



# Elmore Green Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 104153  
**LEA** Walsall  
**Inspection number** 277086  
**Inspection dates** 11 July 2006 to 11 July 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ceri Morgan HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to inspect any school in England. The inspection is to be treated as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Elmore Green Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Bloxwich
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Walsall, West Midlands WS3 2HW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01922 710162
<b>Number on roll</b>	300	<b>Fax number</b>	01922 491 508
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Susan Lemm
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 May 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr A J Bailey

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. He observed 12 lessons or parts of lessons, met with all staff, and held discussions with representatives from the governing body and the local authority. A sample of work was read and a meeting with senior managers and with the school council held. A paired observation with the headteacher was conducted along with two additional detailed meetings. The inspector met briefly with the governing body and a small sample of parents and received almost 100 completed parent questionnaires.

## Description of the school

Elmore Green is a slightly larger than average primary school which continues to grow annually. It serves a community close to the centre of Walsall which has high levels of unemployment. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. Very few pupils are in the early stages of learning English. At the time of the inspection the number of boys was significantly higher than that of girls.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Elmore Green is a good school with many strengths. The staff give every pupil good support and as a result the pupils thrive during their time here. Parents are overwhelmingly appreciative of the high quality of education their children receive and especially the individual attention the teachers provide. One parent commented that her daughter enjoyed school so much she 'often wished on Saturday it was Monday so she could get back to school'.

The progress pupils make during their time at school is also impressive, although it does vary from year to year. A key strength, however, is the thoughtful way the school responds to these variations and the accurate view the staff hold of what is required to correct any dips in performance. There is a responsive and positive approach to all that the school does which reflects well on the quality of leadership.

The standards pupils reach by the time they leave the school are average overall, although there remains some variation between certain groups and across years. However, the progress made by the majority of pupils is good and in some cases outstanding. For example, in 2004 the progress made in English and mathematics was amongst the best nationally. This has dipped slightly since then but remains above average. The school acts quickly and thoughtfully to ensure good progress is made by all.

In English, pupils are able to write at length well and sentence construction is good. By the time they leave, pupils understand basic grammar and punctuation well, although spelling is inconsistent. Handwriting is satisfactory overall, although it is significantly better in English books than those for other subjects. Speaking and listening skills have developed well and pupils can explain subtle concepts and ask questions with an increasing vocabulary. In mathematics, basic number skills are established early which help pupils develop arithmetic strategies with a high level of understanding. The school has rightly identified problem solving in mathematics as a priority for the future alongside writing.

Teaching within school is an area of strength. During the inspection the teaching observed was good overall with some that was outstanding. Some was judged satisfactory as pupils made slower progress but every teacher uses a wide range of teaching styles. The best lessons were an impressive blend of high challenge, very good questioning skills and behaviour management and a thoughtful approach to matching what the pupils were asked to do and previous assessment of their needs. These lessons, such as that on the fire of London, were often conducted at cracking pace and with sensitivity.

Pupils at Elmore Green show very good and often exemplary attitudes to their learning. This is reflected in the good behaviour and the support they offer to each other at all times. They know that the staff care for their safety and appreciate this. The school encourages the pupils to work in pairs to assess each other on occasions. They respond to these opportunities with maturity and thoughtfulness. The school provides good

care and guidance at all times. In particular the school council was clear that bullying and racial incidents just 'didn't happen here'.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Most of the youngest pupils have the benefit of nursery education. Despite this many have low standards of literacy and mathematical knowledge but better social and emotional skills when they enter school. As a result of the rich and active curriculum, a close focus on language skills and good teaching these pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage. This has helped many of them to enter Year 1 well prepared.

Pupils continue to make good progress throughout the school. By the time they are seven years old many pupils have made above or well above average progress in English, mathematics and science. In particular the progress made in mathematics has been rapid. This strong progress is continued throughout the school and the provisional results in the national tests at age 11 for 2006 show standards to be average with good progress overall.

Standards attained by the more able have been variable for some time now and the school expects them to dip for pupils aged seven in all subjects in 2006. The performance of the older, more able pupils is stronger, except in writing.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are made fully aware of healthy lifestyles. They have ready access to water and fruit during the day and engage in sporting activities. There are plans to develop this further through attention to reducing obesity and a healthy school award. The personal and social development of the pupils is good, often as a result of the model provided by adults in school and they increasingly understand the multicultural world they will live in as a result of visits and activities.

