

Epworth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117917
Local Authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	343092
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	John Young HMI

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	259
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Samantha Croxall
Headteacher	Mr John Hodgkins
Date of previous school inspection	16 March 2006
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Introduction

The inspection of Epworth Primary School in June 2009 resulted in the school receiving a notice to improve. An interim monitoring visit by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors in March 2010 judged that the school was making good progress in addressing the areas for improvement previously highlighted.

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching in every class in the school. This included joint observations with the headteacher. They held meetings with the school's staff, a representative from the local authority, a governor and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of other evidence including action plans, case studies and self-evaluation documents. Inspectors also analysed the 64 responses to questionnaires returned from parents and carers, 13 from staff and 99 from pupils.

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

- the extent to which safeguarding and care, guidance and support issues highlighted at the previous inspection have been effectively addressed
- the attainment and achievement of different groups of pupils in the school with a particular focus on more-able pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and Key Stage 1 pupils
- the effectiveness with which leaders and managers have eradicated inadequate aspects of provision and outcomes and tackled other shortcomings highlighted by the previous inspection.

Information about the school

At this larger-than-average primary school almost all pupils are White British and live locally. The remaining tiny number of pupils originate from a range of minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.

The school holds the Bronze Activemark and provides extended services such as a weekly parent and toddler group and other family learning opportunities. Over the past 15 months there has been a significant turnover of staff at all levels of the school. These changes include a new headteacher and deputy headteacher and a new special educational needs coordinator. There have also been a number of changes to class leaders and some restructuring of staff's responsibilities.

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

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Epworth Primary School is now a satisfactory and improving school.

The past 15 months has been a testing time for the school as it has had to contend not only with tackling its shortcomings but also significant changes to staffing and to the school's leadership and organisation. During this challenging period the school has benefited from intensive support from the local authority. To the school's credit, staff have knuckled down and successfully improved provision and outcomes for pupils. The vision of the new leaders and their reform of staff's responsibilities have added clarity of purpose and strategic direction to the school. Leaders have introduced key changes to teaching and learning, the curriculum, assessment, and monitoring and evaluation procedures to boost pupils' enjoyment, learning and progress. Early indications are promising. However, some of these strategies are in their infancy and therefore not fully embedded. This is contributing to the inconsistency observed in aspects such as curriculum delivery, teaching quality, the effectiveness of planning and the discrepancies apparent between stated policy and what happens in practice.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory in terms of their attendance, behaviour and adoption of healthy lifestyles. The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the work and social skills they are developing are also satisfactory. A good aspect is pupils' contribution to the school and wider community. Teaching is satisfactory and improving as staff adopt more creative approaches to learning. There is some very good practice but equally some weaker teaching which slows pupils' progress. The curriculum is also satisfactory and improving and has been made more appropriate and interesting for pupils. These changes have enabled many pupils to begin to make up lost ground from previous underachievement. However, there are missed opportunities to reinforce mathematics across the curriculum. Attainment is broadly average and achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. This represents a major improvement on the position a year ago for Key Stage 1 pupils, for boys and for more-able pupils. Progress is slower and attainment is lower in mathematics than in English. The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support to pupils. Safeguarding arrangements, the promotion of community cohesion and developing equality of opportunity have improved and are now satisfactory. Accurate self-evaluation, improving provision and outcomes for different groups of pupils, together with sound governance, indicate that the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. Most parents and carers are happy with the school but a small minority have concerns. Inspectors found the school could do

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more to improve the quality of its communication with them; for example, about how it deals with unacceptable behaviour.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise achievement in mathematics by creating wider opportunities for pupils to use and apply mathematics across the curriculum.
 - Ensure greater consistency in the implementation of agreed whole-school policy relating to teaching and learning, the curriculum and monitoring and evaluation procedures.
 - Improve the effectiveness of the school's communication with parents and carers and address their concerns and perceptions of how successfully the school manages unacceptable behaviour, helps them to support their children's learning and takes account of their concerns and suggestions.
- About 40% of 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 are responding positively to the modifications in teaching and learning and the curriculum and comment on their greater involvement and engagement in lessons where more innovative approaches are most embedded. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning and are acquiring critical thinking, and collaborative and problem-solving skills, which are fostered by diligent and dedicated staff. Their growing aspirations are illustrated by a girl who, when asked what she was looking forward to when she grows up, responded, 'I can't wait to become a pathologist.'

