

# Elworth Hall Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111163
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire East
<b>Inspection number</b>	337631
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Shirley Herring

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>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	158
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr I Kay
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Margaret Blease-Bourne
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Lawton Way Elworth Sandbach CW11 1TE
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed seven teachers in 13 lessons. They held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, school policies, reports from the School Improvement Partner, teachers' plans, samples of pupils' work and the records of their progress. They scrutinised 36 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

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

- the progress of pupils in Key Stage 1
- the achievement of boys in Key Stage 2
- the quality of learning for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the effectiveness of management actions in bringing about improvements.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The number on role has fallen over the past few years, with comparatively small numbers currently in some classes. However, numbers are now rising again. Most pupils are taught in classes of just one age-group, with the exception of Years 4 and 5 who are in the same class.

The school was designated as a Resourced Provision for pupils with Complex Needs and Moderate Learning Difficulties in 2007. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average but the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to a free school meal rose from 5% in 2008 to 11% in 2009, though this is still below the national average. There has been a significant increase in the past three years in the number of pupils who start and leave other than at the usual time. There have been several changes in staffing and in the organisation of the senior leadership team since the last inspection.

**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?**

**3**

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

**3**

### Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. Among its strengths is the good level of care, guidance and support it provides for pupils, particularly the pupils whose circumstances mean they need additional help. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is high.

Pupils enter school with a range of skills that overall are above what is typical for their age. After several years where attainment was significantly above average at the end of Year 2, results were below average in 2009. The books of pupils currently in Year 2 indicate that their work is again above what could be expected for their age.

Attainment has been broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2 for the past three years. During this period there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils who start and leave other than at the usual time. The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress show that most pupils made at least satisfactory progress from when they joined the school. The school's records show an improvement in the standard of work of those pupils' currently in Year 6, with no difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with complex needs or moderate learning difficulties achieve well as do other pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, because of the good level of support they receive.

While the school's self-evaluation shows an improving trend in many aspects of the school's work, improvement has been slower than was hoped because of inconsistencies in teaching, particularly in the pace of lessons and the application of the clear policies for behaviour, presentation and marking. Inspectors agree with the school that there is a need to monitor teaching and learning more closely to reduce the inconsistencies and provide training and support where needed.

The overall effectiveness of provision for children in the Early Years' Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Learning is most effective in focused activities led by an adult, particularly in developing reading, writing and calculation skills. Learning is less effective in activities that children choose for themselves. This is because some activities, especially outside, lack a clear focus on what children need to learn.

There have been satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. Assessments of the progress of pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 indicate that improvements in assessment and in tracking pupils' progress are slowly impacting on standards. This indicates the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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

- Improve learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage by developing the use of the

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outdoor area to give children more opportunities to practise and consolidate their skills in all areas of learning.

- Raise standards of attainment by:
  - ensuring all teaching is at least good and increasing the pace of learning in lessons
  - ensuring all staff apply the marking, presentation and behaviour policies consistently.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### ■ **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

3

When lessons are interesting and move at a good pace, pupils are fully engaged and enjoy their learning. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 learned a lot about angles as they developed more complex shapes using equilateral triangles. When teachers' explanations are too long, some pupils become distracted and this disrupts their own and other's learning. Pupils respond well when teachers have high expectations for them to present their work neatly, helping them to develop a pride in what they do.

Over the recent past, there has been an increase in the number of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the usual time, for example, of the 26 pupils who completed the statutory tests in 2009 in Year 6, 12 pupils did not join in Reception class. The school's good records show that pupils make satisfactory progress overall during their time in school and attain standards that are broadly average by the time they leave. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils with complex needs or moderate learning difficulties and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support and achieve well.

Pupils say they feel safe. They are secure in the knowledge that the rare instances of bullying are dealt with promptly and effectively. They could recall no instances of any racist remarks. They have a good understanding of the value of a balanced diet and regular exercise and enjoy the many sporting activities on offer. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community, for example, Year 5 pupils conducted a survey of pupils' views and presented their findings to the headteacher. Attendance is high and, with their sound basic skills, this is a good preparation for pupils' future well-being.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies provide a calm, spiritual atmosphere for pupils to reflect and gain a good understanding of their own feelings and their responsibility to others.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<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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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</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>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall but varies between classes. Teachers give clear explanations so that pupils know what is expected. Teachers make good use of questions to encourage pupils to think and to keep them involved. In lessons where introductions to the whole class are too long, pupils become restless and this can disrupt learning. Marking is sometimes of high quality, particularly in English, and some teachers give clear guidance to help pupils to improve. However, practice is inconsistent between classes. Accomplished classroom assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and so these pupils make good progress in lessons. Assessments are generally used well to plan work for different groups, though the school is aware of the need to take more account of those pupils they have identified as gifted and talented.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets all requirements. There is a suitable emphasis on developing the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and the school is devising more creative ways to develop these skills in different subjects. For example, pupils say how much they enjoyed the 'Science Theme Day'. However, it is too soon for the more creative approaches to have had a measurable impact on attainment. There are good strategies to meet the needs of those pupils who need a boost to reach the expected level for their age. Information and communication technology skills are developed systematically, though there is scope to apply these skills more frequently in different subjects. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of additional creative and sporting activities, including three residential trips, to promote personal development and enjoyment.