Although attendance is slightly below the national average this has improved in recent years and the school is working hard with the small number of families who allow their children to miss school too often.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good teaching encourages a strong sense of independent thinking by the pupils. They were confident in discussion and were not afraid to ask questions. The teachers responded with patient and thoughtful replies that kept pupils' participation levels high throughout. One art lesson exemplified the attention to detail and the sharp focus of lessons with excellent use of resources. There is some difference in the quality

and format of teachers' planning but all of it shows an appropriate match of expectation to ability.

Where teaching could be further improved occasional opportunities to reduce misunderstanding were missed and teachers dominated the discussions too much. Usually this happened during the introduction to lessons and the school has appropriate plans to review the balance between the introduction and the rest of the session during the next round of lesson monitoring.

There remains a variation in the quality of marking, although most is detailed and constructive. Teachers use the good support available from other adults in school well and the effective contribution of classroom support assistants helps ensure good progress is made by pupils who have additional needs.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a rich curriculum that includes a wide range of visits and extracurricular activity. The youngest pupils in particular benefit from a stimulating and vibrant curriculum.

The facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) are about to be refurbished and this provides a timely opportunity to improve this aspect of the school's work which is currently no more than satisfactory. There is an appropriate focus on developing the breadth of the curriculum in other subjects.

The school has good links with external partners and other agencies. For example Walsall Academy has supported design and technology in the school. During the visit there was an excellent drum performance given by pupils from a nearby special school which was a celebration of the close links between the schools.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school makes outstanding provision to ensure that all pupils make a contribution to the community and prepare them for future life. The school council understands well, for example, how to represent the views of others. They take this responsibility very seriously. They influence school developments and are proud of their achievements such as improving the infant playground and developing their charitable work. They say that they enjoy working hard, think they could work even harder at times and love their school.

Economic awareness is also a real strength in school. The business and enterprise competitions are an excellent example of the way the school links practical activities and support from outside school to the curriculum.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership and management of the school are good overall with some outstanding features. There is a sense of teamwork as a result of the open approach demonstrated by the current leadership team.

The headteacher leads the school very well with clear vision and sensitivity. He remains committed to a rigorous evaluation of what the school does and has an accurate view of the relative strengths and weaknesses. He describes his own management style as 'more facilitator than innovator' and he encourages a constant freshness in what the school does. In this he is very well supported by a strong leadership team and between them they have considerable educational expertise. Subject leaders manage their subjects well and along with governors know the detail of the school's performance and contribute to overall school planning. Governors are able to balance support and challenge well. There are appropriate plans for staff to work alongside each other more often. The recently completed development plan is satisfactory and has the right priorities but the level of aspiration remains safe rather than ambitious.

Parents who responded to the survey frequently commented on the quality of this leadership and appreciate it. It has fostered an atmosphere in school where adults and pupils work hard, know what is required but also smile. This is an achievement to be proud of.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

You will know that recently I came to have a close look at your school. All schools have visits like these from time to time and they are intended to help schools know what they do well and what they could do to be even better.

I would like to thank you for making me so welcome and finding the time to talk to me about the school council and your plans. I would like to let you know what I found out.

I very much enjoyed meeting you and talking to you. What you told me about the school was very helpful. The pupils I saw in school were very friendly, welcoming and well behaved. This is partly because of the hard work your teachers do in helping you make good progress, behave well and treat each other with respect. Your school is especially good at this and those who help to run the school think very carefully about what is best for you to do.

You have a school you can be proud of with hard working teachers and classroom assistants who make sure you have interesting things to do inside lessons and in extra clubs and activities. They care for you and also help you to do well in your work. Many of you said how much you enjoyed school and this is just one reason why so many pupils do very well. I was very impressed with the way the school helped you understand business and the way you all helped each other. There is a very special atmosphere in school that clearly shows how much you enjoy being there.

All schools can get even better and I have made some suggestions for your school to think about. These are:

1.Help children with their writing and problem solving more often in all subjects. 2.Ask your teachers to share their good ideas with each other more. 3.Check that the school plan really aims high in what it wants you all to do.

Thank you again for welcoming me into your school and being so polite and friendly. I am sure you will carry on enjoying your school and help your teachers all you can.