

# Elmwood Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	115240
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	379045
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 July 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Emma Merva

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	305
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Susan Phelps
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Shaw
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 October 2008
<b>School address</b>	Guys Farm Road South Woodham Ferrers Chelmsford CM3 5NB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01245 321301
<b>Fax number</b>	01245 322498
<b>Email address</b>	admin@elmwood.essex.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	9–10 July 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	379045



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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Emma Merva	Additional Inspector
Jillian Smith	Additional Inspector
Ken Parry	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons or part-lessons, amounting to 11 hours in total, involving 15 teachers, with four visits being accompanied by a member of the senior management team. Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the governing body, staff, pupils, parents and carers. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at its monitoring, assessment and attendance records, improvement plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body and safeguarding documents. In addition, they analysed questionnaires from 117 parents and carers, 103 pupils and six staff.

## Information about the school

Elmwood School is a larger than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is below average, the largest group being those of White British heritage. A below average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language, with only a few pupils at the early stages of learning English. 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, including those being supported at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school has gained the Eco Schools award.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school but one that is improving steadily. It is not yet good because teaching and pupils' achievement are not consistently good over time. The curriculum makes an effective contribution to the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 visit.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They make satisfactory progress from broadly average starting points and attain average levels in writing and mathematics. Reading is above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving. The pace is not always brisk enough or the challenge sufficient for all pupils to make consistently good progress in lessons. Teachers use targets to inform pupils what levels they are currently working at, although the practice is inconsistent.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils are polite and friendly and their constructive behaviour makes a positive contribution to the environment through acting as playground buddies to younger children. They say that they feel safe, display positive attitudes to learning, work well together and enjoy coming to school. Attendance is above average.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders across the school know the strengths and areas for development. The leadership of teaching and performance management are satisfactory. The governing body holds the school to account well through robust systems, such as, regular observations of teaching. Professional development is well planned for. As a result, teaching is improving. However, what is less developed is the regular sharing of good practice.

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress and boost their achievement further in writing and mathematics by:

- ensuring targets are always used to enhance their progress
  - providing more opportunity across the curriculum to improve their understanding of numeracy and literacy.
- Improve the consistency of teaching and increase the proportion of good and better lessons by:
- introducing a rigorous programme to share good practice
  - ensuring good challenge and pace becomes more consistent in lessons.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Children enter the school with levels of skill which are in line with expectations for their age and make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils reach average levels of attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' current work and evidence from the lessons observed during the inspection show that the majority of pupils are making satisfactory progress. However, in the more effective lessons, pupils make good progress due to the well-planned lessons and high quality teaching materials. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson pupils were listening to and responding to the views of others here they demonstrated good use of similes and connectives, because the lesson was well planned and teaching materials were of high quality.

Children make satisfactory progress in their early reading skills in the Reception Year and good progress in some lessons. In a mixed Reception lesson, children could use the sounds 'ow' from words such as 'blow', 'glow' and 'sow'. They read these words and used them to make sentences. Consequently, children made good progress in reading. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attainment in reading is above average. Pupils are encouraged to read and the library is an important feature of school life.

Pupils make similar progress to their peers nationally regardless of their ethnic backgrounds. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in lessons because they are given well-directed additional support together with carefully signposted materials. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, these pupils made good progress and were able to use scale quantities to decide how much cake mixture they would need to make eight, 12 and 15 scones. As a result of well-planned materials, independent activities and effectively guided support, the lesson deepened pupils' understanding of mathematics.

Most parents and carers who returned the Ofsted questionnaire believe their children make good progress. However, this view is not confirmed by inspection evidence which indicates that pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

### **Quality of teaching**

Satisfactory teaching over time has led to pupils' satisfactory achievement, although teaching is improving and some is good and outstanding. Displays in classrooms and

around the school provide an attractive environment to learn as well as celebrating pupils' successes. In the most effective lessons, teachers plan stimulating activities and create a positive atmosphere for learning. Good teaching was seen when learning proceeded at a brisk pace, pupils worked independently and questioning was targeted to aid learning. For example, all Year 6 including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs made good progress and were highly engaged in a history project on events and changes evident from a range of sources that illustrated archaeological findings. The teaching of reading is secure through systematic use of letters and sounds. This was evident in a Year 1 and 2, English lesson where a wide range of literacy resources were used in the planned activities, which engaged and motivated them while they found information for their 'walk around London'. In a mixed Year 3 and 4 lesson, pupils used sections of the Bible to explain how Jesus changed people's lives. Pupils worked well together with their partners and used their empathy to engage in mature discussions about religion. This deepened pupils' appreciation of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. As a result of teaching assistants providing effective support for pupils who require extra help with their work. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage children were helped by teaching assistants to paint symmetrical butterfly pictures.

