

Ellington Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109820
Local Authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	310109
Inspection dates	9–10 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Olson Davis

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Spear
Headteacher	Mrs R Juna
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2003
School address	Cookham Road Maidenhead SL6 7JA
Telephone number	01628 621741
Fax number	01628 673155

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves a generally disadvantaged area of the Borough. The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups are of Pakistani and White British heritage. Nine out of ten pupils speak English as an additional language. The most common home languages are Punjabi, Urdu and Polish. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is well above the national average. The school has a local authority resource base for pupils with speech and language difficulties (SPAL) which accommodates fifteen pupils. More pupils than usual join or leave the school at other than the usual times. The school has extended schools status and is currently undergoing building works as it develops into an extended services centre. This will include a children's centre. There has been significant turnover of staff since the last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Ellington Primary School and Nursery provides a satisfactory standard of education. It is improving because the headteacher provides a clear vision that is shared by the school community. There is a good ethos and a strong sense of community. All pupils, including those from different minority ethnic groups and those of different abilities, feel welcomed and want to learn. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the provision the school makes for their children. One parent wrote, '...staff are constantly challenged by the wide range of ability of children (very many of whom are at the lower ability end). They ensure that if a child needs additional support, then the child gets it and they communicate this to parents.' The school works closely with outside agencies, including the local authority, who have provided valuable support and guidance. These links are helping to improve standards, teaching and aspects of leadership and management.

The school has strengths in the care provided by all adults and has many positive features that contribute to pupils' good personal development. Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. Pupils enjoy their school and they feel safe. As a result, they behave well and are keen to do well in their work.

Standards are exceptionally low but they are improving. Given the low starting points and complex learning needs of many pupils, this represents satisfactory achievement. Pupils make steady progress because the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The school is not complacent and works to improve the overall standard of teaching and learning in order to accelerate pupils' progress. A greater stability in staffing, and closer monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and the leadership team, have led to improvements in standards. Despite the relative inexperience of some teachers, they are competent because they are well supported by more experienced staff. However, the school recognises that more remains to be done to raise standards further, particularly by making more rigorous and consistent use of assessment information to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Although there have been improvements, there is more to do to ensure that initiatives are fully effective. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Subject leaders offer sound support and advice to colleagues throughout the school. However, their broader role in monitoring the quality of teaching and working alongside colleagues has only recently commenced. This limits the effectiveness of the advice they can give to colleagues to help them raise standards.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is well led and managed and gives children a good start to their education. Children are well taught and supported by skilled teachers and teaching assistants. They have access to a good curriculum supported by effective observations, accurate assessments, and close links with parents and other agencies. As a result, children make good progress in their acquisition of the English language and in their personal development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science.

- Make sure that staff make better use of assessment information to challenge and support pupils to do their best.
- Make sure that subject leaders play their full part in raising standards in their areas of responsibility.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory considering pupils' learning needs and high mobility. Children enter the school with very low basic skills. In addition, most speak little or no English when they start. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage but few children reach the learning goals expected by the start of Year 1. Pupils make steady progress across the rest of the school, but standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are still exceptionally low in English, mathematics and science. The high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or with statements of special educational need means test results tend to be low. This is despite the good progress these pupils make. A relatively high proportion of pupils join the school throughout the year and overall their attainment is exceptionally low. Those learning English make good progress in acquiring fluency in spoken English but their reading and writing skills do not improve as rapidly. They have difficulties in understanding the technical language in mathematics and science and this hampers their progress in these subjects. Results in the 2007 national tests show significant improvement because of more consistency in the teaching. The many pupils who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Pupils in the SPAL resource base, make good progress because of good teaching and support, and clear targets for improvement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong and enjoy good relationships with each other, using initiatives such as the 'friendship bench' to support those who feel lonely at times.

They have a good understanding of how to be healthy and safe. The school council state confidently that, 'We help make the school a better place'. For example, they have conducted a survey about the quality of school meals. The Eco Warriors group are similarly enthusiastic. They have contributed to energy conservation in school and are planning an 'Eco Day' to raise awareness about environmental issues.

