



Thomas Eaton Primary

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110648
LEA CAMBRIDGESHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278478
Inspection dates 14 September 2005 to 15 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. Neil Sortwell LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Street
School category	Community		PE15 0QS
Age range of pupils	5 to 12		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01354740392
Number on roll	209	Fax number	01354740640
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.E Elliot-sands
Date of previous inspection	18 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs. Pamela Jones

Age group 5 to 12	Inspection dates 14 September 2005 - 15 September 2005	Inspection number 278478
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Thomas Eaton is a small school close to the market town of March. Its numbers have recently grown to 203, with most of its pupils coming from the villages of Wimblington and Stonea. Nearly one third comes from beyond these villages. There are very few pupils whose first language is not English. Fewer pupils than are found nationally are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. The percentage of them with statements of special educational needs is average. The school encourages 'learning for all' and is regularly used by its local community for that purpose.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Thomas Eaton is a good school which provides good value for money. The school judges itself in this way and inspectors agree. Overall, the school succeeds in ensuring that pupils make good progress, including those in Reception Year, those who are vulnerable or who have special educational needs. This is because the quality of teaching is good and sometimes is outstanding. Standards for pupils at the age of 11 are good but more could be expected from pupils of average ability in Key Stage 1 and of the girls in Key Stage 2. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The school works very effectively with outside agencies to ensure that this is so. As a result, even the most challenging pupils are able to benefit from what the school offers. Good provision is made for children in their Reception Year and they settle quickly. Pupils behave well and are enthusiastic about what they do in lessons and in the very wide range of activities available outside of lesson time. Adults provide high quality care for pupils, and in return they feel safe, healthy and well looked after. They enjoy coming to school and are involved in and committed to supporting it. The work of the school council is outstanding. This positive view of the school is also shared by nearly all parents. Links with parents and the community are strong. Pupils are keen to attend but attendance is marred by families taking holidays in term time. The leadership and management of the school are good. As a result, it has made good progress since the last inspection in raising standards and broadening the curriculum. The newly appointed headteacher and her team are planning for improvement and consulting widely within the school's community. This is necessary because while the school has an accurate view of itself in most areas, it is too cautious in its assessment of leadership and pupils' progress. The school is well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

To improve further the school should - ensure that all pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1 and that girls make better progress at Key Stage 2; - improve the school's planning, based on a more accurate self-evaluation; - improve attendance;

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start school with skills and knowledge which are broadly average for their age and they make good progress in the reception class. Most of the pupils aged five to seven make steady progress apart from those who are less able and those with special educational needs, whose progress is good. The rate of progress improves amongst those aged seven to eleven and, overall, it is good for all pupils including those who are vulnerable. Standards are very much in line with the national average amongst pupils aged five to seven. The school is aware that at this age, boys' reading and writing is not as good as the girls' and that their results are just below average. By contrast, boys do very well in tests at the end of Year 6, particularly in mathematics. Whilst the boys' performance is good, standards amongst girls are in line with the

national average and more could be expected of them. The school is aware of this discrepancy and that girls are not always being stretched enough. Overall standards at the end of Year 6 are above average. In recent years the school has successfully met and exceeded the demanding targets which the local authority set for pupils' test results.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well being are good. Pupils have very positive attitudes and enjoy school. They are keen to attend, although attendance overall is marred by holidays taken in term time. Pupils say that they particularly enjoy the wide range of activities offered to them. They are most motivated about their work when it is practical and involves opportunities for them to find things out for themselves. Pupils are keenly aware of the need to remain healthy, making choices about food and exercise. They know how to keep themselves safe and know who to turn to for help. Children settle very well in Reception Year, quickly learning to work and play very well together. This continues and pupils generally show consideration and courtesy to each other, their teachers and visitors. Pupils know what is right and wrong, and adults are effective in supporting their behaviour. A very small number of parents have concerns about behaviour, which inspectors do not share. Assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on beliefs although these occasions sometimes lack depth. By contrast, pupils have a good awareness of other cultures through visits to places of worship, studying world religions and sharing experiences. They are involved in the smooth running of the school, and the work of the school council is outstanding. In taking responsibility to organise, finance and run events, pupils are able to develop and use important life skills. As a result, they feel committed to the school's improvement and are being well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is good overall and sometimes outstanding. Teachers' expertise is used well with older pupils to raise standards. Teaching assistants provide outstanding support for children in the reception class and very effective support for learners throughout the school. As a result, less able pupils' learning is particularly good. Adults work well together in the classroom. They carefully record pupils' progress, refining their teaching to meet pupils' needs including those of the more able. The best teaching captivates pupils and moves work along at a brisk pace. Teachers use precise language and repeatedly raise the level of pupils' work through skilful questioning and careful selection of the best work. Pupils really enjoy these lessons which are often based on practical work and have clear, achievable and challenging targets. Their sense of achievement and progress is more limited when the purpose of lessons is too broad.

