

Queen Eleanor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122645
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	314355
Inspection dates	3–4 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Edwards

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	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Davey
Headteacher	Mrs Wendy Wakefield
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2003
School address	Station Road Harby Newark Nottinghamshire NG23 7EQ
Telephone number	01522703428
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves the village of Harby and surrounding villages. Almost all pupils are of white British heritage and almost all come from homes where English is the first language. A small proportion of the pupils are from Irish Traveller families. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average, although each intake reflects a wide range of ability. The range of socio-economic circumstances is broad. The proportion of children who find learning difficult is below that of most schools.

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. Because leadership and management are effective, it has improved significantly since the last inspection. The quality of the relationships and the strength of the teamwork provide confidence that the school has a good capacity to maintain this momentum. The school's leaders have developed all aspects of its work systematically. Improvements to the quality of teaching and learning, and to assessment procedures, motivate the pupils to achieve their best. Consequently, standards in mathematics and science have improved markedly by the end of Year 6. One delighted parent, whose views are echoed by many others, commented, 'Queen Eleanor Primary School provides an excellent environment for any child's education'.

Children make good progress in the Reception class because they are well taught and the quality of their experience provides a secure foundation for future learning. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the national assessments for pupils in Year 2 are broadly in line with the national picture. Although overall standards in Year 6 are above the national average, writing remains a weakness for some pupils. Achievement is good because pupils now have a much clearer idea of what they need to do to improve and are committed to learning. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Those pupils who find learning difficult make good progress because they are well supported, both by the teachers and a team of dedicated teaching assistants.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' high expectations, particularly in the class for the upper juniors, are effective in promoting good achievement. A common feature is the warmth of relationships. Tasks set are effective at encouraging pupils to think, especially in science, and are matched closely to the range of ability in most classes.

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good because the care, guidance and support they receive are good. However, attendance rates are below average, and remain an ongoing concern for staff. Nevertheless, most pupils enjoy their school because the good curriculum both interests and motivates them. They feel safe and secure and respond well to the many initiatives encouraging them to adopt healthy lifestyles. Staff respect and value the pupils and enable them to develop self-confidence, self-esteem and self-discipline. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They work hard and play well together, forming strong relationships with one another and with adults in school. The pupils' social development is promoted effectively through special events and reward systems. Pupils contribute well to the community and are developing good skills to prepare them for the next stage in their education. However, their understanding of world faiths and of cultural traditions other than their own is limited.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is led well and the quality of teaching is good. The welcoming staff work well together as a team to ensure children are nurtured in a caring and supportive environment. Children play happily alongside each other and enjoy a wide variety of activities, both inside and outdoors. Much of the teaching is effective and promotes the children's growing independence and social skills well. Learning is fun. Activities are exciting and challenging, ensuring a good balance between independent and adult-led learning. Systems for recording children's attainments and tracking progress are effective. Information is used accurately to ensure children engage in activities that are well matched to their abilities and needs. Good links have been established with parents. Consequently, children make good progress in the

Foundation Stage and almost all achieve or exceed the age-related expectations and are well prepared for further learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards in writing.
- Take further steps to improve attendance.
- Place greater emphasis on the multicultural and multifaith aspects of the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. In Key Stage 1, pupils build satisfactorily on their achievements in the Foundation Stage to reach standards that are broadly in line with the national average. This remains the case in English in lower Key Stage 2. However, progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6. Overall standards are rising in the junior classes because the school has improved the quality of teaching and learning. Furthermore, the rigorous application of the school's tracking and assessment procedures to set work at an appropriate level for groups of different abilities is beginning to challenge higher-attaining pupils. Standards in English are average, with standards in reading stronger than those in writing. Here spelling and handwriting tend to let the pupils down. However, recent whole-school initiatives to improve writing are beginning to have a positive impact. Current standards in mathematics and science in Year 6 are above average. Standards in these subjects are rising sharply and pupils' achievement over time is good because pupils now benefit from well-informed teaching and practical investigations and problem solving activities that require pupils to use and apply the skills they have learnt.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Although pupils enjoy coming to school, where they quickly become confident, enthusiastic learners, attendance rates are below average. They work hard and play well together, forming excellent relationships with one another and with adults in school. Teachers trust pupils and consequently pupils build up self-confidence and self-discipline. Their behaviour is exemplary. Pupils have a good understanding how to keep themselves safe and they respond very well to the many initiatives encouraging them to adopt healthy lifestyles. They make a good contribution to the school community through, for example, the work of the school council and also contribute well to the wider community through fund-raising and involvement with village events. Pupils successfully acquire the essential skills that equip them for the next stages of education and adult life. The school makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, pupils' grasp of cultural diversity is rather limited.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school is well staffed and pupils benefit from the staff's broad range of skills and expertise. For example, good use is made of a skilled linguist to enable pupils to learn Spanish and French. A common factor in all classes is the warmth of the relationships that promotes outstanding behaviour and encourages pupils to try hard. In most lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils' performance and the pace of learning is good. Teaching assistants provide valuable

