

Eccleston Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119310
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339403
Inspection dates	23–24 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Graham Martin

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	138
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Whittaker
Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth Fletcher
Date of previous school inspection	9 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's policies for safeguarding pupils, records of pupils' assessments, marking in books and the school's self-evaluation. Inspectors also took account of the responses to questionnaires returned by 55 parents and carers.

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

- the provision for children's development and learning in the Reception class and the school's evaluation of it
- the achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 in writing and mathematics
- the adequacy of systems to check that all pupils are challenged to achieve as well as they should.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average school situated in a village with little social or economic disadvantage. Very few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds or speak English as an additional language. About 6% of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Fifteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is also below the national average. The school holds a Healthy Schools Award, the national Activemark award for promoting physical development and a Silver Eco School award for environmental awareness. It also holds a foundation level International School Award. A children's centre under construction is due to open on the school site in January 2010. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises one Reception class. Rooms on the school site are used for a pre-school group and an after-school club, both managed independently of the school. These settings were not subject to this 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. The school puts the interests of pupils at its heart. Since its last inspection the school has improved well under strengthened leadership and management. The impact of leadership is seen in good improvements to teaching, learning and achievement and particularly in the outstanding quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Standards are above average at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Senior leaders recognise the school's strengths and weaknesses well and take very effective action to make improvements, well supported by governors and colleagues. The policies and systems for checking and sustaining change for the better, alongside the impact of progress so far, show that the school has good capacity to continue to improve.

Although standards are above average and improving, boys' attainment in writing is lower than that of girls. Teaching is of good quality and enables pupils to enjoy learning. As a result, pupils work conscientiously and take pride in their work. Mostly, teachers' assessments are accurate and support learning well, particularly in English and science. The school has recognised some inconsistencies in the assessment of mathematics. This hinders the achievement of pupils who lack confidence in mathematics. Mathematical assessment is not sufficiently accurate to help set pupils achievable targets that will improve their progress.

Pupils work and play happily together. In lessons they concentrate very well and have a great desire to learn. They are proud of their school and the good contribution they make to its welcoming atmosphere. Pupils say that they feel safe and they have good personal awareness of the kinds of risks and hazards they need to be alert to. They contribute well to school life through their school council. Active links with the local community have been recognised by an award from a national company for the work pupils have done on promoting environmental responsibility.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing by:
 - ensuring that boys who underachieve in writing are provided with the resources, opportunities and support that entuses them to achieve at least well.
- Raise standards and improve achievement in mathematics by:
 - ensuring that assessments of mathematical learning are consistently accurate across the school

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- ensuring that accurate assessments of mathematical learning are used effectively to set achievable learning targets for pupils who lack confidence in number skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils make good progress in their learning. They achieve well and enjoy lessons. They listen and concentrate well, are diligent and take pride in their work. Pupils attain above average standards by the end of Key Stage 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress and achieve well. The great majority of pupils learn well but the school is aware that to become outstanding more needs to be done to accelerate the learning of some pupils for whom progress is slower. For example, the achievement of a minority of boys in writing is slowed by a lack of opportunities and resources to excite their interests and inspire their writing. Also, a minority of pupils who are unsure of their own skills in understanding and using number are not set learning targets that are achievable enough to boost their confidence and thereby raise standards even higher. However, overall, pupils' good progress in their literacy, mathematical and personal skills means they are well prepared for the next steps in their education.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school, not least because they are friendly, behave well together and know that bullying is forbidden and will be dealt with firmly. They enjoy sport and other activities that keep them fit and healthy. Visits to places of worship, links with children in other countries and opportunities for pupils to understand their self-worth promote good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. When asked about the healthy meals they enjoy at lunchtime, pupils explain what is nutritious and how different foods nourish their growth and development. In winning a national competition to plan environmental improvements to their school and village, pupils show enthusiasm for actively playing a part in their wider community and securing skills that contribute to their future economic well-being, such as teamwork and cooperation.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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

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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good and sometimes better, with some lessons having outstanding features. Teachers describe the work well and set clear expectations. They explain to pupils how they will know when objectives are achieved. Good use is made of discussions with learning partners. This provides opportunities for pupils to express their thinking and take account of the ideas of others. For example, in a writing lesson pupils discussed and shared good ideas about what words they would use to describe the spooky atmosphere of a scene they observed in a film clip. When resources such as the interactive whiteboards are used imaginatively the interest of boys is stimulated, enabling them to make better progress in writing. However, this is not always the case and in some writing lessons a small number of boys do not engage as well with writing as they do in lessons where they are enthused by the content and resources. Teachers are generally skilled at intervening where pupils need individual support and are quick to pick up on any misconceptions in their learning and to provide good guidance to the class to enable pupils to achieve well. In mathematics, assessments are not always used with sufficient accuracy to set learning targets for pupils who are unsure about number. Teaching assistants are well trained and confident in their skills; they provide good support for individuals and small groups.

