

Eagley Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105177
Local Authority	Bolton
Inspection number	308789
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Janette Corlett

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Dorothy Wrigley
Headteacher	Mrs Cathryn Antwis
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2003
School address	Stonesteads Drive Bromley Cross Bolton Lancashire BL7 9LN
Telephone number	01204 333650
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.s.

Description of the school

Pupils come from a range of social and economic backgrounds within the area. The great majority of pupils are from a White British background and only a handful speaks a language other than English at home. None of the pupils are at early stages of learning English. Few are eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below the national average, although the numbers in individual classes fluctuate year-on-year. Skills and knowledge on entry to the Nursery are broadly in line with those expected of children of similar age. The school provides extended care facilities for pupils before and after school, sharing this provision with children attending the local junior school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Parents are very supportive of the school and speak highly of its nurturing ethos and welcoming environment for youngsters. They feel that the school looks after the pupils well and say that their children enjoy coming to school and find learning fun. The pupils feel safe and know how to be healthy because the school encourages them to eat a well balanced diet and take part in lots of physical activities. Physical activities within the school day are supported by a good range of after-school clubs including gymnastics, dance and drama.

Standards are above average and achievement is good. Young children enter the Nursery with the skills normally expected for their age group. By the time they are ready to move on to the Junior School they reach standards which are consistently above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics, and this shows that they are making good progress. Pupils' performance in writing is not quite as good as in reading and mathematics. The school recognises this and has introduced a range of activities which are beginning to raise standards. Due to good teaching and good subject leadership, the most able pupils achieve well, especially in mathematics. Similarly, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by teachers and support staff in achieving their individual potential.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They know their pupils very well, and are particularly good at developing their independence as learners. This means that pupils contribute well in class discussions and are confident in organising their work. They move sensibly between one activity and the next and have established good routines for selecting materials and tidying away after themselves. This prepares them well for their future working lives and contributes to their good personal and social development. Most lessons are good, and the result of this is that pupils are well motivated and eager to learn new things. They look forward to coming to school and know that their teachers are always willing to listen and offer help when they need it.

The headteacher has developed a collaborative approach to the leadership and management of the school. This has established a dedicated team of staff who share her vision for high levels of achievement within a warm and caring environment. Some of the school's systems for checking the impact of its actions in securing further improvement are in the early stages of development. These are not yet sufficiently formal and robust to enable senior leaders to account effectively for all aspects of the school's performance. This means that some of the information which could support further improvement is not readily available and this limits the pace at which the school moves forward. The school is aware of this and has introduced a more systematic approach to managing information. The school has good capacity to improve and provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good provision in the Foundation Stage enables pupils to make a good start to their education. Children quickly settle into the classroom routines, learn confidence and independence, and reach good levels of personal and social development. Their progress in reading and writing is less rapid because some of the activities the school provides to support their learning are not sufficiently well structured in the Reception classes. The school gives good levels of care and

support for individual needs. The good quality of outdoor provision is well managed, especially in the Nursery, and staff take an active role in supporting the children's physical and creative development, encouraging their natural curiosity to explore the world around them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing throughout the school.
- Establish rigorous formal systems for leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills expected for their age in all areas of learning and make good progress so that by the end of the Reception year, they reach stages of development which are above those normally expected.

In Years 1 and 2, pupils also make good progress, reaching standards above the national average. In 2007, the proportion of pupils reaching the highest level in mathematics increased, reflecting the school's strength in teaching this subject and their high expectations of progress. Attainment in reading and writing is also above average, but standards are not quite as high in writing as in reading and mathematics. The school's recent actions to provide more opportunities for pupils to write throughout the curriculum are already having a positive impact and the quality of their written work in books and displays shows improvement.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress from their individual starting points.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are very happy in school and have a good understanding of how to develop healthy lifestyles. Their good skills in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) give them a strong foundation for their future in education. The school is very much at the heart of the local community, and pupils benefit from this support and have some opportunities to make their own contributions in return. Attendance is consistently good because pupils enjoy their learning and find their lessons interesting and exciting.

Parents comment that the school treats pupils as individuals, nurturing their strengths and supporting their weaknesses through a strong family ethos. They appreciate regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress and the willingness of teachers to listen to any concerns. A small minority of parents would like to see increased levels of communication between home and school. The school is successfully addressing this by providing a home-school diary to further support parents' involvement in their children's learning.

