

Euxton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119473
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	313307
Inspection date	11 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Gillian Salter-Smith

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	196
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev John Riley
Headteacher	Mr Giles Storch
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	Wigan Road Euxton Chorley Lancashire PR7 6JW
Telephone number	01257 263454
Fax number	01257 231827

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- pupils' progress and the quality of teaching
- whether the school's work on improving pupils' abilities to think in different ways and to take more decisions about their work is effective in raising achievement
- the quality of care, guidance and support
- the extent to which senior and middle leaders and governors contribute to school improvement.

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation documents, observation of lessons, discussions with staff, pupils and governors, an analysis of parents' views, scrutiny of pupils' work and other school documents. 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

The school is slightly smaller than average. A small proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average but the number with a statement of special educational need is around average. The vast majority of pupils are White British and all pupils speak English as their first language.

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 provides outstanding care, support and guidance. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Parents are right to be highly supportive and appreciative of the school. Comments typical of many parents are, 'The school has an exceptionally caring and friendly atmosphere' and, 'We are extremely pleased with the quality of education and care at Euxton C of E. Our son has developed both his literacy and his numeracy alongside an appreciation of learning.'

A caring and supportive atmosphere based on Christian values is very well established. The school goes to great lengths to ensure that every child is happy in school and ready to learn. Behaviour is very good; attendance that is well above average is one indicator of how much pupils enjoy school. There are numerous examples of how staff provide additional support for pupils and their families, particularly those who are facing difficult circumstances in their lives. On a day-to-day basis, excellent levels of supervision and support at break and lunchtimes ensure that staff are continually alert to pupils' concerns and are quick to sort out any upsets. Pupils are very aware of the importance of friendship and support for one another. The school council and older pupils have been highly active in developing ways to make playtimes fun and friendly for everyone. Well-planned programmes of personal development help pupils to understand one another better. Consequently, pupils feel very safe and secure in school. As one pupil said, 'You can't be upset for very long. There is always someone who will come along and cheer you up.'

In this highly supportive atmosphere, pupils achieve well and reach above-average standards. When they start school, the level of development of many children is better than is typical for their age. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. Results of Key Stage 1 national assessments show that standards are above average. In 2007, results in writing were particularly good although in mathematics not enough pupils reached the higher Level 3. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards improve further. In four out of the past five years, the results of national tests for Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science have been significantly above average. In 2007, over half of the pupils attained the higher Level 5 and the school's challenging targets were exceeded. Results show that pupils of different abilities achieve well and there are no significant differences between the achievement of girls and boys.

Consistently good teaching helps pupils to make good progress. Positive relationships between staff and pupils and the good use of humour mean that pupils enjoy learning. Regular assessments and tracking of pupils' progress help teachers to provide challenging lessons where tasks are well matched to different needs. Teaching assistants work effectively with individuals and groups identified as needing support, either for learning difficulties and/or disabilities or because they are falling behind. Pupils feel very well supported in their learning. They know how well they are doing and what to do to improve. This is because teachers give pupils clear guidance through learning targets for literacy and numeracy and in the comments they make when they mark pupils' work. The school's recent emphasis on helping pupils to think more deeply and in different ways, and to take more decisions about what and how they learn, is building momentum. Pupils are increasingly thinking things out for themselves, discussing their work in pairs and groups, and deciding how well they have achieved in lessons. These activities are more often planned and developed in science lessons and in subjects other than literacy and numeracy and are contributing well to pupils' progress. They are less well developed in literacy and numeracy lessons.

Pupils are very well prepared for their futures. They develop much self-confidence and get along well with each other. They understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They acquire good standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils have a very good awareness of how they can make a difference to their own community and to the wider community. This is exemplified through the work of the school council and the support they give to elderly people within the parish. An outstanding range of extra-curricular activities helps many pupils do particularly well in music and sport. Well-established partnerships with local schools contribute to the breadth of extra-curricular opportunities and activities that enrich learning. These include lessons in modern foreign languages and challenges for pupils identified as gifted and talented.

Leadership at all levels shares a common purpose and determination to ensure that every child is happy, secure and achieving well. All staff work effectively as a team to achieve these aims and tackle the right priorities. An accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities arises from regular monitoring by leaders at senior and subject level and has led to continued improvement since the last inspection. Governors are very supportive of the school and have brought about much improvement to the accommodation. They are less involved in checking directly on the school's performance. Pupils' good achievement and above-average standards have been maintained over recent years. This and other improvements, for example in pupils' competency in ICT, confirm the school's good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Reception class is good. Good teaching helps children to make good progress. By the end of Reception, many children develop skills and competencies that are better than those expected for their age. Learning is well planned. It provides a good balance between tasks that are directed by adults and activities where children make choices about what they do. Regular assessment helps staff to plan activities that build on individual children's progress. Opportunities for play and creative work capture children's imagination and lead to much enjoyment. The outdoor space has been improved considerably since the inspection in 2004 and it is used well to provide activities in the different areas of learning. However, in the winter months its relatively small size restricts what can be offered.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of pupils in Key Stage 1 reaching the higher levels in mathematics.
- Provide more opportunities in literacy and numeracy lessons for pupils to think things through for themselves and deepen their understanding of how well they achieve in lessons.

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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?	1
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 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 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
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?	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

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?	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	1
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

14 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Euxton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Lancashire, PR7 6JW

It was a delight to meet and talk to so many of you when I visited your school. Thank you for making me feel so welcome. It is important that you know what I found out about your school and what I have reported to your parents/carers.

You have a good school and you are a real credit to it. You are developing into mature and caring young people who enjoy learning and are very sensitive to the needs of others. This is one of your school's outstanding strengths. Most of you make good progress and do well in your national tests although it would be good to see more of you gain the highest standard in maths at the end of the infants. You are well taught and all the staff make extra sure that every single one of you is happy and secure in school and ready to learn. The leaders and governors of your school work as a strong team with all the staff to ensure that you are exceptionally well cared for and supported. Many of you benefit from the excellent range of extra activities, which help you to do well in music and sport especially.

Recently you have been learning how to think more deeply and in different ways, and to make decisions about how you learn and how well you have done. This has happened mainly in science and subjects other than literacy and numeracy. Your school is going to give you more chances to work in this way in literacy and numeracy lessons in order to help you do even better than you do now.

You can help by continuing to be supportive of one another, especially when you are working co-operatively with each other. You need to think hard and carefully when you are working out the best ways of tackling problems and your work.

I wish you well for your futures and hope that you continue to enjoy the rest of your time at Euxton C of E school.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Salter-Smith

Lead inspector