



Ewyas Harold Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116674
LEA Herefordshire
Inspection number 279871
Inspection dates 15 March 2006 to 15 March 2006
Reporting inspector David Cox AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ewyas Harold
School category	Community		Hereford
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Herefordshire HR2 0EY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01981 240432
Number on roll	104	Fax number	01981 241106
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms Diana Palmer
Date of previous inspection	14 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs/ Mr Beverly/ Richard Ashmead/ Harris

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Ewyas Harold Primary School is a smaller-than-average primary school. Most of the pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties is average. There is currently no headteacher, following the departure of the previous headteacher in 2005 and pending the appointment of a new headteacher from September 2006. In the meantime, the leadership of the school is provided by a temporary leadership team of four staff.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

The school judges itself to be a good school but inspectors judge its overall effectiveness and value for money as inadequate. The school's view of its effectiveness is far too generous because it does not have sufficiently good monitoring systems in place to provide a detailed and accurate evaluation of its work.

Pupils make good progress in the Reception class, with many reaching nationally expected standards from a below-average starting point. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well and their standards are above average. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, however, standards are below average overall, mainly because attainment in mathematics is exceptionally low. Pupils' achievement is inadequate overall because of the unsatisfactory teaching of mathematics in recent years. Achievement in English and science is satisfactory. Although there is clear evidence that the teaching of mathematics is improving, particularly in Year 6, the full impact of this is still to be seen and further improvements are necessary. Despite teaching being currently satisfactory overall, some pupils in Years 1 to 6 are not challenged enough because teachers do not always use the assessment data gathered on these pupils to set tasks that are pitched at the right level.

Pupils enjoy their time in school and develop good personal skills. Effective measures are taken to ensure pupils feel safe and well cared for but academic guidance is inadequate. Leadership and management are inadequate owing to the lack of a headteacher. Systems for monitoring the work of the school, which were criticised at the last inspection, are still weak and are not always applied rigorously enough to bring about the desired improvement in the progress made by pupils. The current temporary leadership team has shown that it can move the school forward, but the lack of a headteacher is holding the school back.

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to improving the progress pupils make in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 and establishing more rigorous monitoring and evaluation.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make more effective and consistent use of the recently introduced strategies to improve pupils' standards in mathematics.
- Demonstrate a clear direction for the school that is based on a more rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school.
- Raise standards by ensuring that teachers make more effective use of assessment data to ensure all pupils are challenged.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Achievement and standards are inadequate. The good start pupils make in their earlier years in the school is not maintained, particularly in mathematics.

When children start school in the Reception many do not have the skills and knowledge typical of four-year-olds. During their time in the Reception, children make good progress, with many achieving what is expected nationally by the end of Reception. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and reach above-average standards because of good teaching. Standards have continued to rise in Years 1 and 2.

Standards are below average by the end of Year 6 and the achievement of pupils is inadequate, especially given the standards pupils reach by Year 3. This is especially true in mathematics, where standards dropped to an exceptionally low level in the national tests in 2005. In addition there has been a marked decline in pupils' results in mathematics in Year 6 in recent years. The school has correctly identified that this was caused by inadequate teaching in previous years, which resulted in pupils not reaching their expected levels. In contrast, results in national tests for English and science were broadly average and pupils' achievement in these subjects was satisfactory. Pupils' standards are currently average in English and science and their achievement is satisfactory.

The leaders of the school have correctly identified that mathematics is a weakness and are now working with the support of the local authority to help pupils raise their standards. These measures have not been in place long enough to have had a full impact. The school set challenging targets for improvement in 2005 but fell well short of its target for mathematics and English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. A firm foundation is established in the Reception class where children develop good personal and social skills. In other classes pupils behave well. They are friendly and confident, showing mutual respect. Spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils know right from wrong and know the importance of listening to each other's views. Cultural development is satisfactory but not enough is done to develop pupils' understanding of living in multi-racial Britain today. Attendance is good. Pupils like coming to school, and enjoy learning. They say bullying is rare, but if it occurs it is dealt with quickly and fairly.

Pupils talk knowledgeably about how to stay safe, and have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including regular exercise. For example, pupils said that they enjoy taking part in the 'Walk to School' initiative. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to school life through the school council. They enjoy working together and by the time they leave school in Year 6, their literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of education. However, their numeracy skills are not nearly as well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are now satisfactory as a result of measures being taken to address some of the weaknesses in teaching in the past, in particular in mathematics. However, it is too early to measure the full impact of such actions and the school is only at the beginning of the process of improving standards in mathematics sufficiently by the time pupils leave school.

