

Eyrescroft Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110767
Local Authority	City of Peterborough
Inspection number	325216
Inspection dates	16–17 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Elaine Taylor HMI

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)	381
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Calladine
Headteacher	Mrs C Hainsworth
Date of previous school inspection	22 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Eyrescroft Bretton Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE3 8EZ
Telephone number	01733 262190
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school in a township on the edge of Peterborough. Most of the pupils are of White British descent, but an increasing number come from different ethnic backgrounds and often have English as their second language. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average, as is the number with learning difficulties and disabilities. The pupils have a very wide range of different learning needs. More pupils enter the school at different times than in most schools. The school has provision for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and there is a private nursery on site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school is going through a period of considerable change. Following a significant drop in results two years ago, the then newly appointed headteacher put into place effective systems to raise standards. However, although some improvement is evident in the latest results, the full impact of these developments has yet to be seen. Therefore, although there is good capacity for improvement, the overall effectiveness of the school is currently satisfactory. This emerging improvement is also reflected in the satisfactory judgement for leadership and management.

Pupils' achievement is generally satisfactory in relation to their very low starting points and standards are broadly average. They make much slower progress in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics across the school. Pupils' personal development is good because of the good care and support they receive. Pupils receive satisfactory guidance on how to improve their work and this is improving. Many parents who responded to the questionnaire spoke favourably of the commitment and understanding of the teachers. One parent summed this up by saying, 'the teaching staff are always courteous and approachable. Nothing ever seems too much trouble'.

The children behave well around the school and in lessons, and their attitude to learning is positive. Pupils feel safe and they are safety conscious as they play together and move around the school. They have a good understanding of what it means to lead a healthy life and many take advantage of the healthy food on offer in the canteen or as snacks. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to contribute to the community through the school council and fund raising activities. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for life beyond school, but their weaker literacy and numeracy skills are limiting factors.

Although pupils are making satisfactory progress overall, the school recognises that greater consistency is needed in the quality of teaching to improve the impact and thereby raise standards further. Teachers manage their classrooms well and provide activities for the pupils that are fun and engaging. However, their plans do not always take sufficient account of the levels that individual pupils have previously reached in their learning. Therefore, some activities they provide lack challenge for the more able or are too difficult for some. The curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory with some recent improvements intended to integrate aspects of pupils' social development across all subjects. The school recognises that there are some areas of the curriculum, which need further development, particularly in providing opportunities to challenge the more able pupils.

The school works well with a wide range of partners in order to address the very different needs of many of the children. This has ensured that the school community is calm and supportive.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

From low starting points, children learn and develop well, particularly in their personal, social and emotional skills. They settle happily into the Reception classes and feel safe because the staff help them to feel unique and valued as individuals. Teaching is good. Kindly, caring adults create a loving ethos in which children's welfare is paramount and their well-being is nurtured sensitively. Activities are planned well, taken from the new EYFS curriculum, and these are based on regular checks of children's progress. They provide a good balance of teacher-directed and free-play opportunities so that children are encouraged to learn new skills, think for

themselves and discover new experiences. As a result, children make good progress and achieve well. They do not reach the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1 because many have limited basic skills in communication, language, literacy and numeracy. Nevertheless, they do well and take pride in their successes. Staff liaise well with parents and carers to ensure that they are kept informed of how well their children are doing.

The provision is led and managed well by two leaders who work together adeptly and are dedicated to the children's education. They have developed the provision effectively since the previous inspection by successfully focusing on increasing children's social skills right across the curriculum. The outdoor area is used well but is rightly highlighted as an area for further improvement so that children's physical development can benefit from more exciting play equipment.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress pupils make during Key Stage 1.
- Raise standards in mathematics across the school.
- Ensure teachers use information on pupils' prior attainment to plan meaningful activities in lessons that offer suitable challenge for all levels of ability.

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

Pupils enter the school with standards that are well below those expected for their age particularly in the development of their social skills. They make slower progress in the first two years of compulsory schooling than at other stages. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards have been exceptionally low. In 2007 results from teacher assessment indicated that standards in Key Stage 1 were inadequate. Decisive action by the school's leaders has resulted in clear but modest improvements in 2008. In the national tests in 2007 at the end of Year 6, standards were below average, but here too achievement improved in 2008, particularly in English. The school's own tracking data shows the pattern is continuing. Although variable across year groups, the progress they make is satisfactory in Key Stage 2, so that by Year 6, standards are now broadly average. This indicates satisfactory achievement over all. Progress in mathematics across the school is slower than in reading and writing. Standards are improving because of thorough tracking of individual progress that leads to well targeted support for those falling behind.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Overall, pupils' personal development is helping to improve their academic progress. They have positive attitudes to learning and are motivated to do well. Their behaviour is consistently good whether in lessons or around the school, because they understand why this is necessary within a well functioning community that respects and values the rights and needs of others. Pupils enjoy all aspects of school life, and are quick to identify what their favourite lessons are. Attendance rates are satisfactory and improving. Pupils develop good personal skills that enable them to make effective contributions to both the school and wider community. Many pupils

