

Eton Park Junior School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	124051
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	314791
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2008
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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

Type of school	Modern (non-selective)
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ron Clarke
Headteacher	Julie Green
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2005
School address	Masefield Cresnet Burton-on-Trent DE14 2SG
Telephone number	01283 239450
Fax number	01283 239456

Age group	7–11
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Amended Report Addendum

Report amended due to administration error

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Eton Park serves part of the large town of Burton-on-Trent. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. A very high proportion of pupils come from a minority ethnic background and many speak English as an additional language, although almost all are fluent in English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational need.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Eton Park provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils join and leave the school with standards that are broadly average. The achievement of all the different groups of pupils is satisfactory, because teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. Progress in reading and writing is now much better than in recent years. However, pupils, especially girls, are still very hesitant speakers in more formal situations because they are not given enough time or opportunities to explain their ideas. This weakness also limits their standards in science, where some more able pupils have a good knowledge of scientific facts, but have difficulty explaining answers using the correct vocabulary. The best progress is in basic arithmetic. Pupils are quick to work out sums, but do not get enough opportunities to put these basic skills into practice in solving problems. In less formal situations, pupils are far more confident, reflecting their good personal development. They chat happily to adults, behave well and show respect for others. The school works hard to provide good quality care, guidance and support, so pupils feel safe and confident that they have someone to turn to when they are unhappy. The school has good systems for identifying and supporting any pupils who are vulnerable, or who are falling behind with their work. Pupils not only feel safe but also have a well-developed understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe and healthy. The school council, for example, is deeply concerned about traffic problems and the dangers they may create for younger pupils. It is in developing this real sense of community that the school's leaders and managers, including governors, have had great success. The school is a harmonious place, where pupils value different cultures and beliefs. Parents who may be nervous about coming into school have been successfully encouraged to play as full a part as possible in their children's education, and this has helped to significantly improve pupils' attendance and punctuality. Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. The school makes good use of data to identify areas of performance that could be improved, and when actions are taken, they are invariably successful. Most of these initiatives are led by the headteacher, because the role of subject coordinators is underdeveloped, especially in monitoring the quality of teaching, and this limits the capacity to improve to a satisfactory level. Checks on teaching are comprehensive, but, at times, focus too much on what works well at the expense of identifying areas for improvement. This means that it is difficult for the school to identify common features, which, if improved, would raise the quality of teaching across the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide pupils, especially girls, with more opportunities and encouragement to speak aloud and explain their work in lessons.
- Provide pupils with more opportunities to carry out investigations and solve problems in mathematics.
- Ensure subject coordinators play a greater role in checking the quality of teaching, and ensure that such checks clearly identify areas for improvement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

In recent years there has been some underachievement in English. However, the school has improved standards in reading and writing, to the extent that they are now slightly better than in mathematics and science. Achievement in all three subjects is satisfactory, but with some areas of strength and weakness in each. Pupils make good progress in their basic number work, and are quick to carry out mental arithmetic. They struggle, however, when given problems written in words rather than numbers. They are good at practical work in science, but find difficulty in explaining their findings. For example, one pupil correctly identified metals as good conductors, but when asked to explain how he knew this, he simply wrote, 'Because they are better'. This reflects a weakness in pupils' speaking. They are uncomfortable addressing a group or a whole class, because they struggle to put their ideas into words using the correct vocabulary. Progress in information and communication technology (ICT) has improved significantly since the school was last inspected and is now satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils behave well and try their best. They take their work seriously, but find it difficult to work on their own initiative. Boys are happy to share their ideas with a partner and answer questions in lessons but girls are much less confident at putting themselves forward. Pupils are keen to come to school, and love joining in the many extra lunchtime and after-school clubs. Their attendance has improved significantly in recent years and is now satisfactory. Punctuality is good. Pupils get on well with each other, including those from different cultural backgrounds. They are friendly and polite and develop trusting relationships with others. They value others and show respect by listening to what others have to say. They have a strong sense of community, which is reflected in their willingness to contribute to school life by representing their class on the school council or by organising playground games in their role as play leaders. They respect others' views and beliefs, as shown when a discussion by the school council on the potential problems of trying to provide Halal meat for Christmas dinner was taken very seriously. Pupils have a good understanding of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle. As one boy said, 'We are a fitness school and we know how to eat healthily.'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Lessons always have a clear focus, so pupils know what is expected of them. Short tasks that are changed frequently are used to ensure that pupils do not become bored. However, there are occasions when too many tasks are introduced at the same time, so pupils become confused and the pace of learning slows. Tasks are planned at differing levels of difficulty, but sometimes they are not given to the appropriate pupils; as a result, those with learning difficulties find the tasks too hard, or the more able find them too easy. Teachers encourage pupils to talk to one another, but do not always allow them enough time to think about what they want to say when they answer questions. Instead, the teacher will often finish sentences for the pupils, or translate the answer into the correct vocabulary, rather than getting the pupils to do it for

