

# Ely St John's Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110773
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	337567
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Glynn Storer

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	412
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Owen Rose
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sarah Hogben
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	St John's Road Ely Cambridgeshire
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Inspectors spent about a third of their time looking at learning. They visited a total of 16 lessons and saw the work of all 14 of the school's regular teachers. Inspectors held meetings with pupils, governors and staff. They looked at policies, planning, safeguarding documentation and the school's data on pupils' performance. They also took account of the views of 64 parents and carers who returned questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- standards by the end of Key Stage 2, with particular a focus on standards in writing
- pupils' progress in both key stages, with particular emphasis on the progress of girls and that of average and higher attaining pupils
- the impact of improvements in provision and in leadership and management on pupils' learning and achievement
- the quality of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

This large primary school serves a socially diverse community close to the centre of Ely. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and of the very small percentage of minority ethnic heritage, a few are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with statement of need, is about average for a school of this size.

The school has gained the following national awards: Health Promoting Schools, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investors in People, the British Council International School Award and the Becta ICT Excellence Award.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

Ely St John's Community Primary is a good school. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those who face particular difficulties, are making good progress in their academic and personal development. They learn effectively because the school's determined efforts to improve provision and the quality of leadership and management are now 'paying off' and having a positive impact on pupils' progress and achievement. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start, although limited facilities mean that they are not able to reinforce learning sufficiently through activities undertaken out of doors. Pupils in Year 2 have already reached the standard expected by the end of Key Stage 1. The upward trend in standards established in 2008/9 is set to continue. As in 2009, standards in Year 6 are average overall. However, standards in English have risen considerably. In relation to pupils' attainment at the beginning of Year 3, current standards represent good progress.

Teachers throughout the school promote a positive climate for learning. Relationships at all levels are strong and so pupils are secure and happy to be in school. Almost all pupils behave well and respond positively to the opportunities that the school provides. They are willing participants, and this adds to the good quality of their learning. The school's leaders have been effective in building quality in the classroom. For example, a key factor in raising standards and improving pupils' progress in writing has been the strengthening of assessment procedures and the use of assessment to support learning. Teachers' marking of pupils' writing and their advice on how pupils can improve their work are good throughout the school, although this consistency does not yet extend to other subjects. Similarly, inconsistencies in pace and challenge and in the effectiveness of planning for pupils with different abilities reduce the impact of teaching in a small minority of lessons.

Pupils have an exceptionally strong understanding of issues that affect their personal safety and the safety of others. Pupils feel safe and well cared for because safeguarding procedures are thorough and the care that the school provides to all pupils is based on effective partnerships with parents, other schools and support agencies. This is especially the case for those pupils whose circumstances make them most vulnerable. Good partnerships underpin the school's successful drive to promote equality and to eliminate discrimination. The current curriculum is a good vehicle for both academic and personal development because it promotes positive attitudes and enjoyment of learning. Pupils make a particularly good contribution to the school as a community and their involvement in the community beyond the gates is developing well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school is beginning to broaden pupils' horizons but, as yet, does too little to prepare them for life in a culturally and ethnically

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diverse society.

