



Inspection report

Eastwood Primary School

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 107259
LEA Bradford

Inspection number 274636
Inspection dates 20 and 21 April 2005
Reporting inspector Mr J S Hardwick HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Victoria Avenue
School category	Community		Keighley
			West Yorkshire
			BD21 3JL
Age range of pupils	3 to 11 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01535 610212
Number on roll	374 full-time	Fax number	01535 210238
	77 part-time		
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board	Chair of Interim Executive Board	Mr B Fitzpatrick
Date of previous inspection	October 2001	Acting Headteacher	Mrs A Quinn

Age group	Published	Reference no.
3 to 11 years	9 June 2005	274636

Introduction

When Eastwood Primary School was inspected in October 2001, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools (HMI) subsequently visited the school on nine occasions to monitor its progress, and reinspected the school in April 2005.

Description of the school

Eastwood Primary School is a large school that serves an area of densely populated terraced housing in Keighley. Almost all the pupils are from ethnic-minority backgrounds and speak English as an additional language; they are mainly of Pakistani or Bangladeshi descent. Most of the pupils speak little English when they enter the nursery. Forty three per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is more than twice the national average and reflects the level of social and economic hardship in the area. Forty four per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, a proportion that is also well above the national average. The school contains a learning support unit to help vulnerable pupils, who are drawn from Eastwood and four other schools for a short period; the work of the unit was not inspected.

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Overall effectiveness of the school

In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures, since it is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils.

Eastwood Primary School has struggled to overcome inconsistencies in provision, partly arising from continuing changes of staff. Throughout the period of special measures a core of teachers have enabled pupils in their classes to make good gains, but elsewhere the pupils have marked time. Standards have thus been well below average and not as high as they should be. In recent terms, however, the introduction of an interim executive board and an advisory headteacher has brought a concerted drive for improvement, marshalling considerable levels of support to raise the quality of teaching and bring coherence to the school's work. As a result the pupils now make satisfactory or good progress, building on the secure foundations that have long been established in the nursery and reception classes. Proper account is taken of the pupils' backgrounds, through an inclusive approach and well-judged provision for teaching English as an additional language. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good: some are reluctant to contribute to discussions, but most are keen to learn and please adults, and the oldest pupils learn good work habits.

Improvement since the last inspection

The inspection of October 2001 required the school to address key issues concerned with standards, leadership and management, the quality of teaching, the curriculum, the tracking of pupils' progress, the governing body, and provision for teaching English as an additional language. Standards remain too low, but in other respects the school has made satisfactory progress.

Capacity to improve

The school has the teachers, support staff and systems to continue the good improvement made in recent terms. Weaknesses identified within the comprehensive programme for monitoring have been tackled with determination. The pupils' progress is also assessed regularly and the outcomes are properly reflected in the pupils' targets and in the planning of subsequent work. Though much improved, there remain some weaknesses in the teaching, particularly at Key Stage 1, and arrangements for the leadership and governance of the school are not secure for the longer term.

What the school should do to improve further

The key priorities are to:

- re-establish the permanent leadership of the school and the governing body;

- raise standards, in particular by accelerating the pupils' progress in the middle years;
- continue to improve the quality of teaching, especially at Key Stage 1;
- promote the pupils' work habits more consistently between the end of the Foundation Stage and upper Key Stage 2.

Achievement and standards

The pupils make a good start in the Foundation Stage: most enter the school with almost no English, but they learn to explain themselves beyond using single words, and they acquire the rudiments of reading and writing. The pupils also make good progress in the Year 5 and 6 classes, for example, in learning to make notes as a basis for writing or to set calculations out methodically in mathematics. The pupils' progress in the middle years, while satisfactory overall, is more mixed. This inconsistent picture has been reflected in the school's national tests results, which have been generally well below the performance of similar schools over the last four years. Given their starting points, the pupils have fared better in English than they have in mathematics.

Improvements over the last few terms, particularly in the quality of teaching, have resulted in a steady rise in the standards in lessons, but the school is aware that the pupils do not achieve what they might.

Personal development

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the classrooms and around the school are at least satisfactory and mostly good. The pupils are generally keen, interested and readily do as they are told. The need to use exclusion as a sanction is rare.

The particular strengths are in the Foundation Stage, where pupils quickly settle into the routines and learn to share, take turns and choose activities, and also in the work habits acquired by the oldest pupils, for example in planning, writing and using reference books. Elsewhere the picture is less consistent: there are classes where the pupils concentrate and work hard and others where they are passive and many are content to let a few of their classmates answer the teacher's questions. Too little is done in some of these classes to promote independence and initiative.

The pupils' attendance has been below the national average for the last three years: in 2003-4 it was 93.2 per cent compared with the national figure of 94.5 per cent. Unauthorised absence was also relatively high last year. However, attendance for the autumn term 2004 rose to 94.5 per cent.

The overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Proper account is taken of the pupils' backgrounds, through ensuring that all pupils receive

their curricular entitlement and in the way in which English is taught as an additional language. In the nursery, for example, stories are sometimes told in two languages, facilitating understanding and the pupils' sense of belonging. Some pupils are solitary at first but they soon learn to work and play together, and readily organise games on the school yard at break time. Assemblies are used to pursue suitable themes, such as the uniqueness of each human being, and time is allowed for reflection. A weekly faith assembly is held in acknowledgement of the Muslim beliefs of most of the pupils' families.

