



# Eldon Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 119229  
**Local Authority** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 291359  
**Inspection dates** 22–23 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Peter McKay

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>	Eldon Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Preston, Lancashire
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		PR1 7YE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01772 253557
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	165	<b>Fax number</b>	01772 251693
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Ken Phillips
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Rachel Cromie
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 22–23 February 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 291359
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is smaller than average. The roll has fallen steadily as more housing in the area is occupied by students from the nearby university. The school serves an area with above average levels of social deprivation. On entry, many children's attainment is below average for their age. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. A third of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities, which is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds or do not speak English as their first language is above average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school is satisfactory with some good features. A warm and friendly ethos contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of school and their good personal development. Relationships at all levels are good and lessons are conducted in an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Pupils clearly enjoy school, and one pupil proudly said, 'It's the best school.' Parents' endorsement of the school is very strong.

Overall achievement is satisfactory. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory; children make satisfactory overall progress. They make good progress in language and in their personal development and satisfactory progress in other areas. Attainment is below nationally expected standards by the time children enter Year 1. Most pupils continue to make satisfactory progress although standards are below average in English and mathematics and well below in science by the end of Year 6. Underachievement by some pupils in science is the main reason why the school is not closing the gap between its standards and those found nationally and is the school's highest priority.

While teaching is satisfactory overall, not enough is good because it does not take sufficient account of pupils' learning. The progress of most pupils is satisfactory but the more able pupils do not achieve as well as they should because the work set for them is not hard enough for them to exceed the standard expected for their age. Pupils with learning difficulties, those from minority ethnic backgrounds, those who speak English as an additional language and those eligible for free school meals all make satisfactory progress because teaching is matched to their needs.

The school has achieved the Healthy School award and pupils are making good progress in their understanding and adoption of healthy lifestyles. They contribute to the wider community by taking responsibilities as buddies, monitors or school councillors and through fund raising for charity. Pupils are well cared for and supported and feel safe and secure. Vulnerable pupils are supported with sensitivity. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored so that support can be provided where required. Pupils' acquisition of the skills necessary for their future economic well-being is satisfactory.

A good range of activities outside lessons contributes to pupils' enjoyment of school and helps to enrich the curriculum. The Breakfast and After School clubs are well attended. The school is providing more opportunities for creativity in the curriculum, with some success, as evident in the quality of the pupils' artwork on display. The overall quality of the curriculum is no better than satisfactory, however, because the planning to challenge and extend the more able pupils is not good enough.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. In securing some improvement in standards and establishing good systems for monitoring pupils' progress and the self-evaluation of performance, the senior leadership shows a satisfactory capacity to improve. Despite this, the school does not enable all groups of pupils to achieve as well as they should and does not measure improvement well enough in relation to pupils' progress and the standards they achieve.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in science.
- Improve lesson planning to take full account of what and how pupils are to learn and to provide sufficient challenge for more able pupils.
- Ensure that actions to bring about improvement are planned, monitored and evaluated in terms of their impact on achievement and standards.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory although standards are below average. Pupils' attainment when they start in Reception is below average. Progress is satisfactory overall and good in language and personal and social development. By the start of Year 1, most pupils' attainment is just below the goals expected at their age. Girls perform better than boys at this stage and also Years 1 and 2 but by Year 6 their attainment is similar. Standards are below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science.

Observation of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work during the inspection supports the school's view that in Years 1 to 6, pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress because they receive additional support. More able pupils do not achieve as well as they should in reaching the highest levels in national tests because work is not sufficiently challenging. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, those who do not speak English as a first language and those eligible for free school meals make satisfactory progress. The school meets its targets for Year 6 pupils in English and mathematics. However, some pupils underachieve in science because they have underdeveloped investigative skills. Intensive training of the teachers has now improved this aspect of pupils' learning.