see being a member of the school council as an honour. They take their responsibilities very seriously and can be justifiably proud of what they have achieved for the school. An example of this is the way the council instigated the playground buddy system. They decided the attributes required, devised questions for interview and conducted the selection process. Overall pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They develop a strong understanding of different cultures both within the school and across the global community. The weekly reflection time makes a positive impact on their spiritual and moral development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There is a significant core of good teaching, sometimes with outstanding features, but this is offset by too many lessons, including a small number of inadequate lessons, which do not enable pupils, especially the more able, to make the progress they should. Pupils genuinely value the hard work teachers do for them. In the better lessons, teachers use accurate assessments of what pupils already know and can do, as the basis for planning what they need to do next. Learning is challenging, invariably involving pupils in meaningful activities at a lively pace. 'I learn most when I am doing things', was the conclusion of one pupil. In the less effective lessons, assessment to inform planning is not sharp enough, focusing on the work pupils have covered rather than what they have learned. Pupils spend too much time passively listening to teachers, and are not actively involved in their learning. Teachers' marking is usually limited to brief words of encouragement, and rarely as to how they can improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum has been extensively revised over the last year. It now emphasises the importance of core skills. There are greater links between subjects and opportunities for developing pupils' social skills, while maintaining the commitment to teaching literacy and numeracy as separate strands in the timetable. Underachievement in mathematics is being tackled partly through the introduction of weekly calculation lessons for all classes. The full effectiveness of these innovations is too early to assess, although there are some signs of improved pupil progress especially in English.

The various pupil groups requiring extra help are well served by the curriculum and the support they receive. There is a satisfactory programme of extra-curricular clubs and activities, but these are only modestly attended. The provision of visits, residential trips, guest speakers, and involvement with the local community, all contribute well to the enrichment of the curriculum, and to pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are cared for and supported well and the school rigorously follows all the legal requirements for ensuring their safety and well-being. Robust arrangements for child protection and safeguarding pupils are all in place. First aid procedures and arrangements for monitoring attendance and any bullying or racial incidents are thorough. All staff are trained to know how to keep the pupils safe, and their knowledge is regularly updated to ensure they remain vigilant. Academic guidance is satisfactory. A formal system for tracking pupils' progress has been

developed over the last year from which data is analysed and used to identify any underachievement. This has enabled teachers to target support more accurately to meet individual needs, although it is too soon to see the full impact of this work. An area for development is in the feedback that pupils receive on their progress, which tends to focus on how well they have done and not how to improve. Those needing extra help receive satisfactory support from teaching assistants.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has made some significant changes to the management structure of the school, which have successfully united leaders at all levels in a clear vision and a strong determination to raise standards. Processes are in place to enable middle leaders to gather evidence of progress in their areas of responsibility, which then feeds into whole school development planning. This has enabled the senior leadership team to have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are starting to set targets that are more challenging. These are based on the data the school now gathers on what pupils have achieved. The new systems are starting to allow good practice to be shared, but there is still considerable variation between the progress made by pupils in different year groups. Governors increasingly take opportunities to gather first hand evidence of the work of the school and are now better placed to challenge and support. The impact of these changes is most evident in the Foundation Stage, which was judged to be inadequate at the last inspection and is now good. Although there has been insufficient time for these improvements to have a sustained impact on achievement and standards across year groups, the school has rightly judged its capacity to improve to be good.

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	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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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?	3

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	2
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?	3
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**

18 September 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Eyrescroft Primary School, Peterborough PE3 8EZ

Thank you for your very warm welcome when we visited recently. We really enjoyed meeting you all and finding out about your school.

We think that your school is satisfactory. You told us how much you appreciate the way in which all the adults work very hard to make your learning enjoyable. You have some good ideas about how to keep healthy and safe. Your teachers help you to behave really well and you are good at helping each other. You are right to be proud of your school council and see it as a real honour to be lucky enough to serve on it. You impressed us with the way you behave and we are happy that more of you are coming to school every day.

It was good to see that you are working hard and are making satisfactory progress in your lessons. The extra effort the school has made to help you improve your reading and writing is certainly helping you to do better in these subjects.

We have asked the school to improve in the following ways.

- We want you all to improve your mathematics and we want those of you in Years 1 and 2 to be helped to make faster progress in all your subjects.
- We think you will make more progress all round if your teachers check carefully what you know and then give you work that is just right for each of you.

Thank you for a very special two days. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Elaine Taylor

Her Majesty's Inspector