The school offers an unusually wide range of extracurricular activities, which many pupils attend. Some are organised in six-week blocks and are rotated to provide variety. The activities include sports, music, dancing, circus skills and walking in the countryside. Classroom topics are sometimes supported by visits in the locality, for example to a supermarket or canal, and a residential trip is organised for the oldest pupils.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching has fluctuated considerably since 2001, but hard work, the recruitment of a mostly permanent staff, and support have resulted in improvement, with most of the weaknesses eradicated and strengths more widespread. The teaching was very good in one lesson, good in nine lessons, satisfactory in nine and unsatisfactory in one. Overall it was good in the Foundation Stage and much of Key Stage 2, and satisfactory at Key Stage 1.

All the lessons were well prepared, planned and organised and based on suitable learning objectives that were shared with the pupils. The teachers made good use of interactive whiteboards to provide clear demonstrations and speed the progress of the lesson. Tasks were generally matched to the pupils' varying levels of attainment. The large number of additional adults gave skilled help, particularly in leading groups and helping those pupils with an uncertain grasp of English.

The stronger lessons were marked out by the teacher ensuring that all aspects of the work were tackled consistently, with particularly effective use of the closing session to check and secure the pupils' understanding. The most common weakness was a failure to sustain all the pupils' involvement and concentration during the, sometimes lengthy, introductions to lessons and when pupils were expected to work on their own.

The school has introduced a thorough regime for assessment and checking the pupils' progress, through regular tests and analyses of the results. The outcomes are used to identify weaknesses in aspects of work or the performance of particular groups of pupils. As a consequence, for example, emphasis has been given to the quality of writing and solving mathematical problems. The system is complemented by detailed targets in English and mathematics that are displayed on desks, showing the pupils the level they have reached and what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, and based on national requirements. Shared planning enables the teachers of similar-aged pupils to pool their expertise and ensure the

classes cover the same ground. Literacy and numeracy are given a suitably high profile within the timetables, although the details of national guidance have sometimes been followed too closely, at the expense of the pupils' often more basic needs. Recent improvements to the programme of work have included drawing links between subjects, for instance using science as a vehicle for learning to take notes, and establishing regular lessons for each class in a new computer suite.

The school pays proper attention to the pupils' safety, health and well-being. The pupils are confident to turn to adults for help, and play on the confined yard space is carefully supervised. The school takes an active role in the Keighley neighbourhood group, and promotes healthy eating and living.

Leadership and management

Since 2001, the school has struggled to overcome inconsistencies in provision, partly arising from continuing changes of staff. Progress stalled for a time, resulting in low morale and some loss of confidence among the staff about the school's ability to recover. Education Bradford, the contractor providing services for the local education authority, rightly felt that strong action was needed to remedy the situation. An interim executive board thus took over the responsibilities of the governing body and an advisory headteacher was recruited to support the deputy headteacher, who had become acting headteacher. These measures have proved effective. The joint leadership of the two headteachers regained the impetus for improvement and close links with the interim executive board ensured that the necessary support was forthcoming and directed to where it was most needed.

The priorities during this period have been well judged, particularly over raising the quality of teaching, rationalising the use of information on the pupils' progress and tackling the critical weaknesses in standards. A straightforward and forthright approach has brought much-needed coherence to the school's work, raising morale and providing a common sense of purpose.

A core of staff, including those at senior level, have worked hard and effectively throughout the time the school has been in special measures. Their efforts have recently been harnessed such that the management team and leading co-ordinators support the school's drive for improvement well and provide good role models in their work. They have become closely involved in the thorough programme for monitoring performance, for instance by observing and modelling teaching and by organising school-wide assessments. The role of the co-ordinators for the foundation subjects is underdeveloped, partly because the focus has rightly been elsewhere.

While crucial gains have been made in recent terms, the school is now entering a critical further stage in its development. With this in mind new members are being recruited to the interim executive board to provide people who might form the nucleus of a re-established governing body. Similarly, the board is seeking to appoint a permanent headteacher with the skills to lead and manage this complex school.

As recognised in its own plans, further support from Education Bradford will be essential in the forthcoming period if the school is to continue moving forward. The concerted help received in recent terms from Education Bradford has proved effective, though this has not always been the case during the time the school has been in special measures despite a consistent and well-informed approach from the school's link officer.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

Eastwood Primary School was inspected under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by a Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors in October 2001. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and, in accordance with that Act, the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The school was visited by HMI in April and October 2002, in February, June and September 2003, in January, May and September 2004, and in January 2005 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of October 2001.

In April 2005, an HMI and an Additional Inspector returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

During the visit 20 parts of lessons and two assemblies were inspected. The pupils' conduct was observed around the school, on the playground and at lunchtime, and samples of their work were inspected. Discussions were held with the acting headteacher, the advisory headteacher, the co-ordinator for Key Stage 1 and the co-ordinator for literacy. Account was taken of the evidence from previous monitoring inspections.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of October 2001 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.

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