading and mathematics. While virtually all pupils attain the expected standard for their age, relatively few achieve the above average levels.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to that of all other pupils. The standards they attain by the time that they leave the school are typically higher than those attained by similar pupils nationally, and their progress is greater.

Quality of teaching

Pupils make good progress because most teaching is effective, even though the teaching team is still working to achieve consistency in all areas. Inspection findings confirm parents', carers' and pupils' belief that teaching is good. One parent commented on, 'a dedicated staff who strive to prepare children for the challenges of later life'.

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides children with a well-balanced diet of stimulating activities, teacher-led sessions and child-initiated, play-based learning that ensure that children learn effectively and grow in independence.

In the best lessons in both Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching is lively and engaging and also makes considerable intellectual demands on the pupils. Expectations are high and a good balance of support and challenge inspires pupils to strive to succeed. The effective use of assessment to support learning, for example through pupils' personal targets 'fans', is a strong feature of such lessons. Pupils seldom need reminding to refer to their 'fans'; most do so regularly and so take responsibility for ensuring that their written and oral responses are at the level expected of them. When teaching is less successful, the pace of learning is not rapid enough and pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to learn independently by doing things for themselves. Marking has improved in recent times and there is evidence of emerging good practice in the marking of writing. Marking of this quality is not consistent across all classes, nor does it extend to pupils' writing in subjects other than English. Occasionally, progress is inhibited when the teacher's expectations are unclear or not high enough, for example in relation to pupils acting on advice on how to improve their work.

Teaching is effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in a highly successful lesson in the Year 5/6 class, pupils engaged fully with the novel 'War Horse', showing empathy and compassion for the plight of its characters and moral insight when discussing the underlying events.

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The teaching of disabled pupils and of those with special educational needs is good. These pupils have access to and benefit fully from all that the school has to offer. Staff training has ensured good levels of understanding in areas such as dyslexia, autism and the nurture needs of emotionally vulnerable pupils. The school works closely with parents and carers to ensure continuity of support for them. Parents and carers endorse this judgement saying, for example, 'An excellent, caring school that recognises each child's need'.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

All parents and carers who expressed a view agreed that their children feel safe in school. Pupils confirm this. They have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, know how to combat them and have confidence in staff to deal with any incidents that occur. A small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour. Inspection findings are consistent with the views of the large majority parents, carers and pupils. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is consistently good. They enjoy good relationships with one another, with older pupils showing care and consideration for younger friends. Pupils are active and healthy. Their play is lively and energetic but there is no evidence of aggressive play or play that could cause harm or upset to others. Staff care effectively for the small number of pupils who experience behavioural difficulties and so their impact on others is minimal.

Children begin to acquire positive learning behaviours from the time that they enter Reception. By the time pupils leave the school, most develop constructive attitudes to learning and to school life. They cooperate well with others and are capable of good levels of independence and collaboration. Enjoyment of school and this positive approach to learning add to pupils' progress and are factors in their above-average rates of attendance.

Leadership and management

At the heart of the successful drive to improve the provision and outcomes has been the determination of the executive headteacher and governing body to build quality and consistency across the federation. In the time since its inception, the positive impact of this initiative has become increasingly evident. New approaches to assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress, along with 'in-house' examples of effective teaching and the sharing of expertise, have underpinned improvements in teaching and achievement across the school. The management of provision for disabled pupils and those with special education needs embodies rigorous approaches to promoting equality and tackling discrimination. As a result, the school is an inclusive, tolerant and harmonious community. All staff have settled into their teaching and/or leadership roles, because access to on-going professional development has promoted an ambition to 'make a real difference'.

The new leadership team has devised a thematic, skills-based curriculum. Within a

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framework that ensures balanced coverage of subjects and the reinforcement of literacy and numeracy skills, carefully linked special events and educational visits ensure high levels of interest and engagement that bring out the best in most pupils. However, current arrangements do not give pupils enough opportunities to write at length or to strengthen their learning by the use of computers and other related technologies. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Topics that enable pupils to confront global issues, to experience at first hand the religious and cultural diversity of modern Britain, or to participate in local community events, strengthen these areas of pupils' development.

The governing body is conscientious in overseeing the school's work and in ensuring that safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements. Members of the governing body are increasingly independent in their monitoring. This gives them a real voice in school self-evaluation and adds to their authority when they challenge the school about what it achieves. The school's record of improvement since its last inspection, the impact of the recently appointed leadership team, and strengthened governing body monitoring give the school a good capacity for sustained improvement.

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 | 54 | 42 | 2 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 14 | 49 | 32 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 20 | 39 | 34 | 7 |
| Special schools | 33 | 45 | 20 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 9 | 55 | 28 | 8 |
| All schools | 16 | 47 | 31 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Attendance: | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance. |
| Behaviour: | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Floor standards: | the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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: | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. |
| 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. |
| Safety: | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

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.



18 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Queen Eleanor Primary School, Newark, NG23 7EQ

It was a delight to visit your school. I really enjoyed talking with you. I was very impressed by your good manners and the way you play so well together at break times. It was really good to see you helping each other in lessons. Your positive attitudes are helping you to learn.

Your school is giving you a good education. Your standards of attainment are above average. Most of you make good progress, but your progress in writing is not as strong as it is in reading and mathematics. I have asked school leaders to boost your progress in writing by letting you have opportunities to write more often and to make sure that all of your writing – in science, history and other subjects – is marked as carefully as work in your literacy books. That way, you will get more advice on how to improve and your progress will improve. Teaching is usually good, but there are times when it is inconsistent. Sometimes, teachers do not make the best possible use of your individual targets or make sure that you follow advice on how to improve when they mark your work or talk to you about it. I have asked staff to improve these aspects of teaching.

Your school leaders are doing lots of things to make the school better. For example, you told me that you are excited by the thought of using the school's new laptop computers. I have asked the school to give you every possible opportunity to do this, so that your ICT skills and the quality of your learning improve.

You can help your school to improve further by continuing to try very hard in all your lessons, by following the advice that teachers give you and by being patient until all of the new things going on in school have their full effect.

Yours sincerely

Glynn Storer
Lead inspector

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