A decline in standards in Years 1 and 2, particularly in reading, is largely due to an intake which has increasing numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and to an increase in pupil mobility. In Key Stage 2, the results of national tests in English and mathematics have shown some slight improvement, mainly because of intensive external support given to improving outcomes in those subjects, whilst those in science have remained largely unchanged. The school expects results to improve in all three subjects in 2007.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good and pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Pupils of different faiths and languages work and play happily together and respect other cultures and lifestyles. Pupils have good attitudes to school and are enthusiastic about learning. They try hard to earn 'Golden Time' at the end of the week and behave well. Incidents of bullying or racism are extremely rare. The most recent figures show that attendance is average. Pupils follow

the school's routines to ensure their safety. They understand how to be healthy through events such as the special Health Weeks. Pupils also have opportunities to take responsibility and contribute to their community; for example, the school council was instrumental in the acquisition of new playground equipment. Pupils' involvement in fund-raising for charity shows their concern for the needs of the wider community. They make satisfactory progress in developing the skills they will need as members of the working community and they develop the skills and confidence needed for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons take place in a positive atmosphere and relationships are good. Teachers' encouragement and use of praise make a significant contribution to pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Most pupils are well motivated and are keen to learn. They enjoy lessons and learn well when they are engaged in exciting and demanding activities. They gain a real sense of achievement because they receive good feedback on their progress. Pupils' understanding of new learning is improved by opportunities for self-assessment.

However, teachers generally underestimate pupils' capabilities and are more successful in promoting the learning of middle- and lower-attaining pupils than that of the more able. These pupils are not routinely stretched to reach the higher levels because their work is too easy. The proportion of lessons where progress is good is not high enough because the pace is often too slow. Pupils are too passive and learn only by listening to their teachers. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to work independently or to develop investigative and enquiry skills, particularly in science. Teachers' planning places too much emphasis on what the teacher will do rather than on what and how pupils are to learn.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements. The school acknowledges that it now needs to do more to develop problem-solving skills through practical activities, investigation in science, and is providing more opportunities for creativity. Suitable programmes of support ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress. Planning for literacy, numeracy and ICT is satisfactory and pupils acquire suitable skills necessary for their future economic well-being. Lack of a suitable area restricts learning outdoors for children in the Foundation Stage. A range of extra-curricular clubs and activities available to all pupils includes sports, art and computer clubs, and pupils are keen to attend. Well attended breakfast and after school clubs extend the provision for care. Visits and visitors enrich the curriculum effectively. Partnership with a local

sports college has developed sporting skills and promoted healthy lifestyles for many pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils are well cared for so they feel happy, safe and secure in school. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and health and safety arrangements are in place. Parents say that they find the school approachable. Good partnerships with all local health and support agencies ensure pupils' welfare and educational needs are met. The school is sensitive to the emotional needs of different pupils and provides additional sessions to help them understand and control their feelings. The induction programme includes pre-school visits so children join the Reception class happily. Effective links with all local high schools ensure that pupils move to the next stage of their education with confidence.

Effective systems operate to track academic progress and give staff an accurate picture of the standards their pupils reach and what needs to be improved. The school sets its statutory targets for Year 6 in English and mathematics.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have established an ethos for the school in which all pupils are equally valued. The drive to raise standards has generated a host of initiatives and strategies and the school has readily sought external support where needed. Coherent development plans give a sense of direction and purpose. Subject leaders are developing the skills to fulfil their role more effectively and have received training and support from external consultants. They are starting to monitor their areas of responsibility.

The school has developed a good system for self-review and the outcomes are linked to school's development priorities. As a result, the school development plan accurately identifies key areas for improvement and presents appropriate strategies for delivery. Some improvements are evident in English and mathematics. The importance of raising standards in science and the achievement of its more able pupils are prioritised in current planning. However, monitoring and evaluation of the school's action plans are not sufficiently well focused on their impact on standards.

Governance is satisfactory. The governors support the school and are well informed about its progress. Sound financial management has helped minimise the impact of falling rolls on the budget. The school's improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

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## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### 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	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	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Eldon Primary School

Eldon Street

Preston

Lancashire

PR1 7YE

23 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making us feel so welcome and for being so helpful when we asked you questions. We enjoyed talking with you, looking at your work and finding out about the things you like doing. Here is a list of things that we were particularly pleased to see:

- you are well behaved, polite and friendly to each other and visitors which makes the school a happy place
- you enjoy school, are keen to learn and show good attitudes to work
- the school cares well for you and makes sure you are safe and secure
- the school makes you aware of the importance of living a healthy lifestyle
- the school keeps a check on your progress and tells you not only how well you are doing but also how you can do better.

You make satisfactory progress in your time at Eldon but it could be better. We think that:

- you could do better in all your subjects but especially in science, mainly by improving your skills in carrying out investigations
- the faster learners should have harder work to help them reach higher standards
- your teachers should speed up the pace of lessons and give you more opportunities to work independently.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We all hope you will carry on enjoying learning and work as hard as you can to reach higher standards.

Yours sincerely

Peter McKay

(Lead inspector)