The school council is beginning to give pupils greater responsibility in the community because the school recognises the importance of involving pupils in improving the life of the school. Pupils say that there is very little bullying in school and that adults in the school are unfailingly kind and always willing to help.

Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Whilst their behaviour in lessons is generally well managed, at playtimes some pupils, especially boys, are over-exuberant and this means that they do not always play sensibly. The school recognises this and has introduced new equipment and a range

of structured play activities to make playtimes fun and safe for everyone. Pupils' social and moral education is good, but their spiritual and cultural awareness is satisfactory as the school does not always provide enough opportunities for this area of their development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good and means that pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and adopt a range of different teaching styles according to the needs of individuals. They use interactive whiteboards effectively to capture pupils' interest and engage them in their learning. They are well supported by teaching assistants who work constructively alongside them, engaging individuals or small groups of pupils in a wide range of activities. In most lessons pupils see a purpose to their learning. Skilful questioning is used to help children recall prior knowledge and the pace of learning is brisk and energising.

Tasks are usually suitably matched to pupils' abilities and learning needs, although there are some inconsistencies in this provision in the Foundation Stage, where some activities lack structure and challenge.

Teachers' marking of pupils' written work is thorough, giving praise and clearly explaining the next steps in their learning. Information from assessments is generally used well to set challenging targets for improvement in literacy and mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of all groups of pupils and promotes good academic and personal development. It is enriched by a good range of educational visits and visitors. Pupils recently enjoyed a trip to a local farm and also appreciated sampling Italian cuisine in a visit to the local restaurant! Unusually for pupils of this age, the school provides opportunities for pupils to learn to play the violin and ocarina, and the school choir regularly takes part in local performances. Learning to speak French is a real highlight in the school day for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and fosters a very positive approach to learning languages. One pupil commented that he could count up to twenty in French and that this would be very helpful during a forthcoming family trip to Paris!

The school's provision for literacy and mathematics is good and underpins pupils' good progress in developing their basic skills. Curricular support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is effective and has a good impact on the progress of these pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good standards of care, guidance and support. Statutory procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and all staff have appropriate training in child protection. Health and safety checks are rigorous and risk assessments are carried out and regularly updated. Similarly, the school supports inclusion and has clear policies on equal opportunities. Good links with other local schools support pupils' transition to the next phase in education.

Teachers' focused marking of pupils' work is helping them to improve their skills in writing. Pupils have individual targets for improvement which are shared with parents and help pupils understand the next stage in their learning.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have individual education plans which identify areas in which they require extra support, but these are not detailed enough to provide comprehensive information for class teachers and parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. School leaders promote an inclusive learning environment which values individuality and celebrates both personal and academic achievement. The school's good links with outside agencies support the local community, providing opportunities for family learning and childcare provision before and after school. Pupils from the neighbouring junior school share this facility and this supports a smooth transition from infant to junior school.

The school sets challenging targets which are effective in securing improvement. These targets are based on secure assessments of pupils' abilities and ensure that all learners are supported in achieving their individual potential.

School leaders are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses, but the lack of formal systems for monitoring and evaluation mean that this is not always reflected in documentary evidence. This makes it difficult for leaders to gain a clear and detailed overview of the school's performance. The school has begun to address this by recently introducing a systematic approach to self-evaluation and review. This has led to a robust schedule for subject leaders to monitor their individual areas of responsibility and swiftly provide the headteacher with a detailed overview of the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, school leaders now have a secure overview of the priorities for improvement.

The governors are very supportive of the school and effectively discharge their responsibility for the management of the school. They ensure that the school provides good value for money through careful deployment of staff and resources.

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

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
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	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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

Inspection of Eagley Infant School, Stonesteads Drive, Bromley Cross

BL7 9LN

Thank you for being so helpful when Mr Bond and I visited your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and hearing about all the fun you have in school.

We think you have a good school. Your teachers are all kind and helpful. They make your lessons interesting and give you lots of exciting activities to help you learn. Most of you work hard and this means that you do really well. We were particularly impressed with your good work in numeracy. Some of you told us how much you like learning to speak French and showed us how you could count up to twenty and introduce yourselves.

We've asked your teachers to help you be as good at writing as you are at mathematics and reading. We have also suggested that they keep a really close watch on all the things that you and the staff do in school to make it such a special place, so that everyone can work together to make it even better. We're asking you to help them by working hard and looking after each other, particularly when you are playing outside.

Thank you again for showing us your school and letting us watch you learn. We both wish you the best of luck for your future and hope that you will always enjoy playing and learning together.