



Eaves Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104770
Local Authority St. Helens
Inspection number 287027
Inspection date 10 October 2006
Reporting inspector Jeffery Plumb

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Eaves Lane
School category	Community		Marshalls Cross, St Helens
Age range of pupils	3-11		Merseyside WA9 3UB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01744 678260
Number on roll (school)	222	Fax number	01744 678268
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Peter Lloyd
		Headteacher	Mrs Joanne Davies
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Eaves Primary School is of average size but the proportion of pupils with statements for their special educational needs is well above the national average. So too is the number of pupils eligible for a free school meal. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups and none are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The school has the National Healthy Schools Award and the Eco Schools Award, Green Flag. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in post for a year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which has been too modest in its evaluation of its performance in several areas. Good analysis of pupils' performance results in decisive actions which raise achievement. Good leadership and effective management ensure that pupils from a wide range of social backgrounds are included in all aspects of school life and achieve well. An outstanding feature is the high quality of care pupils' experience. This builds their confidence and contributes successfully to their enthusiasm for learning. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

From a low starting point, pupils make good progress in English and science. By Year 6 they reach and often exceed the standards expected for pupils of their age. The story is different in mathematics. Achievement in this subject and standards by Year 6 vary from year to year and boys outperform girls. The school has recently taken decisive action to drive up standards in mathematics for girls and early indicators suggest this action is beginning to raise their attainment. Based on the success of other actions already taken to raise achievement, the strategies put in place to raise achievement in mathematics for girls bode well for the future. Teaching typically provides good challenge for pupils and targets support well for pupils with statements for their special educational needs. The school provides good value for money.

Pupils' personal development is good and they become keen learners. They are enthused by their lessons which they describe as being interesting and fun. Pupils behave well and care for each other. They trust their teachers and feel safe at school. Pupils' fitness and health are promoted very successfully. The vibrant school council has established a healthy tuck shop. This enterprise makes a valuable contribution to developing pupils' work-related skills. Overall, the curriculum is good and the headteacher is clear about what needs to be done to improve it. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Currently there are no tailor-made groups of activities aimed at extending gifted and talented pupils. The plan to move this development forward has not yet been implemented because the new leadership team have had more pressing priorities to address first. In a short space of time their actions to improve behaviour, drive up standards for pupils with learning difficulties, and raise achievement for higher attaining pupils in the national tests for 11-year-olds have all been successful. Having addressed these successfully, they are now well poised to raise achievement for girls in Year 6 in mathematics and for gifted and talented pupils across all subjects. Capacity for improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in mathematics for girls in Year 6.
- Improve the curriculum for pupils identified as gifted and talented to ensure that they are challenged to achieve high standards across all subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is below that expected nationally. Their language and communication skills are well below expectations. They make good progress throughout the school and achieve well overall. In the 2005 national tests for 11-year-olds results were above average in English, mathematics and science. In 2006 the proportion of pupils in Year 6 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was considerably higher than in the previous year. Even so test results remained above average in science and average in English. The number of 11-year-old pupils who reached the higher Level 5 in the tests was the best ever in recent years. Progress and standards reached in mathematics have been up and down in recent years. In the 2006 mathematics test for 11-year-olds, boys achieved well and reached above average standards but girls underperformed and their results were below average. Strategies put in place following an analysis of those test papers are beginning to raise girls' achievement in mathematics. Throughout the school pupils achieve high standards in aspects of information and communication technology because the teaching of this subject is challenging and creative. Pupils with statements for their special educational needs make outstanding progress because of the quality of support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school. Their attitudes to learning are overwhelmingly positive. They say, 'Teachers make our lessons hard so that we learn more, but they support us straight away when we are stuck with our work'. Behaviour is good. Attendance is average but is beginning to rise because of an effective strategy put in place to improve it. Pupils' health, safety and fitness are promoted well. Through a vibrant school council and an eco committee, pupils are involved in making decisions to improve their school. An excellent careers and guidance programme ensures that pupils' work-related skills are developed well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their social development is a particular strength. Older pupils speak with enthusiasm about the opportunities provided for them to take responsibility to support younger pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Typically, teaching is well planned and based on good subject knowledge. It creates an exciting environment conducive to learning through discovery. Consequently, pupils make good progress. Activities in lessons are well matched to pupils' prior learning. Expectations are high and teachers use questions effectively to challenge pupils. Targeted support from teaching assistants ensures that pupils with statements for their special educational needs are fully included in lessons and make outstanding

progress. It is a joy, for example, to behold pupils in wheelchairs fully included in physical education lessons. In a minority of lessons activities are not suitably matched to the learning objectives for the lesson and so the progress of pupils is slowed. Marking of pupils' books is consistently good and comments provide them with helpful pointers to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Innovative planning ensures that key skills are promoted across subjects. This makes a valuable contribution to the development of pupils' problem solving and communication skills. Recent changes based on an analysis of pupils' past performance have raised achievement. This is clearly seen in the phonics programme which has had a marked impact on raising standards in reading and writing for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The continuity of the Foundation Stage curriculum model into Year 1 has raised achievement. The school has identified the need to develop a more thematic approach to deliver its curriculum. Currently, there are no tailor-made curriculum packages aimed at the promotion of excellence and enjoyment for gifted and talented pupils. The new headteacher has identified this weakness and there is an action plan to develop appropriate curriculum activities for these pupils. Good use is made of visits and they contribute well to pupils' learning. There is an excellent range of clubs which enriches the curriculum and which has a positive effect on pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Outstanding care lies at the heart of this successful school. Outstanding use is made of external agencies to support vulnerable pupils. This ensures that pupils with complex special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of school life and that they achieve well. Parents are delighted with the care their children receive. Pupils say, 'We feel safe at school because our teachers look after us. We can tell them about our problems and they are sorted out quickly'. All essential risk assessments are conducted rigorously. There are clear procedures for lifting pupils who find walking difficult. Child protection procedures are in place. A record is kept of adults' suitability to work with children. Teachers track pupils' progress meticulously. Challenging targets are set for all pupils to improve in English and mathematics. Discussion with pupils confirmed that they know their targets and use them to improve the standard of their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management ensure that all pupils are engaged in learning and determined to do their best. The new leadership team work together well to raise achievement and drive up standards. Within a year they have successfully managed significant change, and taken all staff on board with their vision and commitment to

raise achievement. The school has good systems in place to check its performance. Analysis of problems is robust and results in creative actions to resolve them. Despite its modesty in self-evaluation the school has a good knowledge and understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Many actions involving 'thinking outside of the box' have resulted in significant improvements in a short space of time. These actions have raised achievement for pupils. The school is now positioned well to improve the standards of Year 6 girls in mathematics and make better provision for gifted and talented pupils.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming me as a guest in your school. I enjoyed talking with you about your work. Your enthusiasm for learning and enjoyment for school came across to me in the discussions we had together.

What I judge to be good about your school

- The good achievement you make in English and science.
- The good teaching and excellent care you receive.
- Your positive attitudes to learning which you find challenging and fun.
- Your good behaviour.
- Your commitment to improving the environment of your school, and your success in achieving the Eco Green Flag.
- Your involvement in making decisions to improve your school.
- The good leadership provided by your headteacher and the other members of the school's leadership team.

What I have asked your school to do now

- Ensure that girls in Year 6 make the same good progress in mathematics as the boys.
- Ensure that you all have the opportunities to excel in aspects of the curriculum in which you demonstrate a particular gift or talent.

I know that you will keep up your hard work and assist your teachers in making your school even better.