

Eastington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115523
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	311961
Inspection date	27 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Alex Baxter

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paddy Clayton
Headteacher	Malcolm Strang
Date of previous school inspection	26 January 2004
School address	Churchend Eastington Stonehouse GL10 3SB
Telephone number	01453 822922
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: •the degree to which teachers use assessment and track pupils' progress to meet pupils' differing needs. •how well teachers provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning, and quicken their progress; and •how effectively leaders and managers sustain strengths and, where necessary, bring about improvement. Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons, assembly and pupils at lunch and play. Teachers' assessment records and pupils' work were scrutinised. Discussions were held with pupils, staff, governors and parents. Parents' responses to the inspection questionnaire were analysed. 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 this report.

Description of the school

Children's attainment on entry generally matches that expected for their age, but can vary from year to year. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or with English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils who find learning difficult and/or have disabilities is well below average, but can be close to average in some year groups. The school holds the following awards: Healthy School status, Activemark award, Extended School Status and a Leading Aspect award for its computerised pupil-tracking system.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding, truly impressive school, where pupils receive a first class quality of education. All adults in the school and, because of the excellent care, support and guidance they receive, all the pupils, live up to the school's stated ethos of 'Aiming high together'. Consistent, exemplary provision, sustained high standards, excellent academic achievement and outstanding personal development and wellbeing reflect this splendid learning community. 'Wonderful', 'fabulous', and 'commendable' give a taste of the superlatives used by parents to describe the school. One parent wrote, 'The teachers at Eastington really do go that extra mile' while another commented, 'The school continues to be everything we hoped and expected it to be'.

The school's promotion of 'enjoyment and achievement' is exemplary. It stems from the work of an inspirational headteacher and a united staff commitment to energising pupils as responsible learners. Not surprisingly, pupils of all ages want to learn and strive to improve. A culture of learning from, and with, each other permeates all aspects of school life. This is seen, for example, by the way older pupils as 'Big Friends' help younger pupils, known as 'Little Friends', at break times. Children are described as, 'bursting to do this' and comments from parents of past pupils show that these social skills and friendships extend well into the future.

Pupils' behaviour, attitudes to school and attendance are outstanding. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Pupils adopt healthy, safe lifestyles, undertake several responsibilities and contribute fully to the local and wider community. The work of the school council is worthy of note. Pupils' ideas are valued and facilities such as picnic tables and parasols and additional play equipment illustrate the school's positive response to their suggestions. The school's 'PPC-Pilot Progress Club' represents another innovative and successful strategy whereby pupils help each other to learn.

Provision is outstanding in the Foundation Stage, enabling children to make excellent progress. Throughout the school, pupils across the range of abilities develop very good literacy and numeracy skills. Because they have stimulating stories to tell and write, challenging problems to solve and interesting investigations to pursue, pupils make excellent progress through Years 1 to 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught in specific year groups for literacy and numeracy. This strategy with such young pupils enables the teachers to continue a successful focus on developing pupils' skills alongside the equally important encouragement of creativity and a love of learning. As a result, pupils attain above average standards by the end of Year 2. A very effective emphasis on using and applying skills continues in Key Stage 2 so that by the end of Year 6, attainment is very high in English, mathematics and science. In particular, the pupils' reading, speaking and enquiry skills are extremely well developed, equipping them fully for the future.

Teaching and learning and the guidance provided by the staff of the school are outstanding. The staff know the pupils extremely well, give them close individual attention and involve them in evaluating their own and each other's efforts. These factors have sustained effective teaching, learning and support for some time. Staff and, increasingly, the pupils use the school's own innovative computerised tracking system very effectively to monitor pupils' progress. This accurate use of assessment to identify where improvement and support are needed has raised the quality and consistency of provision and pupils' achievement to the highest level. The school really is at the 'cutting edge' of education in its approach to target setting, personalising

learning and involving pupils in self-evaluation. Teachers' questioning is stimulating and challenging and is very effective in drawing new learning from the pupils by valuing and building on their responses. Pupils of all abilities sense the worth placed on their ideas and respond enthusiastically.

The curriculum provided for the pupils is outstanding. The pupils benefit academically and personally from an excellent range of precisely planned learning opportunities. These include visits to other schools to share their facilities, contributions from visitors, for example artists, and a balanced programme of adult-led discussion and practical enquiry. Pupils say, 'We have lots of different activities and we work together as a huge team'. At times, though, the pupils do not have enough opportunity to use computers and make best use of their good skills to support learning across the range of subjects. Assemblies, activity weeks, such as 'Arts Week', and opportunities for pupils to share their own beliefs make an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Leadership and management are outstanding. The accomplished headteacher has established a distinctive, caring and forward-looking school, and has been very successful in getting staff, pupils and parents to sign up to it. He receives excellent support from staff and governors. All staff share their expertise wholeheartedly. Self-evaluation is based on detailed, accurate assessments of pupils' progress and ensures that target setting helps pupils reach their full potential. There are excellent links with parents, the local community and outside agencies that enrich pupils' learning activities. Everyone spoken to during the inspection sang the school's praises because of the great care taken to treat pupils as unique individuals.

A long awaited and carefully planned rebuilding programme is about to begin. The new facilities will include purpose-built indoor and outdoor areas for children in the Foundation Stage, a new hall and additional information and communication technology resources. These are intended to enhance the work of the school even more. The school's proven track record in sustaining high standards and its innovative commitment to continued improvement show an excellent capacity to improve into the future.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. Leadership is very effective and is enriched by the way staff share their expertise. As a result, teaching, the curriculum and care, guidance and support are excellent. In response, the children make excellent progress across all areas of learning. The teacher's strong emphasis on phonics teaching, often accompanied by the imaginative use of a glove puppet named 'Alfie the Dragon', stimulates the children's interest and accounts for their particularly outstanding progress in understanding and using words. The children have very good opportunities to learn through making their own choices, during role-play in 'Mr Grinling's Lighthouse', for example, and these enhance their self-confidence and enjoyment of school. By the end of the Reception Year, all children reach the standards expected and many exceed them. The teacher and her assistant make the very best use of current facilities to develop the children's skills. With the children, they are looking forward with great excitement to having brand new Foundation Stage facilities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn by using computers.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

27 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eastington Primary School, Eastington, GL10 3SB

I have no hesitation in agreeing with you and with many of your parents that yours is an outstanding school. Thank you very much for making me very welcome. You were all extremely polite and it was lovely to meet so many of you.

I would like to say special thanks to those of you on the school council who, together with a couple of other Year 6 pupils, told me all about life at your school. They said that you learn in lots of different ways and you have a lot of fun. They told me how much you enjoy school, because you feel safe there, your friends, including 'Big Friends' and 'Little Friends', help you, and you get on really well. Your parents told me all that too, and I agree. It really was a privilege to visit you and I can see why you love school so much.

These are the other main things I found:

- Your school provides you with an excellent education. You feel safe and cared for because everyone at the school looks after you extremely well.
- You make outstanding progress and, by the end of Year 6, reach exceptionally high standards in all your subjects.
- You behave extremely well and enjoy your learning because teaching is excellent and you have a very interesting range of activities.
- I was very impressed with the effort you put into your learning and the way you so willingly offer your ideas and help each other.
- Your headteacher provides outstanding leadership and receives excellent support from staff and governors. They work very closely with your parents to help you to achieve your best.

To help the school to improve I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to make it possible for you to use computers more often.

Once again thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with each other and the adults to make sure that your school remains an outstanding school.

Best wishes for the future.

Alex Baxter Lead inspector

Annex B



27 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eastington Primary School, Eastington, GL10 3SB

I have no hesitation in agreeing with you and with many of your parents that yours is an outstanding school. Thank you very much for making me very welcome. You were all extremely polite and it was lovely to meet so many of you.

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- You behave extremely well and enjoy your learning because teaching is excellent and you have a very interesting range of activities.
- I was very impressed with the effort you put into your learning and the way you so willingly offer your ideas and help each other.
- Your headteacher provides outstanding leadership and receives excellent support from staff and governors. They work very closely with your parents to help you to achieve your best.

To help the school to improve I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to make it possible for you to use computers more often.

Once again thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with each other and the adults to make sure that your school remains an outstanding school.

Best wishes for the future.

Alex Baxter
Lead inspector