

Eastcote Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101404
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	286051
Inspection dates	13–14 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Ann Sydney

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Pearson
Headteacher	Mr John Duggan
Date of previous school inspection	21 October 2002
School address	Eastcote Road Welling DA16 2ST
Telephone number	020 8856 1346
Fax number	020 8856 0802

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Eastcote Primary is an average-sized primary school. Below average numbers of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is well below average. Eastcote has Healthy Schools' status and a Basic Skills Quality Mark, both of which are national awards. The school is shortly to be re-built.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Standards reached by Year 6 pupils in science and mathematics are well below what they should be, bearing in mind children's starting points, and for this reason achievement is inadequate. These standards are about the national average but pupils leave the Foundation Stage well above average and the school does not build adequately on this excellent start. Standards in Year 2 in writing are low with no girls reaching the higher levels in 2007. Provisional results for 2007 indicate a further decline in performance in mathematics and with fewer pupils than expected reaching the higher levels in mathematics and science. Girls are significantly underachieving.

Managers have been too slow to analyse the reasons for the steady decline in achievement since the previous inspection report in 2002 and so have not taken the appropriate actions. They have not identified underachieving groups nor put in place any interventions fast enough because they are not tracking pupils' progress sufficiently well. Use of assessment data by the school is poor. The school has benefited from support received from the local authority in writing subject action plans. This is particularly the case with science where the action plan has only very recently been produced. It is too early to assess the impact of these plans because new systems are just being introduced. The involvement of middle managers and governors in the school's self-evaluation by the leadership team has not been sufficient to enable them to contribute effectively to the school's improvement.

Monitoring has not been systematic, so that teaching and learning in some subjects, such as science, are inadequate. Managers at all levels have observed very few lessons and their observations do not focus sufficiently on the progress of pupils. While pupils are almost always enthusiastic and well-behaved, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. There are weaknesses in marking and in using assessment to plan activities that will challenge all learners. There are examples of good and outstanding teaching in the school, particularly in the Foundation Stage where the outstanding provision gives pupils an excellent start. The strengths of teaching here are in the detailed planning, showing what the next steps of learning are for individual children, and the good collection and use of assessment data to match work to children's ability. The school is not sharing this good practice effectively.

This is a happy, caring school. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. There is good support from parents, who are involved as volunteers in and out of class. The school seeks parents' views on specific issues but a minority of parents agree that this is not often enough. Although the school looks after pupils' pastoral needs well, the declining achievement of pupils between Years 1 and 6 means they are not satisfactorily prepared for secondary education. The curriculum is satisfactory but provision for more able pupils and for engaging girls in science is barely satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. The sensitive and well-planned approach to children's needs ensures that they get off to an excellent start in the Nursery. Care and teaching are outstanding so that children demonstrate very high levels of enjoyment and commitment to their work. New children settle very quickly to school routines because of the carefully organised home visit programme and staff's warm and welcoming attitude. The Nursery is particularly attractive and well resourced. The outdoor activity area is exceptionally diverse and imaginative. The overall quality of education provided is outstanding and children make excellent progress in their learning. By the beginning of Year 1, all-round standards are consistently above average and sometimes exceptionally high. Assessments of what children can do are frequent and thorough. The Foundation Stage leader has a very clear view of how this phase of the school could develop further through improving the learning environment in the Reception class.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in science and mathematics in Years 3-6 and writing in Years 1 and 2 particularly for girls.
- Improve the use of assessment information to plan work that challenges all pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 1-6, including by sharing good practice.
- Involve managers at all levels in improving teaching and learning and raising achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

By the end of Year 6 standards are about the national average, but pupils' achievement is inadequate because they should be doing better than this. Both boys and girls underachieve and no ethnic group performs significantly better than another. Children join the school with standards generally above those expected for their age and they make good progress in the Foundation Stage. By the end of Year 2 some underachievement is apparent. Pupils have made satisfactory progress in most areas except writing, and standards are just above the national average. By the time they leave in Year 6 test results are average but not high enough. Results in English have been maintained above average since the previous inspection but there is significant underachievement in science and mathematics, especially by girls and more able pupils. This is principally because of weaknesses in the teaching and in the ineffective coordination of these subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the above average attendance and generally good punctuality. They develop social responsibility well, some through membership of the Playground Squad, School Council or the borough's Children's Parliament. One Year 2 parent said 'I have really seen my daughter's confidence grow since she started school.' Pupils appreciate the need for rules and are aware of the sanctions applied for inappropriate behaviour. They behave well in class, listening carefully to the teachers, and even suggesting homework. Around the school and at playtimes pupils are considerate and kind to each other. They have a good understanding

