

Eldon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119229
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339383
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Adrian Francis

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 of pupils on the school roll	132
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss J Williams
Headteacher	Mrs K Brown
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited six lessons, observed five teachers and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including planning, tracking data, the school improvement plan, policies and procedures, and analysis of pupils' work. The inspectors scrutinised questionnaires completed by pupils in Years 3 to 6 and those from 51 parents and carers.

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

- the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in English, mathematics and science
- how effective the school is in using assessment information and teachers' marking to meet the needs of all pupils and to help them improve their learning
- whether the school's leadership and management are making sufficient impact on its improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school with a falling roll. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is also higher than average. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is in a class where pupils are taught alongside pupils in Year 1 and all pupils are taught in mixed-age classes other than the current Year 6. There are breakfast and after-school clubs but these provisions were not part of this inspection. At the time of the inspection, the deputy headteacher had been in post for almost two terms and is now the acting headteacher. There has been considerable instability in staffing since the last inspection. The school has received the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

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

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Its strengths are in the extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles, in the effectiveness of partnerships in promoting pupils' learning and in its safeguarding procedures. This welcoming and friendly school places great emphasis on developing pupils' self-esteem and all staff share this strong ethos. Behaviour is satisfactory and pupils are generally keen to learn and to do their best. They enjoy their time in school and their contribution to the school community is satisfactory. Attendance is low. The school's efforts to promote better attendance have begun to yield positive results, although a number of families have not been able to ensure that their children attend regularly.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. From well below average starting points pupils make broadly satisfactory progress and leave Year 6 with well below average attainment. Although progress is inconsistent across the school, pupils have generally made better progress over the past year and many are now closer to the national averages than at any point in the past three years. This is due to a determined effort by the school's leaders to tackle key areas requiring improvement. Effective strategies are beginning to strengthen the quality of teaching. There is greater focus on improving pupils' basic skills. However, opportunities are missed to promote these skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. Teaching is satisfactory overall and some is good, although not enough of the teaching sufficiently motivates pupils or moves them on rapidly in their learning. Where teaching is most effective, teachers have a good understanding of how well pupils have progressed and the marking of pupils' work clearly indicates what they need to do to improve their work further. However, this is not always the case and pupils are insufficiently encouraged to improve their work following teachers' marking.

Overall, the quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Leaders have focused upon improving provision in all parts of the school. Essential systems have been developed to improve teaching and learning, with the introduction of a more accurate system for tracking pupils' progress. The school, however, has faced a period of staffing turbulence with long absences and many changes of staff. With the effective support of the local authority, the senior leadership team is working more efficiently to provide the school with clear direction and to use improving self-evaluation processes. This is having a positive impact on the pace of improvement. Leaders' obvious ambition, combined with the commitment of the governors and staff, provides the school with satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise attainment and achievement by:
 - ensuring that teaching is of at least a consistently good enough quality to motivate pupils and improve their progress
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills in different subjects across the curriculum
 - ensuring that teachers consistently provide pupils with structured comments on how to improve their work and ensuring that pupils respond regularly to teachers' marking.
- Improve attendance, but especially that of persistent absentees, by using a wider range of strategies to persuade those pupils who do not attend school regularly enough, to do so.
- 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**

Pupils' enjoyment of school was evident in the lessons visited. They particularly appreciate and enjoy the sporting and extra-curricular provision and participate with enthusiasm. Their progress and achievement in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make satisfactory progress. Pupils' progress is no better than satisfactory because activities do not always build upon previous learning and pupils do not always know what they need to do to improve their work. Inspectors looked closely at the progress of particular groups and found that pupils make inconsistent progress. More able pupils generally make the best progress.

Pupils get along well with each other and the vast majority behave satisfactorily in lessons and around the school. They know why good behaviour is important. For the few pupils who find it more difficult to behave sensibly, effective systems are in place to improve their conduct. Pupils satisfactorily develop their spiritual and cultural awareness, allowing them to reflect on their feelings and those of others. Pupils have an understanding of right and wrong, are generally confident and feel valued by the school. Pupils feel safe. They have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy, supported through the broad range of physical activities on offer. Pupils discuss with staff their future options and reflect on ways in which they may need to change their lives in order to fulfil their aspirations. Together with their ability to cooperate, work well in teams and to make decisions based on balanced argument, overall, pupils develop satisfactory skills that adequately prepare them for their future education and life. They are involved in the wider community through sports partnerships and other local links.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the best lessons teachers' subject knowledge is good, they are able to pinpoint and address pupils' learning needs more effectively than in other classes, the pace of learning is quicker and expectations of pupils are higher. In these lessons, pupils are more motivated in their learning and their progress is quicker. However, these aspects are not sufficiently evident in all classes. There are also inconsistencies in the effectiveness of the use of assessment to support learning and in teachers' marking. As a result of whole-school systems, teachers are becoming more aware of the progress that pupils are making, including those who need extra support to make up for lost ground in earlier years. However, these procedures are not yet fully embedded across the school and teachers do not consistently match tasks and activities well enough to pupils' learning needs.