support throughout the school. Interactive whiteboards are used successfully to demonstrate new techniques. In the classes for the youngest children and in Years 5 and 6, the work set is closely matched to the range of ability in each class, and this enables the pupils to make good progress. However, in the class for Year 3 and 4 pupils assessment is not yet used as effectively. Similarly, the quality of marking is variable, but is particularly good for older pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides an interesting and diverse curriculum that nurtures an enthusiasm for learning from the outset. The curriculum is carefully planned and organised to meet the needs of the mixed-age classes and the needs of pupils of different abilities. The strong programme of personal and social education is reflected in the pupils' high standards of co-operation and behaviour. Where possible, teachers link subjects to make learning more enjoyable and have a strong focus on investigative and practical activities. Pupils enjoy the recent initiatives to help them become better writers. They benefit from a large number of enrichment activities and a good range of clubs. However, the range of visits to places of interest to support learning is limited.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are cared for well. Arrangements for safeguarding children meet current requirements and all staff are aware of the child protection procedures and what they should do if they have concerns over any child. Risk assessments are undertaken effectively for all activities. Pupils report that they feel safe in school and they are confident that should they have a problem there is always an adult who will treat their concerns seriously and deal with the issue effectively. Academic guidance for pupils is developing well and is now generally good. The staff undertake systematic assessments of pupils' progress and the results are used to set targets and to plan specific work for pupils. However, the quality of marking is variable across the school. At its best, it gives pupils clear guidance on what they should do to improve their work but, at times, it merely consists of brief comments or ticks.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher approaches her work with a care and commitment that has served to motivate the whole school community. She maintains a clear view of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the school and, since her appointment in 2006, has resolutely fashioned strategies to bring about school improvement. The cornerstone of her work is the uncompromising approach to equal opportunities, which is evident throughout the school. Notable successes are the strengthening and sharpening of the school's assessment arrangements, curriculum innovation and team building. Other staff are increasingly growing in confidence in their role as managers and in monitoring school effectiveness. Governors too are committed to foster the work of the school and provide good support. Their understanding of their responsibility to hold the school to account has grown and they fulfil their role as critical friends effectively.

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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 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?	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
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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

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	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

7 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Queen Eleanor Primary School, Harby, NG23 7EQ.

I really enjoyed my visit to your school this month, because everybody was so helpful and friendly. I particularly enjoyed my discussions with you and hearing your views. It was also delightful to be able to work with you in your classrooms, take part in your assemblies, meet the school council, listen to your wonderful singing and become involved in your Olympics. I can understand why you are so proud of your school as there are many things that make it special. Here are some of them:

- You clearly want to do your best to learn in lessons and are prepared to try hard.
- You are making good progress with your work.
- The school is mindful to keep you safe and happy.
- Everybody understands the school rules and your behaviour is excellent.
- Your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting.
- There is a wide range of activities to help you enjoy school.
- Mrs Wakefield is determined to make sure that your school is as good as it possibly can be.

Your school is good and improving rapidly. This is because Mrs Wakefield and the staff understand how to make learning fun and are working hard to help you. It is really important that you continue to try your best and make the most of the opportunities the school provides. I know that you achieve well, but I am asking your teachers to keep on finding ways to help you to improve your writing and to help you learn about other faiths and cultures. I have also noticed that your attendance rates are not as good as they should be, so I've asked the adults in school to try to improve this. You can help by doing your very best to come to school each day. This way I know that you can help the school to become even better.

Very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Edwards Lead inspector