of a healthy lifestyle demonstrated by increasing numbers walking to school and the popularity of sports clubs after school. Older pupils operate fund-raising stalls at fetes but are not developing the depth of economic awareness they need for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching and learning is best in the Foundation Stage. Excellent planning and assessment and a real knowledge of the learning needs of young children make this outstanding. In the rest of the school, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory so that over time learners do not make the progress expected of them. Pupils bring a lot to their lessons: they are enthusiastic and attentive learners. Relationships are very good with staff and between pupils. Teachers develop pupils' vocabulary well. However, their expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and extension work for more able pupils is unimaginative. Teachers do not use assessment well enough to match work to pupil's needs. Pupils do not know how well they are doing or what specifically they need to do to get better. While the school has satisfactory resources, teachers make insufficient creative use of information and communication technology to bring lessons to life.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum has an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills. Modern foreign language provision is good with opportunities to learn some French and Japanese from Year 3. Both pupils and parents appreciate this. Visits by representatives of the local emergency services, the mayor and the Member of Parliament help to develop older pupils' citizenship awareness. There is satisfactory provision for personal social and health education, which results in satisfactory personal development. The curriculum is enriched with a good range of sports and music clubs, which pupils enjoy. A significant weakness in the curriculum is that it does not yet meet the needs of older girls in mathematics and science, or pupils that are more able. Curriculum planning does not show clear links between subjects, nor where work with computers could improve learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are confident in the level of care that adults in the school provide, from the office staff to the headteacher. Parents describe it as a 'very caring, supportive environment' and talk of 'happy, friendly staff and pupils'. Procedures are thorough for ensuring that pupils are safe and that all possible risks are minimised. The checks on the suitability of staff meet statutory requirements. Staff know pupils and their families well. The school provides access to other support agencies when required. Good work has been done in assessing and monitoring pupils' progress in writing. However, in other subjects data, though collected, is not used well enough to enable all staff to have a clear view of the progress that all groups of pupils are making. Pupils are not clear how well they are doing, or should be doing, or of the next steps in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The school has not been accurate in its self-evaluation. Achievement and standards have been declining for some years and the school has not used data sufficiently well to be aware of this until recently. While the school has actively promoted the caring ethos of the school successfully, the leadership has not identified or tackled the causes of underachievement swiftly enough. While there is ample data in school, these are not being used well enough to inform teachers and pupils. Monitoring of teaching and learning has not been rigorous or sustained, and subject co-ordinators have not been involved sufficiently. The English co-ordinator's role is more developed and this contributes to the better results in English. Similarly, the Foundation Stage is led well, with clear strategic direction. While governors are active and supportive, they have not held the leaders to account for the considerable underachievement in Years 3-6. Staff have not been deployed economically and because of the declining achievement the school provides unsatisfactory value for money. The majority of parents strongly support the school.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

17 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eastcote Primary School, Welling, DA16 2ST

Thank you all for the way you welcomed us into your school. We were impressed by the friendliness and politeness of all of you. We think your behaviour and attendance are good and we like your enthusiasm and concentration in lessons. You told us how you feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Your parents told us what a caring, happy school it is. The Nursery and the Reception classes give you an outstanding start with your learning. All the adults look after you well so that you feel safe and know how to stay healthy. Everyone is excited about the new school building and some of you will see your ideas included when it is built.

However, we found other areas where the school is not doing well enough and needs to improve quickly. Some of your parents would like the school to ask their opinion more often. Some of you told us that work is sometimes too easy and for some years test results have not been as high as they should be. We have asked the school to work on four things:

- improve writing in Years 1 and 2, and older pupils' achievement in science and mathematics
- check how much you know and use this to plan lessons that set you all a challenge
- improve teaching in Years 1-6 so that it is always good and challenges everyone, so that you are all doing as well as you possibly can
- keep a careful check on your progress and on the quality of lessons.

You can help by making sure you know your targets for each subject and know what you need to do to get even better. I am sure you will all work together with the headteacher and the whole staff to do your very best. We hope that you will continue to be happy at school and wish you every success in the future.

Yours faithfully,

Ann Sydney

Lead Inspector