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. For example, information and communication technology (ICT) lessons help pupils to develop an understanding of how to stay safe on the internet. Pupils' interests and enthusiasm are beginning to be promoted through better links between subjects in order to make learning more meaningful for pupils. Some good examples include a theme focused on the World Cup, through which views and emotions related to racism are explored. However, pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to practise their basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which

¹ 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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offer opportunities to extend pupils' involvement and learning.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Support from staff for individual pupils who have specific needs is good. The school's support for the social and emotional development of a number of pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable than others enables these pupils to build their self-esteem and this is recognised by them. One pupil summed this up: 'It's a good school. They really look after us.' A range of activities, particularly the many sporting opportunities offered as part of the extended provision, offer good guidance to pupils on how to make healthy lifestyle choices.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is supported well in implementing this by other senior staff and an ambitious governing body. Improvement is accelerating as a result and, because staffing is becoming more stable, all members of staff are focused on the key priorities. Leaders have an increasingly accurate view of the school's strengths and what needs to be done to improve further. Combined with effective support from the local authority, this vision and drive for improvement is a key factor in the school's satisfactory ability to move forward and improve outcomes for pupils. The governing body is developing a much better understanding of the school, but acknowledges that it needs to extend its role as a critical friend in tackling weaknesses and supporting the school to continue to improve. There is a clear commitment across the school to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. Nevertheless, discrepancies in the quality of provision in different parts of the school and for different groups of pupils mean that the school's promotion of equality is no better than satisfactory overall.

The school's engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory. There are some opportunities for them to share in their children's learning, although these are currently too limited. The school is inclusive and makes new pupils feel welcome quickly. Effective partnerships with other schools and external agencies promote both the learning and well-being of pupils. For example, close links with a local garden centre have enabled pupils to appreciate the benefits of healthy eating as they have grown and eaten their own strawberries. Safeguarding procedures are good. The school has effective links with different groups locally and a good understanding of its immediate community. The promotion of community cohesion at a national and global level is planned and is

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developing, but currently is at a very early stage.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are, overall, well below the levels typically expected for their age. Children make satisfactory progress as a result of sound provision, but by the time they enter Year 1 very few have the knowledge and skills expected for their age. The school works hard to build links with parents and carers, and children receive the individual attention they need from the start. Any additional needs are identified and the necessary specialist help is provided. All children access a wide range of experiences that develop their skills and abilities satisfactorily. They quickly become secure and happy and their confidence, motivation and skills all develop soundly. Children's abilities to work both in groups and independently generally develop satisfactorily, and by the end of Reception many have gained improved concentration and perseverance. This was demonstrated by a group of children engrossed in their work on using construction equipment to build a roadway. The curriculum satisfactorily meets children's needs. There is a good range of well-planned activities and an appropriate balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities. Children do not always receive enough direction in their learning, however, to ensure that they make good progress. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing social skills. Behaviour is good and children learn to share and take turns. Access to the outdoor area is difficult and provision in this area is limited in its effectiveness in developing children's skills across all areas of the curriculum. Welfare is given a high priority and staff ensure that children's physical, social and emotional needs are well

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met. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader works closely with the Reception class teacher to develop systems and the quality of provision. Children's progress is assessed thoroughly and recorded in detail, but the information is not always used effectively enough to plan activities that ensure children's good progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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

Parents and carers are very positive about the work of the school and the education it provides for their children. They appreciate the emphasis given to social and moral development and the strong caring ethos. They comment on how much their children enjoy school. A small minority expressed that they would like the school to keep them better informed about their children's progress and also that their children were not well prepared for the future. Inspectors found that these comments fairly reflected the current position. The school's leaders acknowledge these views and are developing systems to ensure that improvements are made. Some parents and carers expressed concern regarding the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the school's leadership. Inspectors agree that the turbulence in staffing has caused some disruptions to pupils' learning but are satisfied that the school is taking appropriate steps to ensure effective leadership and a more stable staffing profile.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Eldon 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 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 132 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	29	33	65	2	4	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	22	43	27	53	1	2	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	33	23	45	10	20	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	29	27	53	6	12	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	14	27	26	51	8	16	3	6
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	27	27	53	7	14	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	29	33	65	2	4	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)	14	27	20	39	11	22	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	27	31	61	4	8	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	29	28	55	5	10	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	24	32	63	7	14	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	11	22	27	53	13	25	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	27	28	55	7	14	2	4

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). 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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



17 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eldon Primary School, Preston, PR1 7YE

I am writing to thank you for being friendly and helpful when the inspectors visited your school. I would particularly like to thank those of you who spoke with inspectors and those who completed the questionnaire.

You go to a satisfactory school. We were really pleased with the lovely welcome that you gave us, the way you get on so well with each other and with adults and your enthusiasm for sports and for a healthy lifestyle. Many of you told us how much you enjoy school and the learning that takes place. You say you feel safe and this is because the school has good systems to ensure your safety. You work well together in teams.

So what does the school need to do to get better? I have asked your headteacher and teachers to:

- make sure that all teaching is as good as the best so you will make good progress and are keen to learn in all lessons
- make it really clear through the marking of your work how you can improve
- improve the attendance of those pupils who do not come to school often enough.

Some of you can do your part by coming to school much more often. Remember, every day counts and if you are not in school then the teachers cannot help you to learn.

Every good wish for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Adrian Francis

Lead inspector

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