



# Elmlea Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 108991  
**LEA** Bristol, City of  
**Inspection number** 278094  
**Inspection dates** 2 February 2006 to 3 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Hazel Callaghan AI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Elmlea Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Bristol
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7		BS9 3UU
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 3772352
<b>Number on roll</b>	270	<b>Fax number</b>	0117 3772353
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Yvonne Craggs
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 December 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Inge Fey

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Elmlea is a large infant school. Children start in reception with attainment that is usually above that seen nationally. There is a small proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is also small. There is a range of minority ethnic groups represented within the families but no pupils at present are at the early stages of learning English.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 1**

Elmlea is an outstanding school that is exceptionally effective in promoting pupils' high achievement and exemplary personal development. Excellent leadership on behalf of the headteacher and the strong teamwork of the staff ensure pupils' outstanding pastoral care, guidance and support. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and gives them a successful start to their education. Children make good progress in their learning in reception. The school has recognised the need to further improve standards of children's writing in reception and strategies are beginning developed to address the issue. High academic standards at the end of Year 2 are the result of pupils' eagerness to learn, parents' strong support of their children's learning and good teaching throughout the school. Very effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school have provided staff and governors with an accurate view of its strengths and areas for improvement. These have been confirmed by the inspection. The ethos of the school is to look for continuous improvement and there is a secure capacity to do so. The school provides very good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

Further improve children's progress in writing in the reception classes by teaching them to be more confident and independent.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Standards at the end of Year 2 are exceptionally high and pupils' achievement from the time they start school to their transfer to the junior school is outstanding. Children start school with standards above those usually seen in all areas of learning. They make good overall progress in the reception year. Progress in mathematical development and knowledge of the world is very good. Progress in gaining important personal skills, such as establishing relationships, is also particularly strong. By the end of the year, most achieve the goals expected of them at this age and a significant number exceed them in most aspects of learning. There is, however, a relative weakness in the progress made in the development of writing skills, largely because the children lack the selfconfidence to write independently and are over worried about 'making mistakes'. Progress in this aspect is satisfactory. Pupils continue their overall excellent progress through Key Stage 1. Good teaching provides the bedrock for this achievement. Pupils' exceptional achievement is also as a result of pupils' eagerness to learn and parents' strong support and encouragement. Very effective use of information on how pupils are progressing also plays a very important part in pupils' achievement, as teachers have a clear view of pupils' standards and progress, and implement successful strategies to support those who are likely to underachieve. The school identified, for example, that girls were not achieving as well as the boys in mathematics. Effective strategies were initiated and in the most recent tests there was very little difference in the standards of boys and girls. Assessment systems are also effectively used for pupils