The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to develop and use English and mathematics in other subjects and in a range of situations. French and Spanish are taught in Key Stage 2 and there are plentiful enrichment activities, including residential visits. The use of visiting male authors and poets to model writing is a good move towards promoting better attitudes to writing for boys. A recent emphasis on investigation in science has raised standards, as seen in recent test results, further evidence that school leaders correctly identify and target areas of weaker learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2

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The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have complementary skills and use these to good effective: they work well together as a team. They are committed to pupils attaining high standards and have successfully managed the improvements required by the last Ofsted inspection. Staff are enthused by how school leaders support the development of their teaching skills and the way this impacts very positively on pupils' learning. Governors are committed to the school and generous with their time. They know the school well and have a good spread of skills that are used to benefit the school. Every class has a 'class governor', each of whom reports back to the full governing body on the links with the teacher and pupils. This helps to keep governors up to date with classroom practice. Governors' records show that they hold the school to account for its work, that they support what the school is doing to improve but that they challenge school leaders to think strategically about changes. For example, when the headteacher proposed mixed-age classes so that the school kept within its budget governors requested a number of different options to consider.

School leaders take effective steps to ensure that, at all levels, equality is promoted and discrimination is tackled. The school has a very good relationship with the adjacent pre-school that smoothes transition for children into the Reception class. Transition arrangements to secondary schools, including partnership opportunities for gifted and talented pupils, are good. The provision of a breakfast and after-school club on site is appreciated by working parents and carers and enables all pupils to take a full part in all aspects of school life. The school works well with the local community. Through wider visits it gives pupils an understanding of our national heritage and through international links it promotes understanding of other cultures, thereby promoting good community cohesion. At the time of this inspection, policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils' health, safety and well-being meet current requirements. As a result, pupils understand well how to keep themselves safe.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2

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

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The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Reception class is a significant strength of the school as a result of considerable improvement since the last inspection. On entry, children's attainment is, overall, typical for their age. Children achieve very well so that by the end of the Reception Year their attainment exceeds the early learning goals set nationally for their age. Together the headteacher and lead Early Years Foundation Stage practitioner have driven improvements to ensure that Reception children have an exceedingly secure foundation for future learning. Consequently, provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is used to set a model of quality for the rest of the school. Children start school with great confidence following induction visits, including the opportunity for visits to their homes by the Reception class teacher. Activities for children are exceptionally well organised to ensure personal choice yet achieve a balance between adult-led and self-chosen tasks to address each area of learning equally. In whole-group sessions, children's understanding and knowledge of early number and letter sounds skills is very well developed. This is often through games which are great fun, such as when children count on to work out how many bricks in 'the magic box'. Assessments of children's learning are thorough and provide a wealth of information about their progress and what they need to do to learn new skills. Opportunities to develop wider skills are very well planned, such as creating a garden centre outside following a visit to a similar centre. Teaching in the Reception class is exceptionally knowledgeable and effective; parents and carers speak highly of the partnership they have with staff and the care provided. Parents and carers are particularly pleased with the way in which their children settle into school and how quickly they achieve as a result of the high-quality guidance and support provided.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

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Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers have overwhelmingly positive views of the school, remarking in particular how well their children settle into the 'excellent' Reception class. Parents and carers are happy that their children are safe and well cared for throughout the school. Their comments that their children enjoy school, are well motivated and that the staff work hard to help all children to achieve as well as they should are echoed by inspectors' observations. Although a few parents and carers have concerns about the impact of mixed-age group classes in Key Stages 1 and 2, they also comment that the school has kept them well informed about how it is managing falling numbers of pupils and has reassured them that their children will continue to achieve well. Inspectors agree that the school keeps parents and carers well informed about necessary changes and inspection findings confirm that pupils achieve at least well in all classes.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ecclestone 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 138 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	67	65	35	34	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	78	72	30	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	50	48	52	50	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	56	42	40	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	67	64	35	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	72	71	28	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	71	69	30	29	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)	55	53	38	37	5	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	54	53	45	44	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	52	51	46	45	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	50	49	47	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	63	59	40	38	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	73	72	24	24	2	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">■ 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.



Inspection of Eccleston Primary School, Chorley, PR7 5RA

You may recall that I visited Eccleston Primary School recently, along with another inspector, to carry out an inspection. It was a credit to you that you did not confuse us even though we shared the same name! Thank you for telling us your views about your school and for completing the questionnaire.

Your school provides you with a good quality of education. The adults in the school have high expectations and you are taught well. You attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science and are able to express your views and opinions effectively and politely. Your behaviour is good. You are friendly and welcoming to visitors and in lessons you focus well on your work. When you work together as 'learning partners' you listen carefully to each other. You told me that you enjoy your lessons. You appreciate the wider opportunities your school provides, including the residential visit. Those of you who returned from this visit during the inspection reported that it was a very good trip, saying that you worked well in teams and helped each other to keep safe in challenging situations. You know how to keep fit and healthy and you have a good understanding of helping others, both in your local community and through fundraising for international projects. You are rightly proud of the work achieved by the school council and the eco team.

We have asked the headteacher and governors to make some improvements to raise standards in writing and mathematics and the following ideas should help:

- to provide boys with more support to be enthusiastic about writing so that they can achieve better
 - to link more closely the targets for mathematics to the assessments of your work.
- You can help by trying to produce your best writing all the time and by making a good effort to attain the targets set for you in mathematics.

I enjoyed my visit to your school and wish you all the best for the future.

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