In these lessons pupils are unclear about what they need to do to improve their work. This is also reflected in marking which is too variable in its quality.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good. Concerns raised about the breadth of curriculum in the last inspection have been fully addressed. More time is now spent in lessons; pupils work regularly with computers; and an act of worship is an integral part of every day. Opportunities for pupils to consider deeper spiritual issues are limited, but the school is considering how it can make improvements. There is an impressive and extended range of activities provided by the school within and beyond the school day, which are well attended. The school is currently checking registers for these activities to ensure that the full range of pupils is included. The school places a strong emphasis on basic areas of learning in order to boost pupils' chances of success. In doing so it has introduced an innovative workshop approach to improving pupils' personal writing. There are plans to introduce more extended time for creative work within subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school prides itself on the quality of its care and inspectors confirm that it is good. The support for those who are vulnerable and for pupils with special educational needs is an outstanding feature of the school. Staff work very effectively with a range of outside agencies to ensure that the most challenging pupils receive the help they need. As a result, these pupils are well integrated in the school and make good progress. Staff know pupils very well, ensure that they remain safe and make progress. The emphasis which the school places on life-skill classes for all pupils reflects its determination to ensure that pupils are well prepared to lead successful lives. Pupils' positive attitudes towards health, fitness and responsibility are directly linked to the guidance which the school gives. There is room for some improvement in the way in which it makes it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve in their academic work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. It is well managed and runs smoothly, enabling teachers to focus on pupils' learning. The school makes good use of all of its resources, including staff who are deployed effectively. Governors provide the school with good support and readily accept the responsibility of holding the school to account. They have actively secured good value for money in a number of services which the school provides. The leadership consults widely about improvements, involving parents and other stake holders in managing some activities for pupils and adults. At the time of the inspection the head teacher had been in post for just over a week, having been internally promoted from deputy headship. The newly re-organised

leadership maintains a strong sense of direction and there is a well- articulated focus on raising standards and on promoting the care and well-being of pupils. It is unsurprising that these views have yet to be set out on paper or that rigorous arrangements for checking the quality of teaching have yet to be re-established. The school knows that producing a new school improvement plan is a high priority. The school has a largely accurate view of itself, although the new leadership team accepts that in some areas it is too cautious in its assessment. The leadership has a good grasp of the strengths of the school and knows where the priorities lie for improvement. The school is in a strong position to improve yet further.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	2	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

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	3	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

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

We have enjoyed visiting your school and watching you learn and play together. We particularly enjoyed talking with you about your work and were pleased to see how involved you are in helping your school run smoothly. We think that the work of your school council is outstanding. What we most liked about your school - We found that your school welcomed us and that, in particular, you were very polite and helpful. - We noted that you are kind and considerate towards each other at playtime. - We are pleased that you enjoy school and that you take part in many interesting activities during the school day and after school. - We believe that you are well taught by your teachers and other adults and that nearly all of you do well in lessons. - Your headteacher and teachers know you very well. They listen to you and work hard to include you in making the school even better. - The teachers who run your school know how well they are doing, but they also know how the school can become even better. - Your parents and carers are right in thinking that you go to a good school. What we have asked your school to do now - We want the teachers to make sure that you all do as well as you possibly can because we feel that some of you could do even better in lessons. - We have asked your headteacher to encourage your parents not to take you on holiday during school time.