



# Eversholt Lower School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 109449  
**LEA** BEDFORDSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 278199  
**Inspection dates** 7 December 2005 to 8 December 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr. Sean Harford LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Church End
<b>School category</b>	Community		MK17 9DU
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 9		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01525280298
<b>Number on roll</b>	74	<b>Fax number</b>	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. Steven Smith
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Christine Warren

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 9	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7 December 2005 - 8 December 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 278199
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a small school near Milton Keynes that serves Eversholt and other surrounding villages. The area is characterised by high quality housing and low unemployment. All of the children are from White British backgrounds. At 20%, the proportion of the children who have learning difficulties is in line with the national average, but none of these have statements of special educational need. The children's attainment on starting at the school varies marginally from year to year, but is generally slightly above average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Eversholt Lower is a good school with a number of outstanding features. Because of the good quality teaching, and the excellent care, support and guidance, the children achieve well and their personal development is exceptional. The school gives the children many good opportunities to take responsibility and they rise to these challenges admirably. The high quality provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that the children attain good standards and progress well, and this is built upon effectively throughout their time at school. The headteacher has led the school purposefully to develop a broad and exciting curriculum that includes many good opportunities for the children to extend their learning, whilst still maintaining the important focus on improving basic skills. The staff and governors have supported her well and there is a real sense of team work across the school. Through robust systems for identifying its strengths and areas for development, the school has a clear view of its effectiveness. These systems have, for example, identified the need to improve the children's progress in mathematics and writing in Years 3 and 4, to match the very good levels seen in other areas. Good steps have been taken to address these issues through, for example, better definition of the goals for children's learning. Nevertheless, the school recognises that some refinement is needed in setting and reviewing targets in mathematics. The school's consultative approach to planning for improvement has given it a good platform for the next stage of its development. However, the plans are sometimes not sufficiently focused on how the school will know to what degree it has been successful in addressing the key issues. The school gives good value for money. It manages its finances prudently with a keen eye kept on future development. The enhancements made to the school's environment, the opportunities for learning, and more effective financial planning since the inspection in January 2000, demonstrate that the school has good means to make further improvements.

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

- further improve the children's progress in writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 4 - continue to develop the system of setting targets for the children to ensure regular review and further progression, especially in mathematics - further develop the school's planning for improvement to ensure a sharper focus on how the school will know it has been successful.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The children at Eversholt achieve high standards and make good gains in their learning during their time at the school. There is little difference between the progress made by girls, boys or those who have learning difficulties. Children join the school at the age of 4 with skills and understanding that are a little better than expected for their age. They make a good start to their education throughout the Foundation Stage and achieve above average standards. They quickly gain self-assurance in the supportive

environment of the Reception class. In lessons they spoke confidently, chose activities for themselves sensibly and developed their writing skills well through a variety of tasks. This solid base is built upon very effectively in Key Stage 1, so that by the end of Year 2, attainment in the national tests is well above average. Their reading and comprehension are especially high and most children are more than a year ahead of the standards expected for their age. This represents good progress. The gains made in lessons are generally reflected by the high achievement of pupils in tests. In Years 3 and 4, the children continue to make good progress in reading, although in writing and mathematics it is slower. In lessons they made good progress, especially in their confidence with applying fractions to mathematical word problems. By the end of Year 4, overall standards are above the national average and children make the progress expected of them throughout Key Stage 2.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. They approach their education with enthusiasm and flourish in the school's supportive atmosphere. The children's contributions to the local community are excellent, and include concerts for senior citizens, fundraising for local and national charities and an active and effective school council. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Daily assemblies are happy gatherings with a strong spiritual element and a respectful atmosphere. The children have a keen sense of justice and are very good at boosting the self-esteem of others. The school promotes social and moral values well and children develop friendly and supportive behaviour towards each other. Cultural understanding is developed very effectively through the celebration of festivals from the world's major religions, trips to museums in Luton and Bedford, and visits by theatre groups. The children's attitudes and behaviour in lessons are outstanding. They try their hardest all the time and are enthusiastic participants in the good opportunities the school offers them. They particularly enjoy the rewards and responsibilities that the house system provides. They come to school on time and their attendance is above the national average. This has improved over the last couple of years through effective strategies to reduce holidays in term time and by providing certificates for good attendance. Children follow a healthy lifestyle. A good number participate in the after-school sports clubs, and sports day is very popular. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are developed well and provide a firm foundation for the children's future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and sometimes outstanding. The teachers' hard-working and thoughtful approach ensures that the children make good progress. Lessons are well structured and mostly planned around clear objectives for