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There is a strong culture of listening to pupils and addressing their concerns. For example, the school incorporated the school council's suggestions for sanctions and rewards into its behaviour policy, though the sanctions and rewards are not uniformly applied across the school. Support for pupils most in need of additional help is well organised and there are detailed plans in place to guide their learning and behaviour. Staff, including support staff, are well trained, enabling them to provide good support for individuals and groups of pupils. The school has good links with other professionals, such as the speech and language therapist, to provide specialist help, where needed. Regular attendance is encouraged well through an established system of rewards. The home–school books are very useful in highlighting potential problems, which are dealt with promptly.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Following a period of change, the senior leadership team is now focused clearly on improving standards of attainment. There are good systems in place for tracking pupils' progress and identifying and addressing potential underachievement and assessments for pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 suggest that this is beginning to have an impact on attainment. The school has clear policies on marking, setting targets for pupils and managing behaviour but these are not uniformly applied across the school. There is a strong ethos of caring for the individual and supporting pupils most in need of help and the resourced provision for pupils with complex needs and moderate learning difficulties is managed well. There are good links with parents and carers to support pupils' learning, for example, there are regular sessions at the start of some days for parents and carers to hear children read. Parents' and carers' contributions to pupils' individual educational and behaviour plans help them to support their children's learning.

Members of the governing body are a regular presence in school. Several new governors have been appointed and they are receiving appropriate training for their roles. Equal opportunities are promoted satisfactorily and the school has precise information about the performance of different groups. It provides good support for pupils most in need of help and is now developing ways in which it can similarly support and challenge those identified as gifted and talented. Systems for safeguarding pupils are in place and the school's work with a variety of different agencies is effective. Though all policies are in place and being implemented, a small number are still to be submitted to the governing

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body for final approval.

Community cohesion is good. The school has good links with local community groups, such as Cheshire Gardens and the Sandbach Clean Team. It works well with other schools to promote pupils' understanding of diverse cultures and faiths. An Artist in Residence has helped pupils to become familiar with art across the world.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</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>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception class with a range of skills levels that overall are above what is typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress and attain standards that are generally above average when they enter Year 1. Letter sounds, writing and calculation skills are taught systematically in class sessions and small focus groups and children make good progress in these sessions. However, activities that children choose for themselves do not always have a clear purpose and so learning is less effective. The school recognises the need to develop the outdoor area to provide more stimulating activities that help children to practise and consolidate their learning in all areas and inspectors agree with this view. Suitable emphasis is placed on developing personal, social and emotional skills, though some children need more opportunities to develop independence.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. There are good procedures for introducing children to school and these help them to settle quickly. The process also establishes good links with parents and carers who then support children's learning through hearing them read and contributing to children's



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Learning Journeys. There are satisfactory systems for safeguarding children, reflecting the provision in the rest of the school. The breakfast club provides a suitable start to the day for those attending. The satisfactory systems for assessing children's learning are being reviewed and developed.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

### **Views of parents and carers**

A minority of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires. Of these, the vast majority say that their children enjoy school and inspectors endorse their views. While most parents and carers think that teaching is good, inspectors found that this varied between classes.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Elworth Hall 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 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 158 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	67	11	31	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	67	10	28	1	3	1	3
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	39	18	50	4	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	39	17	47	5	14	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	47	17	47	2	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	42	17	47	3	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	44	19	53	1	3	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)	15	42	18	50	1	3	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	42	16	44	5	14	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	33	19	53	3	8	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	42	14	39	5	14	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	18	50	12	33	4	11	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	61	11	31	3	8	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupil's 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.**



20 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Elworth Hall Primary School, Sandbach, CW11 1TE

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. Yours is a satisfactory school which means there are many good things about it and also some things which could be even better.

We could see how much you enjoy school and we were impressed with your excellent attendance. We agree with you and your parents and carers that the school takes good care of you all. There is always an adult available to give you extra help when you need it. Teachers make some lessons really interesting to help you to learn. I really enjoyed finding out about the different shapes you could make in Year 4/5. Most of you behave well but occasionally some find it difficult to concentrate in lessons, particularly when you have had to spend a long time listening. You make satisfactory progress during your time in school and most of you reach the level expected for your age in literacy and numeracy by the time you leave Year 6.

To make your school even better the adults are going to:

- improve learning in the Foundation Class by developing the outdoor area to give children more opportunities to practise what they have been taught
- improve your results by removing the differences in teaching, particularly in the pace of lessons and the way in which teachers mark your work, encourage you to work neatly and remind you about the behaviour policy.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Shirley Herring

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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