themselves. Teachers are quick to spot any pupils not paying full attention, and get them back on task, so disruption to lessons is extremely rare.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development is promoted well through the curriculum. In particular, there is a good focus on becoming healthy through a strong emphasis on physical education and a good range of extra activities. Similar good attention is paid to teaching pupils how to stay safe, especially on the roads. Pupils' preparation for the next stage of education and the world of work is satisfactory. There are some effective initiatives, such as designing a product and presenting it to a 'Dragons' Den', but these tend to be one-off events rather than pervading the curriculum. More time is now spent on reading and writing, and this has raised standards. The basics are also covered well in mathematics, but too little attention is paid to ensuring that pupils can put such skills into practice by solving problems. In many cases, pupils know about a subject, but have difficulty in putting their understanding into words, because they are not given enough opportunities to speak to larger groups.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There is a strong focus on health and safety, and procedures for child protection and risk assessments are robust. Support for personal development is good, and pupils who have emotional and social problems are particularly well supported. The nurture group and outside agencies have been used well to meet the particular needs of these pupils, and this has helped them to reach their potential. A feature of the school's provision is the very effective way in which it works with other agencies and draws on their expertise to ensure that pupils and families receive the right sort of help and encouragement. This has been fundamental in changing some parents' views of the importance of education, so attendance and punctuality are much improved, although extended holidays to Pakistan in particular still cause problems during term time. Parenting classes have proved particularly successful, with many parents now running their own networks. Pupils feel that they are given good guidance in lessons. Their targets make it clear what it is they need to learn and they know that teachers are there to help them. Performance data and teachers' knowledge of their pupils are used well to quickly identify pupils who are falling behind and give them appropriate help. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and for those at an early stage of learning English, is based on a thorough assessment of their needs. The quality of support from teaching assistants that they subsequently receive varies significantly. Some provide just the right level of prompting to allow the pupil to achieve success, while others provide either too much or too little assistance.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school's leaders, including governors, gain an accurate picture of its performance and know its main strengths and weaknesses. They make good use of outside support, such as that from the local authority, to help them raise standards in areas such as reading, writing and ICT. Some weaknesses, such as those in science, are known about, but have not been made priorities so the same level of improvement is not apparent. Subject coordinators check books and teachers' planning, but play little or no part in checking teaching by visiting classrooms. Such visits are

carried out by the headteacher and records show that strengths in teaching are clearly identified. However, they often do not tell a teacher how to make a lesson even better and so the results cannot be collated to provide a list of areas for improvement that are common to most classes.

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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?	3
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	3

Achievement and standards

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

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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

17 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eton Park Junior School, Burton-on-Trent, DE14 2SG

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We were very impressed by how happy you all are, and how well you get on with one another. You behave well and make sure you don't do anything that might upset others. This is helped by the good way in which your teachers quickly spot anybody who may not be paying full attention in lessons, and get them working again.

Overall, we found you are getting a satisfactory education, and making as much progress as most other children of your age. You were very confident when talking to us, but much less so when you had to explain to others how you had reached an answer in maths or science. This particularly applies to the girls. We have asked your teachers to encourage and help you to talk about your work in groups or to the whole class. You are good at sums, but not so good at solving problems. So we have asked your teachers to give you more problems to solve in maths. You told us that you feel safe in school. This is because all the grown-ups take good care of you. They are quick to spot any of you who may have problems or are finding the work too hard, so they can help you. All the grown-ups work very hard to make sure your parents are happy to come into school and know what they can do to help you. You are now coming to school more often, and not arriving late. Some of you still fall behind because you go for long holidays when you should be at school, so you can help yourselves by asking your mums and dads to only take holidays when the school is closed.

The people who run the school are making it a better place to be. You are now learning to read and write more quickly and are doing much better in ICT. The headteacher knows what is good about the teaching, but does a lot of the checking on her own. So we have asked other teachers to get involved to find out what will make your lessons even better.

With all best wishes for your futures,

David Driscoll Lead inspector