

Eastfield Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110707
Local Authority	CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Inspection number	288748
Inspection date	19 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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

The inspection of the day care was carried out under the Children Act 1989: Part XA (as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000) and, where (funded) nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	265
Day care	33
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Paul Varley
Headteacher	Ms Elaine Lynch
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002
Date of previous day care inspection	1 January 1900
School address	Pig Lane St Ives Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE27 5QT
Telephone number	01480 463958
Fax number	01480 463958

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized infant and nursery school. It serves an area which is largely average in economic terms. The majority of children are of White British heritage with 30 speaking English as an additional language. There are slightly fewer children entitled to free school meals than seen nationally. The proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities is average overall. There has been a change of headteacher since the last inspection. The school is a Health Promoting school, is part of a local schools' sports partnership and holds an Investors in People Award.

The school provides a range of day care opportunities in the 'Club4U'. This currently includes before school from 08.00 to 09.00 and after school from 15.15 to 18.15. There are full day sessions from 08.00 to 18.15 during school holiday periods. In addition, there is a playgroup on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is a school that provides an outstanding quality of education. Parents are rightly very pleased with the quality of education provided and note that, 'Eastfield is a fantastic school' and, 'We are proud to be part of the Eastfield community'.

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are close to the average for their age, although the ability to communicate with those around them is very mixed. They settle quickly into the Nursery and start to grow in confidence and do very well. They make outstanding progress in Reception so that when they enter Year 1 they have achieved the targets expected for their age and many exceed these goals. In Years 1 and 2, children also make excellent progress. At the end of Year 2, standards exceed national averages. Children make particular gains in their personal and social development and their confidence in communicating with those around them. Overall, achievement is outstanding which helps equip children very well for their later life.

The personal development of children is outstanding. They really enjoy their time in school and want to succeed. They understand the benefits of a healthy diet; enjoy their lovely new school lunches and the very good range of physical activities that help them to lead a healthy life. They enjoy taking on responsibilities such as the school council which supports the school community well. While attendance is close to national averages, this is affected by families choosing to take holidays in term time which can influence the progress made.

Teaching and learning is outstanding and a key reason why the children do so well. Staff have consistently high expectations of what the children can achieve. Teachers plan very well together in year group teams and make sure that well-matched activities are provided for groups of children of different abilities. The curriculum is excellent. Personal, social and health education themes cover all aspects of personal safety so that children know how to look after themselves and their friends. The care, guidance and support of children is outstanding, with pastoral care of high quality. Staff make excellent use of the range of assessment information and tracking progress to challenge all children in subsequent work.

Leadership and management of the school are excellent. The headteacher is a pivotal force in continuing to move the school forward. She took over a very successful school that was recognised with Beacon status. But she has not allowed the school to simply maintain the many previous strengths. All staff and governors are fully involved in an exemplary programme of rigorously monitoring and evaluating the quality of education offered to be able to identify the further small steps for improvement. The school has excellent capacity to improve and provides outstanding value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the levels of attendance to ensure that all children make the best progress that they can.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children enter the Nursery with wide ranging skills that, whilst very mixed, are average overall. They are often initially quiet and several have limited confidence and skills in speaking and listening. The school has recognised this as a trend and has prioritised opportunities for role

play and 'real life' situations across the school to extend communication skills. A growing number enter the Nursery at the early stages of English. Because of the very good number of staff, children are well supported and rapidly develop effective bi-lingual skills. In Reception, children make excellent progress because of some exemplary teaching. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children reach the targets expected for their age and many exceed these, especially in their personal and social development and their communication language and literacy skills.

In Years 1 and 2, children continue to make excellent progress. They extend their learning in all key areas. National test data shows that, at the end of Year 2, standards have been above, and often well above, national averages since the last inspection. Children have done particularly well in their reading. With more 'ordinary' results in mathematics the school prioritised this area and standards in the last two years have risen considerably. Children do well in their writing because activities are interesting and purposeful. Standards are above, and often well above, national expectations for the age of the children. Overall, boys and girls of all abilities make excellent progress and achievement is outstanding which helps equip them very well for their future economic well-being.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children enjoy their time in school and as one parent notes, 'On the recent half term break he was counting down the time until he could go back to school'. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children is outstanding. As another parent rightly notes, 'The ethos at Eastfield is wonderful and it's obvious at assemblies that the children are respectful, considerate and receive a wonderful education'. Children have very good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy and readily identify how eating fruit and vegetables and 'lots of exercise' help them to do this. A very good range of play equipment successfully promotes active play. Year 2 children take part in a three-day residential visit which supports their personal development very effectively. Children make a strong contribution to the school community with aspects of citizenship education central to many 'fun' activities. The school council discuss issues such as school dinners, friendships and playtime. They are pleased that staff take notice of their ideas and are delighted with the improvement in school dinners. Attendance is close to the national average but adversely affected by families who choose to take holidays in term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is outstanding overall and with examples in each year group of really imaginative and effective teaching that considerably extends children's learning. The school is very generously staffed and, without exception, all adults share high expectations of children's behaviour and what they can achieve. Children are not treated as babies but as enthusiastic learners. There is some teaching, including the teaching in Reception, that models how successfully activities and themes can be used to interest and motivate children to try really hard. Planning is completed in year teams to ensure equality of opportunity, and different but linked opportunities are provided for children covering the range of abilities. This ensures a consistently high but