Effective leadership, management and governance ensure that staff morale remains high and that there is a shared ambition to improve the school. Rigorous systems for checking on standards and quality and a developing culture of accountability at all levels ensure that school self-evaluation is accurate and give the school a good capacity for sustained improvement in the future.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide children in Reception with more opportunities for outdoor learning that links closely with all that they do indoors.
- Raise the quality of all teaching to that of the best by securing greater consistency in:
  - teachers' use of assessment information in setting targets and guiding pupils on how to improve their work in subjects other than writing
  - the pace and challenge in lessons
  - the quality of lesson planning for pupils with differing abilities.
- Prepare pupils more effectively for life in a multicultural and ethnically diverse society by teaching them more about the richness and diversity of the United Kingdom.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Overall standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. This represents a continuation of the trend that has seen standards rise from below average in 2007 to above average in the current Year 2. Standards in writing are average but have also improved considerably year on year. Pupils' progress is good: many pupils in Year 2 have already reached the standard expected at the end of the key stage and continue to forge ahead.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are average. Standards in English, and especially in writing, have improved substantially even though these pupils had significantly lower starting points in Year 3 than those who took the 2009 tests. Current levels of performance represent good progress across the key stage. The apparent dip in girls' performance in 2009 appears to have been an anomaly. At Key Stages 1 and 2, boys and girls are currently doing equally well, as are pupils across the ability range, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Most pupils behave well and show enjoyment in their work. Staff work hard to perpetuate the 'EJ way'. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them and respond consistently well in lessons. Pupils' enthusiasm, their determination to meet challenging targets and their ability to work both independently and collaboratively contribute to improvements in standards and achievement. Pupils who face difficulties with their learning and those new to the English language form constructive relationships with support staff, learn confidently and make good gains. Pupils say that they feel well cared

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for in school. They have an excellent understanding of aspects of personal safety, such as cyber bullying. Their play also reflects a keen awareness of the need for personal safety and consideration for the safety of others. They know how to keep themselves healthy. Pupils make a good contribution to a strong sense of community in school, for example by serving as 'privilege club' leaders. The school and its pupils are well integrated into the local community. Pupils have a good understanding of the needs and interests of the local community and of issues that affect the wider world. Spiritual, moral and social development is good but cultural development is weaker because pupils do not learn enough about the richness and diversity of modern society. Above average rates of attendance, improving basic skills and positive attitudes to learning provide a good preparation for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Effective teaching results in good learning and personal development for most pupils. The atmosphere in all classrooms is welcoming and supportive. As a result, pupils are happy in school and participate willingly in learning activities. Secure subject knowledge

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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and the effective use of aids, such as the interactive whiteboard, makes teaching clear, authoritative and engaging. Teachers make consistently good use of on-going assessment to raise standards in writing. Their marking and evaluation of pupils' work embodies an effective balance between encouragement and clear 'next steps' pointers on how to improve. This practice is also developing in mathematics but is not yet in use in other subjects. Many of the better lessons move along at a brisk pace, levels of challenge remain high and tasks are closely matched to pupils' varying abilities. In these lessons, pupils rise to the challenge and learning is effective. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers' expectations and planning are inconsistent and, at times do not bring the best out in the pupils.

Well-established planning cycles ensure that the curriculum meets statutory requirements and is 'fine-tuned' year on year. Arrangements to teach a modern foreign language are in place and working well. Year group planning ensures a good degree of consistency in pupils' experience and enables staff to use assessment data effectively to modify the curriculum and to better meet the needs of pupils. A wide range of enrichment activities, including educational visits, visitors, special events and lunchtime and after-school clubs extend the curriculum and add to pupils' enjoyment. The school is currently reviewing its curriculum with a view to linking subjects creatively so as to further strengthen basic skills. The only important weakness in current arrangements is a lack of content to inform pupils about cultural and ethnic diversity in modern society. The care which the school provides to all pupils is good and is a strength of current arrangements. It has been an important driver towards positive attitudes, behaviour, achievement and relationships in recent years. All who know the school value highly the 'EJ way,' which is not only about how pupils should behave, but embodies everything that the school holds dear about how everyone should care for one another. One parent put it like this: '(My children) have always felt included, safe and part of a very happy school.'

