



# Earl Sterndale CofE Primary School

## Inspection Report

---

**Unique Reference Number** 112821  
**Local Authority** DERBYSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 289421  
**Inspection date** 27 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Alison Cogher

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Earl Sterndale
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Buxton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		Derbyshire SK17 0BS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01298 83263
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	34	<b>Fax number</b>	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr D Onn
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr D Holden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 February 2001		

---

<b>Age group</b> 4-11	<b>Inspection date</b> 27 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 289421
--------------------------	--	------------------------------------

---

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a very small school in the village of Earl Sterndale five miles from Buxton in the Derbyshire Peak District. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities or a statement of special educational need is very low. No pupils are entitled to free school meals. All pupils come from a White British background and speak English as their first language. The school has achieved the Derbyshire Health Promoting School award.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Earl Sterndale is a good and improving school. The good quality of education provided together with the increasing involvement of all staff and governors in decision-making demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further. Good improvement has been secured since the last inspection. Value for money is good.

Under the good leadership of the headteacher provision made for all pupils including those in the Foundation Stage is good. Expectations for all aspects of the school's work are high. Recent improvements to the systems employed to check the quality of the school's work have involved all staff and governors. Accurate judgements have been made with a clear focus on improving key areas of the school's work. This has resulted in good teaching for all pupils and developments in the curriculum that have secured good pupil achievement over the last year. Consequently pupils' achievement and the standards they reach are rising although the improvement is not as marked in writing as it is in other subjects. Standards by Year 6 are significantly above average.

Teaching takes account of the wide age and ability range in each class and improved curriculum planning ensures that pupils experience a good variety of purposeful activities. Practical activities form a good proportion of pupils' work although not enough of these opportunities challenge pupils to think for themselves while working together to find solutions to problems without adult support. Links made between subjects provide pupils with the opportunity to use the knowledge and skills they have learned in one subject to support their learning in another. This together with visits to places of interest and the support of specialists in subjects such as physical education is extending pupils' learning and adding greatly to their enjoyment of their lessons.

In this very small school staff know all pupils very well and procedures to ensure they are cared for, guided and supported are good. Improved procedures to check the progress being made by pupils have underpinned the rise in expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils are set challenging targets to encourage them to take some responsibility for their own learning. Pupils work hard but their targets are often too vague and therefore pupils are not absolutely clear about what they have to do to make their work better. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Very positive relationships exist between staff and pupils, and between pupils themselves and there is a strong sense of family and community in the school. Consequently pupils feel safe and valued and their personal skills develop well. They show an increasing appreciation and understanding of each other's needs and views. Pupils are tolerant of each other and pupils of all ages enjoy playing together. They demonstrate a good understanding of how to stay healthy and fit through the food they choose to eat and their enthusiasm for taking physical exercise. The school provides a positive and productive environment in which pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and are well prepared personally and academically for the next stage in their education and the future world of work.