who have learning difficulties and disabilities and those with English as an additional language, with the result that they make similar progress to that of other pupils. Pupils meet the challenging targets set for them.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development, especially their ability to take initiative, show responsibility and care for one another, is outstanding. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils interact well with one another and relationships are very good. In discussions with many of the pupils, they say they have no concerns about bullying but if it occurred they were confident that it would be "sorted out". Pupils greatly enjoy school and see it as a friendly and happy place. One parent said her child would like to come to school over the weekends as well. Attendance is well above that found nationally. However, some families take their children on holiday in term time and unauthorised absence is above the national average. The behaviour of most pupils is exemplary and their attitudes to their work are extremely positive. Pupils feel confident to suggest new ideas and these are regularly discussed in class and within the school council. Pupils are actively involved in supporting local and national charities. As pupils move through Key Stage 1 they demonstrate growing independence and feel empowered to make choices. Pupils use their very good knowledge of healthy lifestyles to help them make sensible choices. They choose healthy foods, such as fruit for snacks, and participate enthusiastically in physical education and sports clubs. Pupils' excellent academic standards and ability to work effectively with others prepare them very well for the next stage in their learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good. Together with excellent support and guidance, pupils' eagerness to learn and parents very good levels of support, it promotes pupils' outstanding achievement. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the reception class is good. There are particular strengths in the way children are helped to learn to work and play together. The school has rightly identified a need to improve the teaching and learning of independent writing skills and has begun this process. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is also good. Throughout the school, teachers actively promote pupils' interest and motivation to learn. Lessons are usually well planned and activities successfully matched to pupils' differing abilities. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' work and pupils' thinking skills are successfully promoted through a variety of tasks and discussions. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers to provide good levels of support for pupils of all abilities. Pupils' progress and standards are very effectively monitored so that new activities successfully build on what pupils already know and can do.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's curriculum is good with some excellent features. This contributes to the exceptionally high standards by Year 2. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. All aspects of the recommended curriculum are successfully provided, leading to good achievement. There is a generally good balance of structured activities and opportunities to work independently. However, opportunities for free independent writing are not as effective. Good use is made of the outside area to promote children's effective learning, but it is some distance from the classrooms and this limits its availability. The curriculum in Years 1 and 2 is well balanced and effectively focused on stimulating pupils' interest and enjoyment in learning. The school is particularly successful in promoting pupils' creativity and imagination and this is reflected by outstanding artwork seen in all year groups. Provision for pupils' personal, emotional and social education is outstanding. Teachers have devised highly effective strategies to develop pupils' thinking skills and there are very good opportunities to apply and develop knowledge and skills through investigative work in mathematics and science. The provision for information and communication technology has improved and pupils are using this more effectively to support their learning across the curriculum. The importance of healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe is promoted very well. A 'health week' effectively fosters sun safety, exercise and diet. Activities such as dance, French and sport are popular and also contribute to pupils' enjoyment.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support. Pupils are highly valued as individuals and so feel very secure and cared for. Effective systems and strong relationships ensure pupils feel confident to talk about their successes and about any difficulties, both personal and academic. The attainment of all pupils is properly tracked and targets for future attainment regularly set and reviewed. Targets are shared with both pupils and their parents and underpin the very good progress made. Pupils have a very good understanding, appropriate to their age, of what they need to do to improve their work. The achievements of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and of those with English as an additional language, are systematically monitored and additional support provided as necessary, helping these pupils to achieve as well as their peers. The school takes the well-being of its pupils very seriously and the provision for aspects such as child protection and health and safety is very strong. There are good links with outside agencies that are drawn on as required. The school's very good partnership with parents supports pupils' very good progress. Strong links with feeder nurseries and with the junior school ensure that transitions are smoothly accomplished.

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## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

Leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The leadership provided by the headteacher is excellent. Her strong sense of purpose and vision for the school are shared by all staff. This united approach is responsible for the exceptional quality of care and support given to all pupils, their outstanding personal development and their academic achievement. Management procedures are comprehensive and efficient. There are thorough systems for monitoring pupils' standards and progress. Data is used very well to identify pupils' learning needs and effective support is provided for all abilities. The school is continually searching for ways to improve so that pupils find learning a rewarding experience and high standards are maintained. Staff embrace new ideas that are well rooted in research. The focus on 'Building Learning Power' activities and philosophy discussions are just two examples of strategies employed to extend pupils' abilities and skills. The school has made very good improvements since the previous inspection and has the secure capacity to improve even further. The school is very evaluative and its analysis is securely based on monitoring and review. Staff assessment of the school's effectiveness is secure and they successfully identify what can be improved and how. Governors are very well informed and provide good levels of support and challenge based on their wide range of expertise. They seek parents' opinions and suggestions, and involve them in all aspects of school life. Most parents have nothing but praise for the school.

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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>	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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>	1	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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>	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	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**

Dear Children I am writing to say thank you for making us feel welcome in your school and for helping us with our questions. We really enjoyed chatting to you and found everything you said very interesting. I thought you would like to know what we found out about you and the school. What we liked about the school

- You are very happy at school and really enjoy your lessons.
- You get on very well with each other and the adults in the school.
- You behave sensibly and are extremely kind to each other.
- We think you try very hard to do well in your work and you are good at making sensible choices about keeping healthy and safe.
- Mrs Fey and the teachers work really hard to make your lessons fun and to help you think carefully about how to be better learners.
- You are given lots of opportunities to take responsibility and you do it very well.
- All the adults look after you extremely well and help you to get better at your work.

What we have asked the school to do

- We have asked the teachers to find ways of helping children in reception to be more confident in their writing.

Thank you again for helping us find out about your school. Mrs Callaghan Lead inspector