Teaching and learning in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 are good. Teachers of the Reception pupils are knowledgeable about the curriculum for young children and, overall, provide interesting activities that meet their needs. For example, in one lesson, the teacher gave a lively presentation of different sounds, which very effectively engaged children's interest and enabled them to make good progress. In these years pupils also respond well to the teachers' imaginative use of different counting systems, which inspires pupils and improves their mental arithmetic.

In Years 1 to 6, when teaching is at its best, each lesson successfully builds on what the pupils have learnt before and pupils listen attentively and concentrate hard in response to skilful management of behaviour.

Where there are weaknesses, these arise in particular from the lack of an agreed methodology of how mathematics should be taught; this has led in the recent past to pupils underachieving. The teacher in Years 5 and 6 is working hard to overcome past difficulties and there is clear evidence that standards are beginning to improve, but recently introduced strategies to improve pupils' mathematical skills are not as yet being used consistently by all staff in the school.

Teachers generally do not make enough use of the limited assessment data gathered on pupils. The lack of data can lead to work that is not well matched to the needs of all pupils, and clear evidence of this was seen during the inspection, which inevitably affected pupils' progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. However, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to use literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in subjects across the curriculum. This hampers pupils' progress. In Reception, the curriculum meets the needs of children well and this is reflected in the good progress children make. Good attention is paid to developing the pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship skills. The pupils speak well of this provision, which they greatly appreciate and which influences their good personal development. Despite being some way from the nearest swimming pool the school makes good provision to cover that aspect of the curriculum. Substantial numbers of pupils join in the good range of

sports, music and other activities provided for them outside of normal lesson times, including an after-school French Club.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

The staff work hard and effectively to make sure that pupils feel well cared for and secure. There are good arrangements for keeping pupils safe and free from risk. Health and safety and child protection procedures are firmly in place and there are many good examples of this. Measures taken to plant willow trees and a wooden sunshade in the school grounds have provided access to shade when needed. The way in which the school can help to influence pupils' diets has been strengthened by the introduction of hot meals on two days a week. The school's satisfactory links with a range of external agencies help pupils with learning difficulties.

Care, guidance and support, however, are inadequate overall because the quality of academic guidance is inadequate. The way the school checks pupils' progress to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they should is not robust enough. Teachers do not always have sufficient information given to them about how well pupils are doing. Pupils do not always receive adequate information about how well they are doing in their work and the next steps to improve. This results in some groups of pupils not making as much progress as they should.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leadership and management are inadequate because the school has been without a headteacher. The school's leaders are aware that improvements need to be made and the school improvement plan identifies the most important areas for development. However, this plan does not provide enough detail about the strategies that are needed to bring about improvement. Their role as the leadership team is temporary until the appointment of a new headteacher. Whilst there is no clear direction for the long-term development of the school, the school's leaders are working with the Local Authority to ensure that short-term plans are in place. Systems for monitoring the work of the school are in place but have lapsed and lead to inaccurate evaluations of effectiveness. Despite these concerns, the temporary leadership team has shown sufficient capacity to enable the school to move forward. They have identified the weaknesses in mathematics that led to pupil underachievement and have redeployed a mathematics specialist to teach Years 5 and 6. Observations from the inspection show that there is clear evidence that standards of mathematics are beginning to improve. The start made in tackling weaknesses in mathematics is overdue and it was lack of action in the past that led to standards being allowed to fall to an exceptionally low level in Year 6.

The school is well supported by the parents. Parents praise the 'caring environment and support' given to their children. However, a significant minority express concern

about the lack of clear direction for the school and the uncertainty surrounding the leadership.

The governors, whilst supporting the school, have not always been sufficiently critical of the school's performance. Governors are rightfully anxious about the leadership of the school and in April made a permanent appointment for September 2006.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	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	2	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4	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?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	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

As you know, we visited your school last term to find out how well you are doing. Thank you for looking after us and making us feel welcome. Thank you also for talking to us about your school, the work you have done and how well you enjoy coming to school.

What we liked about your school

• You behave well and you enjoy being at school a great deal. • Children in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 do well. • Children in Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress in English and science. • Your school is a healthy and safe place. • Teachers and other staff in the school look after you well.

What we have asked your school to do now

• Help some of you to improve your standards in mathematics. • Ensure that the people who are in charge of the school keep a close check on how well your school is doing and whether it is improving quickly enough. • Make better use of the information the school has about you so that the work set always helps you do your best and improves your standards.

Your school will be visited again by inspectors to see how it is getting on.