Attendance is only satisfactory due to a minority of families who take extended visits abroad, often for significant family events and celebrations. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage in their education because of the effective development of their personal skills, improved speaking skills and overall satisfactory achievement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Strengths in the teaching include good behaviour management and the development of positive relationships with pupils. Pupils enjoy the lessons and are usually aware of the purpose of what their teachers ask them to do. Teachers give clear explanations which means that pupils get on purposefully and work well together. Pupils' books provide evidence that teachers are marking their work consistently and giving them helpful advice on how to improve. Speaking and listening is a growing focus in lessons that is encouraging pupils to talk about their learning. Clear explanations in advance of technical vocabulary mean pupils can understand, and more easily learn, new terms that are specific to the lesson. However, in some lessons, assessment information is not used effectively to plan the next steps in learning. As a result, pupils' learning is not moved on quickly enough. In these lessons, more able pupils find the work lacks challenge whilst less able pupils find that it is too difficult.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers are beginning to make creative links between subjects to make learning more interesting for pupils. However, they sometimes miss opportunities to extend pupils' writing skills in other subjects. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection. It provides satisfactory support for pupils' learning. The curriculum is suitably enriched and extended with visits, field trips and visitors to the school. These give pupils a wide range of opportunities to develop their interests and contribute to the local community. The personal, social and health education programme contributes effectively to pupils' good personal development. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with speech and language difficulties, is good. Pupils' needs are accurately assessed and well-structured individual plans enable teachers and teaching assistants to help these pupils to make good progress. Support staff work competently to meet the needs of pupils new to English.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Adults know the pupils' pastoral needs well. In particular, there is a strong understanding of the ethnic and cultural heritages of the pupils and the school makes significant efforts to ensure that pupils from all backgrounds feel valued, safe and secure. The school makes good use of outside agencies to support pupils and their families. The SPAL unit provides excellent care and well targeted guidance and support for its pupils. The school has a high number of pupils joining during the year and particular efforts are made to ensure those new to the school settle quickly. Procedures for safeguarding pupils and all required checks and assessments are securely in place. The headteacher and governors have worked hard to improve attendance. Their efforts have been successful in reducing short-term absences but some parents still take their children abroad for extended periods during term-time. Academic guidance is good for pupils that have learning difficulties and disabilities. It is satisfactory for other pupils. They have targets for improvement and are keen to meet the expectations set for them. However, some targets are not precise enough. As a result, pupils are not sufficiently clear about what exactly they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and the leadership team work well together and are good role models. Until recently, the school's development had been adversely affected by high staff turnover. There were inconsistencies in the teaching. Rigorous monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and senior leaders has led to improvements, particularly for the teachers in their first year. This is already having a positive impact on standards but more remains to be done to ensure that teachers are making the best use of assessment information to accelerate the progress made by pupils. School self-evaluation is satisfactory. The headteacher knows the school well and school improvement planning identifies the key areas for development. However, some subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in evaluating the school's work. For example, their role in monitoring teaching and working alongside colleagues is underdeveloped. This means that they are not fully aware of the strengths of teaching and those aspects that need improving within their particular subject areas across the school. Governors are supportive and place strong emphasis on developing the community aspects of the school's work. They provide increasing challenge to the school to improve its provision for pupils. They recognise the need to strengthen their monitoring role so that they can more fully hold the school to account for the progress made by pupils.

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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?	3
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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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	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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	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

29 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ellington Primary School and Nursery, Maidenhead, SL6 7JA

Thank you for the friendly way you welcomed us when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you and listened carefully to what you had to say about the school. This is what we thought.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education and is improving. These are some of the things that your school does well:

- the staff take good care of you which makes you feel safe in school
- the children in the Foundation Stage get a good start in school, especially in learning to speak English
- you enjoy your learning and the other activities in school
- you behave well and want to do your best in lessons
- the school listens to you when you suggest how things could be better and you value being given responsibilities
- you are making satisfactory progress in your learning and this is getting better
- the headteacher and governors have clear plans on how to improve the school.

To improve further, we have asked the school to:

- help you do better in your English, mathematics and science lessons
- make sure that teachers give you work that is just the right level for you
- encourage teachers to visit each other's classrooms more often to see how well you are learning.

We hope that you will continue to enjoy your school. We also hope that you will help your teachers as they work hard to make your school even better for you.

Yours sincerely,

Olson Davis

Lead inspector