

Eileen Wade Lower School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109443
Local Authority	BEDFORDSHIRE
Inspection number	288375
Inspection date	9 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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	5-9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	35
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Braga
Headteacher	Mrs Virginia Gilks
Date of previous school inspection	11 February 2002
School address	High Street Upper Dean Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE28 0ND
Telephone number	01234708260
Fax number	01234 708260

Age group	5-9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small village First school. It serves Upper Dean and four other local villages and hamlets. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are over twice as many girls as boys on roll. In the Reception year and Year 4 there are no boys at all. The five year groups are taught in two classes. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception year varies widely each year but overall is at expected levels.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Eileen Wade has a warm family atmosphere where pupils enjoy learning together and they achieve well. As one pupil said, 'sometimes we fall out, but when we do lots of others come to help us to be friends again'. It is a good school with outstanding features and it provides good value for money. Parents are unanimous in their support of the school. They appreciate the good start that it provides for their children and speak very warmly of how 'all the staff are very conscientious and looking for ways to improve'. One parent encapsulated the views of many parents by saying, 'Ours is a delightful school where every aspect of the children's welfare and education is taken care of.'

Although standards at the end of Year 4 are not as high as at the time of the previous inspection, pupils in all year groups make good progress in their learning and they achieve well. Over the past two years, staff have introduced a good system to track pupils' progress and attainment. This is used well, particularly in English, and has helped to boost achievement from previous satisfactory levels. In mathematics, progress is good though not so strong and staff are keenly aware that there is a need to increase the number of pupils that gain the higher levels. Overall, standards are above average.

Children make good progress in the Reception year because a wide range of activities encourages them to learn well both indoors and outdoors. They also benefit from group teaching that is inclusive and sensitive to the pupils' individual learning needs. These positive attitudes continue throughout the school and pupils make rapid progress in their personal development. This is outstanding. Behaviour is good, relationships are excellent and pupils delight in taking responsibility. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall because staff know the pupils well and they generally support their learning needs effectively. However, in science, teachers' plans do not match the pupils' differing learning needs, particularly in the development of science skills. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are catered for particularly well. This is a strong element within the good quality care, guidance and support provided for pupils at the school.

There have been many improvements in the past 18 months and these are the result of good leadership and management of the headteacher and show the school has good capacity to improve. The staff have been involved well in making changes to provision, particularly of the teaching and learning of English, the provision for Reception pupils and the development of the curriculum which is of good quality.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the number of pupils gaining higher levels in mathematics.
- Ensure that science lessons are planned to meet the needs of all groups of pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. Standards are well above expected levels in reading and writing. In mathematics they are slightly above and in science at expected levels. Although the cohort is small, there is a positive trend of good improvement in results. Pupils continue to make good progress in Year 3 and 4. Progress and achievement is strongest in reading and writing where many pupils make excellent progress. This is due, in part, to the focus on developing the pupils'

awareness of phonics in their reading, writing and spelling in the lower class. It has also been supported by the improved tracking and target setting system. In mathematics, progress is good though the number that are on course to achieve the higher levels is smaller than in English. The good achievement made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is due to the quality of the support they receive. Their needs are identified early and pupils make good progress towards the targets set in their individual learning plans.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils love school and learning. They attend regularly and show a keen pride in their own and others' achievements such as in achievement assembly. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about keeping fit and healthy. This is helped by the school's excellent provision that includes a daily 10 minute aerobics session for the whole school in the hall which the pupils thoroughly enjoy. Pupils' outstanding sense of responsibility is shown through the influential school council and also their mature attitudes in this area. 'We have to take responsibility for ourselves and our own learning first', said one pupil. She then went on to say that it is the responsibility of older pupils to 'make sure that our four-year-olds are happy'. They delight in raising money by organising pupils' bring-and-buy sales and also ice-cream sales. They are proud that this money is used to support the education of a Tanzanian child. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and they have an excellent awareness of the importance of staying safe. For example, even the youngest children are aware of the need to wear sun hats when finger, foot and hand painting outside. Pupils are well prepared to move on to the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and there are some outstanding features. Relationships are good and staff manage the pupils particularly well. The few pupils that have challenging behaviour are supported very well by both the teachers and support staff. Teachers make clear what the pupils are to learn and they generally match work very well to the wide range of needs present in both classes. However, this is not the case in science, where learning is satisfactory because teachers' plans do not provide enough challenge for pupils at different stages of learning science skills.

Learning is good overall because the activities set are interesting and teachers make good use of technology to make lessons lively. They help to support the varying preferred learning styles of pupils by making good use of the interactive whiteboards and computers in the classrooms. The learning support staff are very skilled and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. They encourage pupils' efforts and they probe for understanding with good questions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and carefully planned to ensure that a wide range of interesting learning activities and experiences are provided. This is a particular challenge because of the age range of pupils in each class. The school rightly recognises the need to strengthen further the

curriculum planning in science and mathematics. Children in the Reception year benefit from separate curricular provision that enables them to choose activities as well as engage in those directed by staff. The strengthening of the curriculum for the teaching of reading and writing skills has led to considerable improvements. In addition, staff are adept at making use of literacy skills in many subjects. For example in the lower class, pupils' history work on the Fire of London is augmented well by a good range of writing in different styles and with art and design and technology work. Pupils in the upper class benefit from specialist teaching such as drama during creative arts week.

There is also specialist teaching of physical education and French for Key Stage 2 pupils. There is a good range of additional activities. Many visitors and visits out of school enhance learning. The residential trip for older pupils, enliven the pupils' learning and contribute well to their personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Close relationships with parents, the village pre-school and the very small sized school help children to settle quickly to learning in the Reception year. These very good relationships continue across the school with all adults knowing the pupils well and helping to support their academic and personal development. Parents commented on how they are able to discuss their children's needs whenever concerns arise. High quality child protection procedures and health and safety routines ensure that pupils are kept safe and secure. The school now has good systems for tracking pupils' academic progress, particularly in English and mathematics, which alert staff to any potential underachievement. Pupils are helped to have a clear understanding of their targets, particularly in English, and how they can improve. Nevertheless, there is scope to improve the guidance offered to more able pupils in mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good leadership. The headteacher is successful in achieving the vision to secure both the pupils' academic and personal development. All the adults work closely together and there is a strong atmosphere of support throughout the school. The impact of improvement projects brought about in the past two years has been positive and has led to the school's current good overall effectiveness. This has been based on a secure knowledge of the school's strengths and needs. The school has good quality self-evaluation processes and a good quality school development plan that effectively identifies improvement areas and how progress towards them is checked.

Governance is good. Governors are very supportive of the school, and they also raise good questions about aspects of provision in order to challenge the school sensitively to do better. However, they are not yet systematically involved in the evaluation of the school's development plan.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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	2
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	2

Personal development and well-being

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

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?	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

10 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eileen Wade Lower School, Upper Dean, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE28 0ND

Thank you for your help when I inspected your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit because everyone was so welcoming and friendly. I would like to share with you what I thought.

I think that yours is a good school. These are the things that I think are best about your school:

- Teaching is good and all the adults take good care of you so that you make good progress in your learning.
- The staff help you to love school, to enable you to be very responsible and to understand how to stay safe and healthy very well.
- Your behaviour is good.

I know that everyone wants to do even better and I have suggested two things that I think will help:

- For your teachers to help more of you to reach higher levels in numeracy by the time that you leave the school.
- For teachers to make sure that their plans for science lessons have activities that help you to learn equally well whether you find it easy or hard.

You can help by continuing to work hard! I am confident that you will continue to enjoy your school and I wish you well in the future.

With best wishes

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector