

Eversley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114999
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	311786
Inspection dates	9–10 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Mike Best

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	359
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	39
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Ann Blake
Headteacher	Mrs Penny Pepper
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Eversley Primary School Crest Avenue Pitsea Basildon Essex SS13 2EF
Telephone number	01268555333

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	9–10 October 2008
Inspection number	311786

Fax number

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Age group 4-11

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. Just under half the pupils come from a mix of privately-owned and rented housing near to the school, with others travelling from other parts of Basildon and beyond. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), initially on a part-time basis, at the start of the autumn or spring term following their fourth birthday. On entry, children's knowledge and skills are below those expected for their age, especially their speech and language skills which are low. The school includes an enhanced provision for up to ten pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils joining the school other than at the start of the EYFS is significantly higher than average.

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. Whilst the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, the proportion at the early stages of learning English as an additional language is average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and that of pupils with statements outlining their needs is well above average.

The school runs a breakfast club for pupils attending the school and revision clubs for those in Years 5 and 6 during the course of the school year. It has recently received a Healthy Schools award.

The headteacher took over the school at Easter 2008 following the retirement of the previous long-serving headteacher. The deputy headteacher took up her post in June 2008 and a small number of new teachers and support staff started at the school at the beginning of this term.

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 which is successfully managing change and building effectively on well-established foundations. It evaluates its effectiveness accurately and since the last inspection has taken successful steps to promote improvement. The new headteacher, ably supported by her deputy, provides clear direction to the school's work and has rapidly gained the confidence and respect of pupils, parents, staff and governors. The school's capacity for further improvement is good. The school manages its finances well and provides good value for money.

Achievement is good. The effectiveness of the EYFS is good and children get a good start to their education. Given their starting points, pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6, reaching standards that are broadly similar to the national averages in English, mathematics and science. Overall, pupils maintain the good progress they make in the EYFS as they move through the school although, in past years, this has been greater in some year groups than in others. Rigorous analysis of the information available from teachers' assessments and the results of end-of-year tests has pinpointed where these dips occur. As a result, the school has, this term, linked pupils' personal targets to National Curriculum levels, agreed them with pupils and shared this information with parents. This good practice is well-promoted in lessons but is not yet securely established. In addition, although subject leaders' roles and responsibilities are well-defined and they play an active role in monitoring and supporting teaching and learning, they do not consistently make enough use of data when checking how well pupils are progressing. The implementation of these and other similar initiatives demonstrates the good quality of the school's leadership and management in identifying issues and taking prompt action.

Teaching is good and senior staff have an accurate understanding of strengths and areas for improvement. Using this information, they have specifically deployed teaching and support staff to match pupils' particular needs. The school acknowledges the importance of continually reviewing the revised curriculum so that it is fully effective in raising standards across the school. As a result, it is developing a more practical and creative curriculum framework in order to raise levels of pupil involvement and achievement. New programmes for teaching letters and sounds and for developing pupils' writing skills are established, and the positive benefit of these is starting to becoming evident in pupils' work. However, pupils do not always have sufficient time to write, both at length and in depth, in English and in other subjects in order to practise, develop and extend their skills.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to learning. Pupils are friendly, confident and supportive of each other. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They eat sensibly and take regular exercise. Pupils' fundraising for a wide range of charities, including supporting a child in India, is one aspect of the good level of community cohesion evident throughout the school. Pastoral care is a considerable strength of the school. The enhanced provision for children with moderate learning difficulties is particularly effective, enabling them to integrate successfully into the main classes. Assessment procedures are thorough and staff effectively identify and support pupils who need extra help or challenge in their work.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the EYFS achieve well because the knowledgeable teaching team provide interesting and exciting tasks and activities that are well-planned to address children's needs. All areas of learning are covered with many opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves. The tasks that adults lead are well-planned so that children learn the basic skills they need to make good progress. This is particularly significant in the programme adopted by the school to teach early literacy skills. Children quickly learn letter sounds and names and use these when reading and beginning to write. Staff carry out a variety of assessments on the children. When they leave the EYFS, children's overall standards are slightly below the local and national averages.

Particular attention is paid to children's personal development and well-being so that they settle into school quickly, soon make friends and learn to follow routines. They are confident and keen to share their work with adults. They behave well and concentrate on tasks, persevering until they have finished. Good leadership and management have resulted in an accurate evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of provision. Best use is made of the available accommodation although there is currently no dedicated outside space for the children. Staff acknowledge that this reduces the opportunities available to extend the children's learning into the outside area. However, plans are well-advanced to tackle this.

The school's breakfast club is well organised and managed. Children enjoy their healthy breakfast and the good range of activities staff provide for them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the opportunities for pupils to write at length in English and for a range of different purposes across the curriculum.
- Embed new target-setting arrangements in day-to-day practice.
- Improve subject leaders' use of data about how well pupils are progressing when monitoring the work of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards at the end of Year 2 have been broadly similar to the national averages in reading and mathematics in recent years. In writing, there was a dip in standards in 2007 that prompted a review of how the school taught and developed pupils' skills. Improved results in 2008 indicate that the resulting changes are fit for purpose but the full impact of these has still to be secured. Standards in writing at the end of Year 6 lag behind those in reading, although progress in both subjects accelerates well in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' results in science have been consistently higher than in English and mathematics. Across the school, pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are well developed.