Pupils' attainments by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national averages. This represents satisfactory achievement given that when they started Key Stage 1 their skills and dispositions were at expected levels. Elsewhere in the school inspection evidence and the school's latest data show that the majority of pupils are working at age-related expectations. The school has accelerated their progress and gained lost ground in their learning from previous underachievement. This is true for all groups including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and gifted and talented pupils. The school has met or exceeded most of its challenging targets with the exception of those for mathematics.

Most pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe. They know who to turn to in a crisis and believe that staff will help them. Behaviour in and out of lessons can be good but is satisfactory overall, with some differences between pupils going unresolved despite the school's efforts. Pupils' awareness and take-up of healthy lifestyles is satisfactory. They love physical education and learn about social and emotional aspects of health and well-being in personal, social, health and citizenship education lessons. Pupils play a good role in school and wider community life by performing for their proud parents and

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carers at the guitar assembly, acting as school councillors and playground buddies, and working with local residents as part of the inter-generational project. They support charities such as the earthquake appeal in Haiti and Children in Need. They have raised over £1600 by car washing, staging an Epworth's Got Talent' show and running a summer fayre.

Pupils' acquisition of workplace and other skills that will aid them in the future is satisfactory. They are developing some sound basic skills alongside a range of problem-solving, evaluative and communication skills. Attendance is average. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. They are polite, know right from wrong and can think maturely about moral dilemmas. At times they do not always apply their knowledge and understanding to reflect on how others might feel.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some excellent practice apparent in those classes that have adopted more active and imaginative approaches to learning. In these lessons role play, debates in the style of 'Question Time' and challenging problem-solving

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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activities allow pupils to showcase their aptitude. Expectations are high, success criteria are explicit and pupils confidently assume responsibility for leading their own learning. Not all staff apply these agreed strategies and there is some reluctance from those entrenched in less innovative styles. Consequently, the impact of teaching on learning is inconsistent. Staff's planning and delivery do not always cater for the range of pupils in their classes, with some staff settling for a 'one size fits all' model. The introduction of a common assessment format and enhanced target-setting and tracking procedures is allowing the school more accurately to gauge pupils' progress against their targets and identify and intervene where further challenge or support is required. Again, implementation is inconsistent. The quality of marking and feedback is improving, though pupils do not always know how to improve their work.

The opportunities provided by the curriculum are satisfactory and improving as the curriculum is refined to match pupils' needs and interests better. There is a strong focus on promoting pupils' literacy skills, which permeates all subjects and is effective. This is not the case with mathematics and there is scope to establish a similar focus. The school is trying to establish a themed approach to the curriculum so that pupils can more readily understand the connections between subjects and consolidate their knowledge. Pupils like this and enthusiastically told inspectors how they had combined history, geography, English, art and drama when studying the Aztecs. Pupils enjoy using information and communication technology and the increasing number of visits and visitors they receive, particularly the residential trips. Some of these developments are recent and not fully embedded and there remains inconsistency in implementation.

Scrutiny of policy and practice reveals that the care, guidance and support pupils receive have improved and are now satisfactory, with issues from the previous inspection robustly addressed. Extra steps have been taken to ensure that pupils feel cared for and secure – a view endorsed by parents and carers. Learning support assistants work closely with teachers and external support services such as the education welfare officer, the local authority's advisers and educational psychologist to provide specialist support to all pupils, including those deemed gifted and talented, those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Support for attendance is satisfactory and the rate of persistent absence is low. The quality of academic guidance is also improving. Transition arrangements as pupils move through and out of the school are sound. The school is aware there is scope for further improvement and that new procedures need embedding.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3
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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and his senior team have a clear vision for the school which has been shared and largely embraced by staff. There has been extensive consultation and a wider distribution of leadership which has aided the common sense of purpose that now exists. Support from the School Improvement Partner and a consultant headteacher has been important. The impact of improvement strategies is being increasingly felt as they become more established. The evidence that the school is more effective is demonstrated by the fact that several aspects of provision and outcomes that were inadequate at the previous inspection are now judged to be satisfactory. Senior staff have not shied away from a number of uncomfortable decisions to challenge and/or change personnel and provision in the best interests of pupils. Routine scrutiny of lessons, sampling pupils' work, checking teachers' planning and providing clear objective feedback to staff are helping to increase the effectiveness of teaching, with inadequate teaching largely eradicated. This has been facilitated by a range of coaching, mentoring and training from within and outside the school.