appropriate level of challenge for all. Children are encouraged to collaborate with each other, and the use of 'Talking Partners' to discuss ideas is well established.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Staff have a creative approach to curriculum planning and are not limited by expectations for a particular year group but plan imaginative activities that provide progression in learning. Themes are used very well to link the planning for basic skills. For instance, the current garage theme in reception is based on real life experiences. Following a visit to a local garage, and another to a tyre centre, a wide range of activities, including writing, provide a purpose for learning, illustrated in the excellent writing of health and safety rules for the class garage. Extra-curricular activities are excellent and the school works very successfully to provide visits out and visitors into school to enrich learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All elements of care, guidance and support are excellent. The pastoral care of children is of high quality, with numerous comments from parents illustrating how, as one notes, 'I have always found Eastfield to be a very caring, safe atmosphere for my children'. The support offered to those with learning difficulties and disabilities is very effective and the school has close working relationships with a range of external agencies. Child protection procedures are well established and there are suitable checks of those who help in school. Very unusually, children produce their own risk assessment for a school visit, which provides an outstanding focus on how to stay safe. The learning environment around the school is used to celebrate the very high quality of the children's work with some stunning displays of exceptional artwork.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership of the headteacher is simply outstanding. She is a pivotal force in school improvement, welcoming ideas and carefully considering how best to continually move forward. Since the last inspection, there has been a complete change of the teaching staff with excellent appointments, including the deputy headteacher, those in the senior leadership team and year group leaders. The senior staff continually recognise and praise the great strength in the team approach of everyone working very enthusiastically together. Governance of the school is also outstanding. Staff and governors work very effectively together and there is a rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. This is a model for others in its thoroughness and how it has enabled staff and governors to work so closely together in a trusting and professional manner. The lasting impression of the school is of enthusiasm and sheer enjoyment in the job, illustrated not only by the headteacher but by everyone involved.

Effectiveness of registered day care

Grade: 2

'Club4U' provides good quality child care that has some outstanding features. Children play in a bright and high quality setting in which they feel safe. Parents say that they are delighted that their children are able to thrive in such a secure and nurturing environment. The children

enjoy making use of the excellent range of resources which are easily accessible. They are occupied well and show high levels of interest and concentration in what they do. Children particularly enjoy using the interactive whiteboard to explore shapes and letters. Staff provide a good range of activities which help to engage and interest the children. There are good opportunities provided for children to play quietly by themselves, in pairs and in small groups. In addition, the secure outdoor space enables children to enjoy physical activities using the good range of interesting equipment. However, as yet, the staff's play plans do not ensure that there is regular opportunity for children to play and develop their emotional social, physical and intellectual capabilities.

Staff manage the children exceptionally well and are warm, welcoming and supportive towards them. As a result, the children say that they thoroughly enjoy their time in the den. Their behaviour is excellent and there are very positive and supportive relationships that help children to thrive in their play. This is aided well by the staff who promote the children's welfare and well-being effectively. They listen and respond to the children's needs with sensitivity and encourage them to focus well. The setting ensures that children are helped to understand how they can become responsible in a variety of ways. Children are expected to help to tidy and there are good routines for the provision of snacks and drinks. In addition, children know that they have to ensure that the cabin is hygienic. Whilst staff ensure that hygiene routines are well established, for example in washing hands after using the toilets, the children also understand their role and responsibility in maintaining good hygiene. Some older children in the 'cabin', which provides care for over 8 year olds, encouraged the younger children well to take part in a fund raising activity for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) to support the plight of the albatross. Younger children helped to raise money from their parents for this cause. They were animated and excited to recount their fund-raising efforts! There are good arrangements in place to safeguard children. All the staff are suitably qualified. They hold an up-to-date first aid qualification and are clear about how they would deal with any issues regarding protecting and safeguarding children.

Since registration in September 2006, there have been no complaints about the registered day care that required Ofsted or the school to take action so that the day care continued to meet the National Standards. The school is required to keep a record of complaints about the registered day care made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints about the registered day care other than those made to Ofsted.

Recommendations or actions to improve the registered day care

- Ensure that play plans provide opportunities for children to develop emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

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.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

The effectiveness of the registered day care

The quality and standards of the registered day care	2
How effective is the day care in helping children to be healthy?	1
How effective is the day care in protecting children and helping them to stay safe?	1
How effective is the day care in helping children to achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
How effective is the day care in helping children to make a positive contribution?	1
How effectively is the day care organised?	2
Does the day care meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides?	Yes
Has the day care improved since the last inspection?	NA
Does the day care require enforcement action?	No
Does the day care require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 March 2007

Dear Children

Eastfield Infant and Nursery School, Pig Lane, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE27 5QT

Thank you very much for looking after me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed chatting to you in lessons, at lunchtime and when I spoke to the school council. I think your school is great; in fact it's excellent - it's outstanding!

These are the things that I think are best.

- Ms Lynch and all the other staff and governors lead the school really well.
- You certainly enjoy school and try very hard.
- You make excellent progress and reach standards that are better than expected for your age.
- The teaching is excellent; staff seem to enjoy working with you all which encourages you to do really well.
- The curriculum is excellent with lots of extremely interesting things for you to do.
- All staff care for you very well and make sure that you are safe and happy.

This is what I think could be improved.

- The attendance of some of you could be better.

Thank you again for chatting to me. Enjoy your time at Eastfield.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector