

Eastling Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118336
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	312893
Inspection date	16 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Eileen Chadwick

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)	103
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	15
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Freed
Headteacher	Dave Walsh
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Kettle Hill Road Eastling Faversham ME13 0BA
Telephone number	01795 890252
Fax number	01795 890252

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	16 October 2008
Inspection number	312893

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

Attainment on entry to Reception and the evenness of pupils' progress from Reception to Year 6, especially of more capable pupils in mathematics.

The impact of initiatives to improve the standards achieved in writing.

The impact of leadership and management, especially through monitoring and evaluation, on improving achievement.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, discussions with pupils and staff, a review of the assessment data the school use to track the pupils' progress, and analyses of pupils' work. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors 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

Eastling Primary School is smaller than most primary schools. It serves a mixed population from a wide rural area. Most children are White British. An average percentage of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These pupils' needs include autism, speech and literacy learning difficulties. An above average proportion of pupils join the school other than at the usual time. The 15 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are taught as a separate class, although the other three classes contain more than one age group.

The school has gained Healthy Schools, Activemark, Eco Silver and Platinum Travel, Artsmark and Investors in People awards.

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. It has some outstanding features. Pupils receive exceptional levels of care, and their personal development and behaviour are excellent. Pupils do well academically and are also given strong opportunities for developing their information and communication technology (ICT), sporting and musical talents. The school has developed well since the previous inspection. It is improving further under the very good leadership of the headteacher and is well placed to continue to improve in the future. The great majority of parents justifiably hold the school in high regard. One parent echoed the views of many when saying, 'a well run and managed school, giving my child strong foundations for the future because potential is identified and nurtured'.

Pupils achieve well and standards are rising. The strong start made in Reception means that pupils now enter Year 1 above average in all areas, including literacy and numeracy. This is built upon well in Key Stage 1 and, by Year 2, standards are significantly above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards are rising because there have been improvements in teaching. The new arrangements for teaching reading, phonics and spelling are having a very positive impact on raising achievement from Reception to Year 2. Setting enables teachers to match work more closely to the very wide range of pupils' learning needs. Those who need extra challenge work alongside older pupils, so they are able to work at higher levels. Also, those who struggle are taught smaller learning steps.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2 and, by Year 6, standards are well above average in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils write fluently and imaginatively with good spelling and punctuation. However, the school has rightly identified the need to give pupils a more exciting writing curriculum by bringing subjects together for writing across the curriculum. The substantial number of later entrants to Key Stage 2 adapt well because their work builds securely on their previous attainment and there are good procedures for helping those pupils who need to catch up. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well, and make excellent progress in reading and writing in Reception and Key Stage 1. More capable pupils achieve well and their progress is particularly good in mathematics in Years 5 and 6 due to strong subject teaching.

The sustained successful leadership of the headteacher, in partnership with a dedicated and effective teaching team, is central to the improvements being made. The arrangements for self-evaluation are good. The school sets demanding targets and staff tackle any underachievement. The headteacher rigorously monitors teaching and promotes good practice. Staff are being given the opportunity to monitor and manage their areas of responsibility and this now includes observing their colleagues teach. Thorough assessment systems have led to the school having an accurate view of its own performance. However, given the small number of staff and staff changes, the task of monitoring and evaluating pupils' assessments has fallen mostly on the headteacher. This is preventing subject leaders having a complete overview of the whole school and taking a fuller part in raising achievement. Governors are very well led and provide both strong support and challenge.

The quality of teaching and the curriculum are good. Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and manage them well. Their good subject knowledge raises their expectations and they meet pupils' diverse learning needs well. Throughout the school, they use ICT well to promote learning. Pupils have a wealth of opportunities for extra-curricular activities, sport and trips.

Visits and visitors bring learning alive and are used to underpin academic learning. Pupils develop a very good understanding of how regular exercise and a healthy diet help their bodies grow strong. The excellent partnerships with other schools enrich pupils' learning experiences and ease pupils' transfer to the next stage in their education.

Close association between the school and the community helps to promote a family atmosphere and pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Members of the community go out of their way to support the school and this enhances community cohesion. Pupils' contributions to the school and wider community are excellent. Pupils show a very well developed sense of responsibility in the way they care for their school and local environment. Older pupils know they have an important role in helping younger pupils to feel safe, secure and happy. The significant numbers of later entrants to the school are very well integrated into the life of the school. Pupils' ecological awareness is stimulated well through their conservation activities. The thriving school council is a very good vehicle for enabling pupils to contribute to decisions the school has to make. Pupils work very well together and their teamwork and decision-making skills are constantly emphasised. This, together with their good progress in basic skills, means they are well prepared for their future lives. The school vigorously promotes good attendance.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

There is a range in children's levels of skill and knowledge on starting school although, overall, these are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Excellent induction and welfare arrangements help children to settle and thrive in the warm and supportive environment. Children make good progress and, by the end of Reception, most attain the goals set for children of their age and often exceed them, including in reading, sounds, writing and mathematics. New arrangements for teaching sounds and letters are having a very positive impact on raising achievement in early literacy. Children also do exceptionally well in shape and space aspects of mathematics. Strong emphasis is given to children's personal development and this means they are very happy and quickly adjust to school. Standards of behaviour and levels of independence are high.

Teaching is good. Well planned activities indoors and out help children to learn new things easily and there is a good balance between activities where children discover things for themselves and those where they work with an adult. Independence in learning is encouraged extremely well. Staff are very effective in supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, many of whom reach the same standards as their peers. Children develop their confidence and self-esteem, being eager to try out new things. The procedures for assessing children's work and monitoring their progress are good. There are excellent links with parents. The school is currently extending the use of the outdoor learning environment so that it further enriches children's learning experiences. Leadership and management of EYFS are good and there is close teamwork between staff.

What the school should do to improve further

-
- Improve opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum in order to enhance enjoyment and achievement in writing.
- Develop subject leaders' skills in monitoring and evaluating pupils' assessments.

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
---	----------------

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?	1
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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
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	2
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?	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	1

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?	1

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**

16 October 2008

Dear Children,

Inspection of Eastling Primary School, Faversham ME13 0BA

I am writing to tell you how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helping us with the inspection. Your views are important as you are the school's customers. You said your school is a good one and we agree. Here are some good things about your school.

- You make good progress and reach well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by Year 6.
- Those of you in Reception get off to a good start.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you are a credit to your school. This helps to make your school a happy one.
- You give a warm welcome to new children and help them to quickly feel at home.
- You have some great opportunities for ICT, music and sport.
- All adults take superb care of you and ensure that you are safe.
- Your headteacher, teachers and school governors are working hard to make the school even better.

This is what we are asking the school to do.

- Give you more chances to write in different subjects.
- Help teachers in charge of subjects to be more involved in checking how well you are learning. We hope you will continue to enjoy school and continue to try hard in all you do.

Best wishes,

Eileen Chadwick Lead Inspector