Parents are extremely supportive of the school and are pleased with the way their children achieve academically and develop personally. The school values the strong partnership it has with parents and the support they provide for their children at home.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in writing.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to work together without adult support on tasks that challenge them to think for themselves and so promote their independent learning skills.
- Improve the targets that pupils are set by making them more precise so pupils understand exactly what they need to do to make their work better.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Very few children are admitted into Reception each year. Although the situation varies from year to year most children start with standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. In the past, pupils have made satisfactory progress to reach above average standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Over the last year the school's evidence shows that the progress pupils have made is good and standards are significantly above average in Year 6. Pupils are achieving well and standards are rising. Increased expectations of what pupils can achieve and improvements to teaching and the curriculum are having a good effect on pupils' progress particularly in mathematics and science. Pupils' progress in reading is good. Progress in writing has improved but to a lesser extent. Pupils' presentation of their work and the vocabulary they use do not always reflect their overall ability. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well because of the good support they receive.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils behave extremely well in lessons, at play and as they move around the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their spirituality is nurtured well and they have a good sense of right and wrong. They are very aware of their own and others' safety as they move around the restricted spaces in the school. Pupils say they enjoy being at school because lessons and other activities are fun. This is reflected in their good attendance and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are proud of their school and their involvement through the school council in securing improvements to it. They are keen to take on more responsibility for their learning. They work hard to meet their targets although their success in doing so is impeded as their targets are often not precise enough. Pupils' good social skills are clearly demonstrated as they work and play together harmoniously. They have a strong sense of their own community and contribute to the wider community through for example, singing at the switching on of the Christmas lights in Buxton. They have a good understanding of their own cultural heritage and improvements in the curriculum are helping them to develop an increasing appreciation of British cultural diversity.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use assessment information well to plan lessons that meet the wide age and ability range of pupils in their class. They give clear explanations and demonstrations and provide pupils with well-matched tasks that challenge them to do their best. However, too few of these activities require pupils to think for themselves or to work together without adult support to improve their ability to learn and work independently. The very positive relationships enable pupils to ask for clarification or support when they need it and this helps them to learn well. A calm, purposeful and enjoyable atmosphere is created in lessons and these move at a good pace. Teaching assistants are well briefed and work in partnership with teachers to provide good additional support for pupils.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is well organised to ensure that pupils in classes that contain three or four year groups experience all that they should in relation to the National Curriculum. Teachers are beginning to identify opportunities to link subjects together. This is supporting pupils' improving progress as they understand the purpose for their learning and practise their skills in a range of contexts. There is a good range of visits, visitors and after-school clubs to support pupils' learning. For example, all pupils visited Manchester Airport after a week where lessons revolved around the theme of aeroplanes. The use of sports coaches has contributed to pupils' enthusiasm for being active and to their success in sporting competitions.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Staff know their pupils very well as individuals and caring for them is a high priority at the school. Good links to outside agencies and the support they receive in school ensure that pupils who require specific support because of their learning difficulties or disabilities receive the help they need to access all aspects of school life. Procedures to safeguard pupils are in place and consistently implemented by all staff. Pupils appreciate the way they are looked after and feel valued and trusted. They respect adults in the school and each other. This positive environment contributes well to pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils' academic and personal development is checked regularly and the information gathered is used to set targets for pupils. Pupils know what their targets are but they are often too broad to give pupils a clear indication of exactly what they need to do to make their work better.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are effective. The recently appointed headteacher has made a good start by securing improvements to key aspects of the school's work. Systems to check the quality of the school's work are good and the information that is gathered is used well to identify priorities for school improvement. The very small size of the school means all staff play a part in the leadership and management of the school. They are all involved in decision-making and work hard as a team to secure improvements quickly. Governors carry out their duties well and are supportive of the school. They are developing the skills that will enable them to make a greater contribution to school improvement planning and to hold the school to account for its work. Pupils' and parents' views are sought regularly and acted upon as the school strives to make learning as enjoyable and productive an experience as possible for all pupils.

**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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
---	-----------------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

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

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

27 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Earl Sterndale C of E Primary School, Earl Sterndale, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 OBS

Thank you very much for making my visit to your school such a pleasant one. I really enjoyed talking to you about your school and your work. I also enjoyed having a very tasty lunch with you and was pleased to see you all enjoying eating healthy food. I was impressed by your excellent behaviour, the way you enjoy each other's company and the way you take care to move round the school safely. I was pleased to hear that you enjoy school and think it is a great place to be. You work hard in your lessons and try to do your best and your work is getting better although your writing is not as good as your other work.

You and your parents think you go to a good school and I am pleased to say I agree. Mr Holden, the teachers and governors and other grown-ups at school care about you a lot. They are working hard to help you feel safe and happy and to make sure that you learn as much as you can and have fun too. You have good ideas about what would make your school better and are good at taking responsibilities. This helps Mr Holden and the teachers to make things better at school.

I have asked Mr Holden, the teachers and governors to work on making your school even better by:

- helping you to improve your writing;
- making sure that you know exactly what you have to do to make your work better; and
- providing you with more activities where you can work together, think for yourselves and learn without an adult being with you all the time.

Thank you very much for helping me with the inspection of your school. Enjoy your time at Earl Sterndale and keep on working hard.

Mrs Alison Cogher

Lead Inspector