

# Eaton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111047
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310487
<b>Inspection date</b>	2 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike McLachlan

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	103
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Elizabeth Scott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Broadley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 December 2003
<b>School address</b>	Lower Lane Eaton Tarporley Cheshire CW6 9AN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01829 732731
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated in detail the following issues: achievement and standards, the quality of teaching and learning, and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, policies and minutes, observation of the school at work, interviews with senior members of staff, pupils and parents and analysis of the parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

This is a small primary school set in a predominantly rural area in north Cheshire. Overall the socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are favourable although there are growing numbers of pupils drawn from a wider area. The proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals is well below the national average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need is below average although there are significant differences in each year group. The school is in receipt of a number of national awards including Artsmark Gold 2007, Investors in People 2005, Fair Trade School Status 2006 and National Healthy School Status 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school in which pupils make good progress and develop into confident, articulate young people well prepared for their next stage in learning. It gives good value for money. Parents have every confidence in the school and many took the trouble to add positive comments to the questionnaires they returned. Their overwhelming support is summed up in this comment: 'This school gives so much more than an academic education, it allows children to flourish and gives them a wonderful platform for life.'

Standards are well above average by the age of 11, which represents good progress and achievement from pupils' initial starting points. Standards in the national assessment in Years 2 and 6 have improved in the last three years. Most pupils are achieving the standards expected, given their prior attainment, and many are exceeding them. The thoroughness of the schools' detailed assessment and tracking systems ensures that any pupils who may be falling behind or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are quickly identified. Good additional support is provided to ensure that they are well cared for and achieve well. The very small numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups also achieve well.

Pupils are well cared for and feel very safe in the school. The school meets current requirements in terms of safeguarding children. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and take part enthusiastically in all it has to offer. Attitudes and behaviour are excellent and attendance is good. These factors establish strong relationships between teachers and pupils. Consequently, self-esteem is high and pupils are always prepared to 'have a go', contributing substantially to their good achievement. Pupils are very active members of the school and the local community. For example, the school council has introduced new playground games and commissioned a particularly impressive mural, created by a local artist with all the pupils, which proudly adorns the front of the school. A good range of enterprise activities ensures that pupils have a good economic awareness. Pupils display excellent attitudes towards keeping safe and maintaining healthy lifestyles. A strong focus on art and music develops pupils' cultural and spiritual understanding well. Pupils have a good understanding of multicultural issues and develop empathy for the needs of others through charitable works and through their work as buddies for younger children. These developments are well reflected in the school's national awards.

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and is characterised by careful planning. There is very effective collaboration between the teachers and the expert classroom assistants, so that the needs of all pupils in the mixed-age classes are met well. Lessons typically begin with active sessions involving the whole class so that all pupils are quickly involved in learning. This work is then developed through key tasks based on individual pupils' prior attainment rather than age. Consequently, all are challenged and progress is good. Where teaching is outstanding, tasks set require pupils to extend their imagination and act creatively. A moving example of this was the response produced in a literacy lesson where pupils had analysed and were now imitating the style of a famous poem which began 'If I had wings.' One pupil wrote 'If I had the world in my palm, I would touch the clear blue waters of the ocean and sail my fingers through the cotton wool clouds.' This response is all the more remarkable as, given the time of the inspection, the pupil had only just moved up from Year 4.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and give some supportive comments although these do not always identify what pupils need to do to improve. Pupils are given specific targets related

to their current work, but they do not have a clear idea of the 'bigger picture', that is, the level and breadth of work they are expected to cover. Consequently, they are not always able to identify their next steps in learning and their opportunities to develop effective assessment of their own and others' work is limited.

The good curriculum contributes successfully to pupils' effective achievement. There are a number of good opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of the links between different subjects through themed days and activities. The curriculum is enhanced by a very wide range of extra-curricular activities with many visits and visitors including an impressive Year 6 residential with other primary schools in preparation for moving to the high school. A wide range of additional musical tuition is available including some more unusual instruments. For example, a pupil gave the inspector an accomplished demonstration of her own composition on the mandolin.

Leadership and management are good. This is an improvement from the last inspection and all issues raised in the last report have been successfully addressed. Self-review is thorough and accurate. Senior staff and subject leaders have established good systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and tracking pupils' progress. The headteacher who led these improvements has very recently moved on to another school and the governors acted quickly to appoint a new headteacher who starts in the spring term. The very experienced acting headteacher, with the full and expert support of a strong senior leadership team and the good governing body, is maintaining the momentum of improvement. For example, a stakeholders' meeting is planned to take place later this month for the new headteacher, governors, staff and other interested groups to plan the next three years' developments for the school. While resources are used well budgets show an above average level of reserves that have not yet been targeted at improving provision for current pupils. Given the improvements in pupils' standards and achievements and the good quality of teaching and leadership, the school has good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Overall, the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is good. Pupils make good progress given their initial starting points that, although broadly above average, range from pupils with special needs to those with specific gifts and talents. Good leadership and management by the Foundation Stage leader combined with very effective planning between her and the teaching assistant ensure that all pupils achieve well. Virtually all reach the higher levels of the national learning goals by the end of the Reception year and a high proportion are well established in the first level of the National Curriculum. The school's growing reputation has led to increasing numbers of pupils joining the school. This has resulted in a mixed age class in this stage which now includes Reception children and a few Year 1 pupils. Inspection evidence and the teachers' detailed tracking systems show that pupils of all ages are making good progress and their learning needs are well met.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve marking and the process of setting targets so that pupils know the next steps required in their learning and can play a stronger role in assessing their work and that of others.
- Ensure that the additional reserves are used to improve provision for current 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?	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 <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

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

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

<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.

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

Inspection of Eaton Primary School, Eaton, CW6 9AN

Many thanks for the way you greeted and talked with me when I visited your school. You were great ambassadors for your school and a credit to yourselves, your school and your parents or guardians.

You go to a good school, which is well led. The senior staff, teachers, assistants and governors have a clear idea of what is needed to make it even better.

You clearly showed how much you enjoyed all the school had to offer both in and out of the classroom. I was particularly impressed by the good relationships shown between you and your fellow pupils and your teachers and staff. This enables you to feel confident in lessons and about school so you are prepared to have a go even when the work appears difficult. I thought you were very mature, confident and articulate young people. You have a very good understanding of keeping safe, eating well and being healthy. You show great consideration for each other and take on responsibilities such as members of your very active school council.

You are taught well and are good learners. I was delighted by the quality of the work I saw and some of it was very good indeed. I was entertained by an expert mandolin player, poets in the making and by delightful Reception children who talked with such confidence about their work.

You have a good understanding of the targets you are set and your teachers track your progress well. I thought it would be even better if the teachers give you more information on what to do to improve. I've asked them to ensure you are more involved in assessing how well you are doing. I also noted that the school still has some money in the budget that should be used to improve things for those of you in school now.

I can clearly see why one of you said, echoing the words of many, that 'this is a great school'. I wish you all well with what I am sure will be an exciting new phase in the life of the school.