Taking into account the wide range of ability in each cohort, there are no significant differences between boys and girls. Overall, boys do better than girls in mathematics but girls do better than boys English. In science, boys and girls achieve similar results. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties and those who need support in order to keep up with others make good progress. Pupils from minority ethnic groups, including the small proportion at the early stages of learning

English as an additional language, also make good progress. More able pupils benefit from the enrichment activities the school provides for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They understand the clear boundaries of the 'golden rules' of the school and appreciate the commendations for good behaviour, attendance and work. Pupils new to the school, including those who join other than in the EYFS, settle quickly into daily routines. All pupils show a high degree of respect for other cultures and customs. Pupils appreciate the opportunity to take on responsibility as play leaders, monitors and reading buddies. The school council plays an active role in the life of the school, such as in the development of the playground equipment. Pupils respond well to the opportunities for reflection and singing in assembly. They gain the basic skills needed for secondary school and acquire a good range of personal skills. Attendance is in line with the national average and improving. This is due to the school's efforts to discourage parents from taking their children on holiday during term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy learning. They are keen to answer questions, work together effectively and get on well with staff. They are making good progress due to staff engaging in good quality lesson planning, well-focussed professional development and effective team-work. Lesson introductions successfully capture pupils' interest and link new learning with earlier work. Occasionally, teachers do not give pupils sufficient time to work independently and complete their written tasks. Pupils' differing needs are well catered for in lesson plans and teaching assistants work well with teachers to provide high-quality support for pupils. Regular opportunities for checking how well pupils are progressing are included in planning and teachers' working notes often provide valuable pointers for developing the next steps in pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good range of curricular and other activities. The thematic approach integrates subjects and provides opportunities for all learners, including those who find learning difficult, to make good progress. The revised schemes of work in literacy and numeracy are beginning to raise standards although these are at an early stage of development. Enrichment activities provide good support for identified gifted and talented pupils. ICT is developed well across the curriculum and pupils regularly use it as a tool for learning. The wide variety of school visits for each year, including the Year 6 residential to Upminster, makes a positive contribution to the pupils' personal and academic development. The breadth of extra-curricular provision, particularly in sports, supports pupils well and adds considerable enjoyment to their school experience.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. All pupils have personal targets in reading, writing and mathematics, which provide them with their next steps in learning. Marking is detailed and helps the pupils to understand how to improve their work. Staff encourage the pupils to develop their self-confidence and enjoy learning. As a result, pupils feel safe and well cared for. Arrangements for child protection and for safeguarding pupils meet current requirements. Teaching assistants provide high quality support for pupils who require additional help with their work. The early morning 'booster' sessions for Year 5 and 6 pupils are well organised and pupils appreciate the opportunity to revise and develop their skills and knowledge. The school takes effective steps to help pupils transfer to their next stage of education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Day-to-day management is good and the school runs smoothly. Targets for development are suitably challenging and recent audits of the school's strengths, needs and shortcomings, spearheaded by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, provide a well-informed and perceptive basis for future planning. Performance management for teachers is well-established and effectively supports individual and whole-school development. The governing body is well informed and members provide good support for the school, with many governors maintaining regular contact with classes. The governing body effectively holds the school to account and is keen to identify ways in which it can further develop its role.

Good partnerships with other schools, outside agencies, parents and the community, effectively promote learners' well-being, particularly for those with learning difficulties. The school enjoys good support from parents and the community. Parents are particularly pleased that their children enjoy school and make good progress, and that they can readily approach the headteacher or staff to discuss any concerns.

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.

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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

13 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eversley Primary School, Pitsea, Basildon SS13 2EF

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school last week. You all get on well with each other and the staff, and your behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. The staff take good care of you and you told us that you have no hesitation in asking them for help.

You make good progress in lessons because the teaching is good. Your lessons are carefully planned and build on your earlier work. You know what you need to do to improve because your teachers write helpful comments in your books when they mark your work. You all have targets for improvement and we are pleased to see that these are now linked to National Curriculum levels so that you know what you are aiming for in your work. Your teachers have only recently agreed these new targets with you so it is not surprising that you are still getting used to them. We have asked your teachers to make sure you really understand what these targets mean - do stick at it!

Mrs Pepper and the staff know that many of you do better in reading than in writing. They have put in place new ways of teaching you how to write for different purposes and your work is improving. We have suggested that they now make sure you have enough opportunities to write longer and more detailed pieces of work not only in English but in other subjects. This is so that you can practise, improve and develop your writing. From what we saw in your books, we are sure you are up to the challenge.

Your teachers help each other to make sure that they are teaching you the right things in the correct way. They collect quite a lot of information about what you can do but do not always make enough use of this to check that you are doing as well you can. We have asked them to make full use of all this information so that you make the best possible progress all the time.

Keep working hard and enjoying school.

Yours truly

Mike Best

Lead inspector