Marking is regular and pupils value this. However, the use of targets to prompt pupils to progress more quickly is inconsistent, as is the use of challenge and pace. In the less effective lessons, some teachers talk too much and the pace is too slow. For example, in some lessons, pupils were engaged in one activity for too long and as a result their progress was restricted. Similarly in some lessons, teachers do not always provide suitably challenging opportunities to develop pupils' thinking skills.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Inspection evidence and school records over time confirm this. Pupils try hard in lessons, listen to their teachers and show respect for each other. There are many pupils who take on responsibilities gladly. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have designed, set up and run their own tuck shop. Others participate through acting as part of the student council or helping new children to settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result of these responsibilities, pupils demonstrate their strong social, moral and cultural development. Pupils are clear about the rewards and sanctions used in school if they do not reach the high expectations for behaviour that the school has set for them. Most carers and parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire believe behaviour is good and that their children are safe, this is a view shared by pupils. Inspection findings confirm this. The school helps pupils to identify risks, such as, keeping safe while using social networking sites and helps them to keep safe through good partnership work with the local police.

There are few instances of bullying and pupils feel adults deal well and quickly with situations of bullying, such as, homophobic and inappropriate name-calling. There have been noticeable improvements of behaviour over time. Disruptive incidents are rare and the school records clearly show this. When any disruptive behaviour occurs,

pupils are looked after by an adult in the quiet room to help them to reflect and improve their behaviour.

## Leadership and management

The headteacher and leadership team are committed to improving the school. Members of the governing body provide effective support and challenge for senior leaders. For example, they have participated in school reviews and are linked to subject areas. As a result, of clear and systematic monitoring, self-evaluation is increasingly accurate and informs development planning well. It ensures that strengths and areas for development are clearly identified. Professional development is well planned for through well considered mentoring programmes and, as a result, teaching is improving. Performance management is effective. However, the sharing of good practice to enhance pupils' outcomes is not yet consistent across the school. The school has sustained pupils' satisfactory achievement, attendance has risen and teaching is improving. Consequently, the school demonstrates a sound capacity for improvement.

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire said they were happy with the school and the care it provides for their children. The school has thorough procedures to keep pupils safe, including the systems for child protection and risk assessment. Safeguarding requirements meet statutory guidelines. Promoting equality of opportunity is a central focus of the school's work through monitoring and tracking pupils' progress well. The school uses a wide range of external agencies to support and enhance provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

The curriculum is carefully planned and has been strengthened through the introduction of French and a focus on conservation classes. The Eco award and the work on the 'Forest School' have enabled pupils to work together on schemes such as the 'saving water' project. This enabled pupils to gain a greater understanding of conservation issues. These experiences, and the wide range of extra-curricular activities, including breakfast and after school club, music, sport, trips and visits, make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They encourage them to think of the needs of others and the effect of actions on the environment. The school celebrates success regularly at its whole school assemblies with an emphasis on recognising achievement and showing appreciation for those who help others. Nevertheless, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

## 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.**



11 July 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Elmwood Primary School, Chelmsford, CM3 5NB**

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we inspected your school and for helping us. We found that your school is satisfactory. This means the school already does some things well but could do some better. The headteacher and governing body have made some improvements since the last inspection.

Here are some of the things we found out about your school.

- You enjoy school, attend regularly, behave well and respect each other and adults.
- Your teachers and other adults in school care for you and help you to understand how to keep yourself safe.
- You make satisfactory progress and do well in some lessons.
- You enjoy taking on responsibilities.

We want to help your school to improve so we have asked your teachers to:

- provide you with clear targets to help you to do your best
- ensure all lessons are good and help you understand how to use numeracy and literacy in other subjects
- give the adults further opportunities to see the best teaching to make your lessons more enjoyable.

You can help by continuing to work hard at all times and keeping up your attendance.

Yours sincerely

Emma Merva  
Lead inspector

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