The school engages satisfactorily with parents and carers by newsletter, seeking their views in questionnaires and consultation on matters such as homework policy. The school is satisfactorily promoting a range of partnerships with partner schools, the on-site children's centre, community groups and the local authority's support services. The promotion of equality and tackling of discrimination are satisfactory. A good aspect is the emphasis placed on closing the attainment gap between different groups of pupils. The promotion of community cohesion is also satisfactory overall. A good feature is the work to develop a deeper understanding among pupils of other religions, cultures and communities than those in Epworth. Most of these changes have not been in place long enough to show a major impact.

Safeguarding arrangements are now satisfactory. The headteacher and governors fulfil their obligations to monitor and review policies and procedures in relation to site security, risk assessments, child protection, health and safety and the safer recruitment of staff. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have benefited from training and experienced additional members have been recruited. This has left the governing body better placed to challenge as well as support the school. Value for money is satisfactory because resources are deployed suitably to secure satisfactory outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils and provide adequate provision. Financial management is secure.

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

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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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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 Reception with skills that are generally in line with typical expectations. They make good progress in all the areas of learning and by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage their skills and dispositions are above age-related expectations. This represents good achievement. Staff are nurturing and considerate and children have good relationships with them. This facilitates children's effective personal development and well-being. Interesting, well-resourced indoor and outdoor areas have been created to encourage children to explore, experiment and interact with each other. However, there is scope to promote greater independence and choice by giving children the option to flow freely from inside to outside. Provision for multicultural education is underdeveloped but all requirements, including those for safeguarding, are met.

The new leaders are in a period of transition as they work to restructure and refine current procedures and approaches to improve the quality of provision. They are clear about strengths and development areas and are working with other settings to introduce best practice. Recent changes are not yet embedded and there is room for further improvement. Assessment is heavily weighted to adult-led activities.

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	2
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

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Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive about the school and its work on behalf of their children. They agree that their children enjoy school and that it keeps their children safe. They also believe the school is well led and managed. However, there were concerns about how well the school deals with unacceptable behaviour; whether their suggestions and concerns are taken account of; and a lack of information about their children's progress. Inspectors investigated these issues and found that the school could improve the quality of its communication with parents and carers, and enhance the effectiveness of its measures to deal with unacceptable behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Epworth 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 259 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	47	26	41	6	9	2	3
The school keeps my child safe	30	47	30	47	3	5	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	25	36	56	10	16	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	20	36	56	12	19	3	5
The teaching is good at this school	18	28	36	56	6	9	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	20	37	58	11	17	3	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	28	42	66	1	2	1	2
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)	11	17	39	61	7	11	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	20	39	61	9	14	3	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	20	36	56	6	9	5	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	19	36	56	10	16	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	18	28	37	58	5	8	3	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	23	39	61	5	8	4	6

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.



08 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Epworth Primary School, North Lincolnshire, DN9 1DL

Thank you for being helpful to the inspectors when we visited recently. We learned a lot from observing your lessons and talking with you. We also read with interest the views you, and your parents and carers, expressed in the questionnaires. A special thanks to those of you who we spoke to at lunchtime; you conducted yourselves very well.

After studying all the evidence, we judged that the school provides you with a satisfactory education and we have removed the notice to improve. We know that you will be pleased with this news as you explained how much you enjoy school. The signs that your school is getting better include the faster progress you are making in your subjects, the extra steps taken to keep you safe and the curriculum changes which now give you more visits, visitors and interesting topics which you like.

The teaching you receive is satisfactory overall but in some classes it is good. This helps you to reach standards similar to national averages, but your learning and progress would improve if all your lessons were as good as the best we saw. You contribute well to school and wider community life and take your roles in the school council, fundraising and as playground buddies seriously. You lead healthy lifestyles and are acquiring a range of skills that will help you in the future. Staff are caring and give you the guidance and support you need. The youngest children in your school make good progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school's leaders have taken some effective steps to improve the school but know that there is room for more improvement so we have asked them to:

- raise your achievement in mathematics by letting you use and develop your mathematical skills in more of your subjects
- ensure that whole-school approaches to teaching and learning, the curriculum and monitoring and evaluation procedures are consistently carried out
- address the concerns and perceptions your parents and carers have about the quality of the school's communication with them and how it deals with poor behaviour.

You can all play your part by continuing to work hard and attending school regularly.

Yours sincerely

John Young,
Her Majesty's Inspector

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