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The school is stronger now than it was at the time of the previous inspection and continues to provide good value for money. This is reflected clearly in current trends in standards and progress. Under the committed leadership of the headteacher and senior staff, the school has been successful in improving systems for tracking pupils' progress,

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strengthening subject leadership and improving feedback to pupils on their targets and how to improve their work. In addition, monitoring by senior staff and governors is more systematic and thorough than it was. This results in accurate self-evaluation that informs strategic decision making on priority areas for improvement, the setting of whole-school targets and the composition of teaching teams. Staff at all levels share the headteacher's ambitions for the school. Effective management of teaching and learning means that they all know those areas for which they are both responsible and accountable. The track record of improvement since the last inspection, along with strengthened management systems, gives the school a good capacity for sustained improvement in the future. The quality of provision and current outcomes for pupils indicate that the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination effectively. The school's positive engagement with parents and its constructive partnerships both within and beyond the world of education permeate the school's work and are particularly influential in underpinning arrangements for care, guidance and support. The school pays good attention to safeguarding. The school's promotion of community cohesion is underpinned effectively by an in-depth enquiry into the nature of the immediate and wider communities. This has given the school a good platform from which to launch community-based initiatives and to reach out to groups who could benefit from the school's support.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children get off to a good start in Reception, because the manager has a good



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understanding of how to meet the needs of young children and leads and manages the provision effectively. There is a real sense of teamwork in the setting that fully includes parents and carers and enables experienced staff to provide valuable support to children and their families. Children are warmly welcomed into a safe and secure environment, where they settle happily. Their starting points are often lower than those normally found, especially in their communication skills. However, staff are skilled in assessing children's level of need. They interact sensitively with them, providing them with good role models. Expectations are high so that children quickly adopt well-established routines and become active, enthusiastic learners. They thrive on praise and encouragement and make good progress. Consequently, many children leave the Reception class at levels that are close to those typically expected for their age. Children learn well because activities are thoughtfully planned and there are frequent tasks where children make choices. That said, the work set is sometimes too teacher-directed and planning does not always allow children to learn through pursuing their own interests and ideas. Indoor resources are readily available and children are encouraged to learn independently but the current lack of facilities means that, in both of the classes, there is too little emphasis on purposeful play and exploration which flow naturally into the outdoors.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive in their views about the school. Individual parents raise the occasional concern but these do not constitute a significant body of dissatisfaction with any specific area of the school's work. Many parents added positive comments. These tended to focus on how happy their children are at school, the school's caring and supportive ethos, the approachability of staff, including the headteacher, and the quality of leadership. Inspection evidence largely supports the views of these parents.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ely St John's Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 412 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	48	75	15	23	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	70	18	28	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	42	36	56	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	50	28	44	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	59	25	39	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	53	26	41	2	3	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	42	36	56	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	34	45	20	31	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	44	31	48	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	47	30	47	3	5	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	39	35	55	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	37	58	25	39	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	59	23	36	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



10 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ely St John's Community Primary School, Ely, CB6 3BW

Thank you for making my colleagues and I so welcome and for taking time to talk to us and to answer our questions when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you. The things that you told us showed us that you think that you go to a good school - and we agree. I particularly enjoyed seeing how well you play together at lunchtime and visiting the privilege club. My colleagues were impressed by the answers that the lunchtime discussion group gave, so well done. I thought that you would like to hear more about what we found out.

Children in the Reception class get a good start to their time in school.

Most of you are making good progress in English, mathematics and science; standards are broadly average and rising.

You have an excellent understanding of how to keep yourselves and others safe.

Those who find learning difficult progress as well as everyone else.

Your behaviour and the way that you respond in lessons are good. Almost all of you follow the 'EJ way' and that makes your school a very pleasant place.

Staff help you if you have problems and take particularly good care of anybody who is having a hard time.

The headteacher, staff and governors are successfully improving the school.

Because everybody wants Ely St John's Primary to be as good as it can possibly be, we have made a few suggestions that should help it to improve further. This is what we would like the school to do:

- make sure that children in Reception have more opportunities to work and play out of doors
- make all lessons as good as the best, so that you make even better progress -
- teach you more about different cultures and traditions and about the wider world, so that you grow up to be good citizens.

You can all help by following the EJ way in every single lesson

Yours sincerely

Glynn Storer

Lead inspector

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