learning and criteria for success that are shared with the children and explained effectively. However, when success criteria are not identified clearly enough, the progress of some children slows. The variety of activities is good, and sometimes excellent provision is made for the children's different capabilities, especially in using computers. The strong relationships between the adults and the children in lessons underpins the efficient use of time and means that learning continues at a brisk pace. Teaching assistants are employed very effectively and their involvement with the children is well planned. Questioning was generally thoughtful and probing, although it was often directed only to those children volunteering a response. Assessment is generally used well. Marking is up to date, conscientious and generally helpful in pointing out the next steps for improvement. However in some subjects, for example mathematics, it is sometimes based too much on correcting work, and not enough on providing the children with ways to achieve the next level of success.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

Eversholt provides its children with a broad, balanced programme for learning and gives suitable emphasis to different subjects and the development of skills. The school keeps the curriculum under constant review and makes appropriate modifications in the light of the children's needs. Good use is made of information and communication technology by teachers and children. The school rightly views this as an area for continual development and is doing a good job of constantly looking for ways to enhance teaching and learning through its use. Very good attention is paid to developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy throughout the school. Additionally, the school's well planned 'golden time' provides excellent opportunities for the children to enjoy activities such as pottery, aerobics, cooking and fabric printing. The curriculum is enriched very well by a wide variety of activities during and after school hours. The environmental sustainability project, for example, was initiated by the school council and now involves all children and staff. The football and netball clubs are well attended. Additionally, there are a good number of trips to places of religious significance and interest like Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. The Year 4 children particularly look forward to their residential visit to Shropshire for outdoor pursuits.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school provides a caring environment in which academic achievement is nurtured and valued by all. Procedures for protecting children and caring for those who are vulnerable are clear, thorough and effective. The school pays good attention to the children and staff's health, safety and welfare. Although bullying is very rare at Eversholt, when it does occur the children know who they can turn for help. The house system is a strong feature of the school. It encourages support across the age groups and provides incentives for good behaviour, effort and success. The support for those children who have learning difficulties is very good. They are well supported in lessons and spend some time each week consolidating their literacy and numeracy skills

effectively in small, focused groups. The very good monitoring of the children's academic progress, enables teachers to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses. Targets are set for the children's individual areas for development. However, sometimes these goals lack sufficient clarity and are not reviewed frequently enough. Homework is well organised and is appropriate for the children's different ages and capabilities.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's leadership and management are good overall with some very good features. The headteacher has managed the school ably since the last inspection, whilst maintaining good achievement and high quality teaching. Her enthusiastic and principled leadership has motivated staff to constantly look for ways of improving the school. Team work is a strong feature and shows itself, for example, in the professional and effective way each teacher takes responsibility for assuring the quality of provision in a number of subjects. Morale of the school is high in the mutually supportive atmosphere created by the headteacher and all her staff. The school has good systems for gathering information on its performance. Assessment information is used well to identify areas for improvement in the children's attainment. Lesson observations, scrutinies of work and questionnaires to parents, staff and children, all contribute to the sound base of evidence from which the school's accurate self-evaluation is drawn. Likewise, the school's planning for improvement is consultative and identifies the main steps for development. However, whilst the plans include many sensible actions to address the key issues, they sometimes lack focus on how the teachers and governors will know to what degree they have been successful. Governance is very good. Governors have a clear view of the school's performance and make a significant contribution to the school's self-evaluation process. They are supportive and challenging in appropriately equal measure.

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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	2	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>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	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	2	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>	1	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	1	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**

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when I came to visit your school. I enjoyed talking with you and watching you working with your teachers very much. You made a real contribution to your school's inspection. It was also nice to speak with your teachers about how well you work and to meet your school rabbit! I think your school is really good. What I liked most about your school: - you work really hard and show how much you enjoy going to school - you are friendly, play nicely and look after each other well - you read beautifully, and your writing and maths improve well during your time at Eversholt - Mrs Warren and all her staff work very hard for you and make your school a happy place in which to learn - you are given lots of interesting things to do in lessons and after school, and you really make the most of them. Even your school can improve, so I've asked your teachers to do these things: - help you to do even better in writing and maths in Years 3 and 4 - help you by making your targets a little clearer and checking whether you've hit them a bit more regularly. Good luck for the future.