



Elworth CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111256
LEA Cheshire
Inspection number 278639
Inspection dates 15 February 2006 to 16 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Dee Brigstock CfBT Lead Inspector

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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|------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | School Lane |
| School category | Voluntary controlled | | Elworth |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 | | Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 3HU |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01270 762 787 |
| Number on roll | 289 | Fax number | 01270 759 310 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr E Lea |
| Date of previous inspection | 28 February 2000 | Headteacher | Mr T Egley |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Elworth is an average sized school. Most of the pupils are of white British heritage, with few from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. When pupils start school their skills and knowledge are above average and the socio economic background of most pupils is broadly average. Few pupils leave the school between Reception and Year 6 but several transfer into the school from others each year.

The school has several awards, including Investors in People and the Basic Skills Award. It also has Cheshire County Council Healthy School status.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Elworth is a good school with some outstanding features. Most pupils make good progress throughout the school, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Standards are well above average by Year 6 but the school knows that a small handful of capable pupils could do even better. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school, are very well behaved and flourish in the school's safe and creative atmosphere. Their personal development and understanding of how to stay fit and healthy are first rate.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, and frequently outstanding. Some, but not all, teachers mark pupils' work very constructively, giving clear instructions on how to improve further. However, almost all pupils learn well because the work they are set is pitched at a level that challenges them while leading to success. Relationships between all adults, pupils and the local community are outstanding.

Overall, the school's curriculum is good. Art, music and sports are developed very creatively. The school knows itself well, although provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, not good as the school suggests. This is because planning in some areas of learning reflects the National Curriculum, rather than the Foundation Curriculum, particularly in outdoor education. Pupils' care, guidance and support are good.

The school provides good value for money because it is led and managed well. The headteacher, staff and governors are firmly focused on raising standards, and in delivering a rich, exciting curriculum. Improvement since the last inspection is good. The school is well placed to improve even further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure learning for all Reception children is based on the Foundation curriculum, including enhanced opportunities for outdoor learning.
- Raise standards for a few of the most capable pupils by planning work for them which is more challenging.
- Construct an agreed whole school marking policy.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, achievement and standards in the school are good. Children start school with above average standards, particularly in their language and communication skills. They make good progress in their personal development, reading and writing so that by the end of Reception, most meet and a significant number exceed expectations. In Years 2 and 6, overall, pupils maintain consistently above average standards year on year and make good progress, because their lessons and their curriculum are interesting and well planned. In 2005, a few pupils did not reach the higher levels expected of them in national tests for English, mathematics or science, despite their school work being at this standard. However, the proportion of pupils attaining these higher levels

remained high in both mathematics and science. Steps have already been taken to boost similar pupils' achievement in English in the current Year 6, through successfully addressing identified weaknesses in writing. The same procedures have not yet been put into place in mathematics or science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to achieve their precise targets for improvement by additional, practical support from well-informed learning assistants. As a result they make good progress. Pupils' achievement in other aspects of the curriculum is at least good with particular strengths in the arts and in sport.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' high levels of interest in their learning and the good example they set to others in work and play make these aspects of school life outstanding. This is a friendly school where rare instances of bullying are resolved swiftly. By Year 6 children are keen, confident learners, proud of their work and school. Pupils feel safe and cared for by staff and other pupils. They know how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and understand the importance of a good diet.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary. From the start, children are taught right from wrong and learn to care for others, both in school and the wider community. The school council plays an active part in raising money for charities, gathering ideas and working to see them through. High quality displays enhance the school environment, and contribute effectively to pupils' understanding of the diversity and range of world cultures.

Older pupils readily take on additional responsibilities; as play leaders, house captains and lunchtime helpers. These contribute effectively to the caring atmosphere of the school. Pupils' future economic well-being is promoted very well because their basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are so good. Attendance is above the national average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and often outstanding. Relationships between all staff and pupils are excellent and, as pupils' behaviour is managed so well, no time is wasted in maintaining discipline.

Teachers plan interesting and challenging lessons, which catch pupils' interest and motivate them to learn more. Pupils say they work hard but also have fun. There is some outstanding practice. For example, in a superb lesson with younger Reception children, their interest and motivation were captivated by: making up a line dance, using ICT programs to follow a route and programming a toy; all activities being linked to the story of Noah's Ark. These activities led to impressive learning about giving and

following directions. In Years 5 and 6, lessons are frequently outstanding, leading to successful learning for all pupils.

The school has good systems for assessing all pupils' attainment, tracking their progress and diagnosing any shortfalls. This system is used well to set pupils' targets for the future, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Where teachers consistently refer to these targets in their marking, the impact on pupils' progress is easily seen. Some teachers' marking is more congratulatory than developmental and does not inform pupils how they can improve their work precisely enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is vibrant and exciting and includes an extensive range of educational visits and visitors. Since the previous inspection, provision and pupils' achievement in ICT have improved significantly. The school works hard to improve provision in all subjects, with a strong emphasis on English and mathematics ensuring pupils are prepared well for their future. Very good provision in music, art and physical education results in pupils' good achievement in these areas. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress due to effective planning and skilful support. Those who are talented; for example, in music or sport, have extra coaching or tuition. One pupil exclaimed, 'You get music lessons for good prices!' The importance of keeping healthy and safe has a high priority.

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory rather than good, because the space for outdoor learning activities is underdeveloped. Moreover, teachers' planning is geared too closely to the National rather than the Foundation curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Children are excellently cared for and supported in most respects. However, guidance on how they can improve their work, through teachers' marking, is inconsistent. Health and safety procedures are robust, so that children feel safe, and are happy to come to school. Teachers and other staff know their pupils well. Pupils feel secure because of the very good relationships with staff, which enable them to make good progress in their learning. Child protection systems are thorough, and any children at risk are quickly identified and appropriate action is taken. The school works very effectively with outside agencies when necessary. Pupils new to the school say how easy it was for them to settle in and their parents agree.

The system of grouping children with those of similar ability in Years 5 and 6 is effective. There are very good procedures for inducting children into school and in transferring them to the next.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management at all levels have resulted in a thriving school which has the overwhelming confidence and support of parents. Standards are well above average and almost all pupils' progress, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good. The school's vision is shared by all and strong teamwork ensures a common drive towards raising standards in all subjects even further. Governors support the school effectively as critical partners in its continuing development and are closely involved in school on a regular basis.

The monitoring of teaching, learning and standards by the senior leadership team and external advisers is rigorous. Through closely analysing the information gathered, the school has identified clear priorities for improvements in writing and put whole school strategies in place to achieve further success. For example, clearly focused targets have been set in English to enable teachers and pupils to raise progress for a few of the most capable pupils. These additional measures have not yet been put into place in mathematics and science. The school knows itself well, despite overestimating the quality of the curriculum in the Foundation Stage.

The school is well maintained and resourced. Prudent financial management has enabled good improvements to the building, although outdoor provision for Reception children remains a priority. Funds have been set aside to secure current staffing levels and sustain a good quality of education for all learners. Improvement since the last inspection is good and the school is well placed to improve even further.

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Inspection judgements

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|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall | 16-19 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 1 | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage | 3 | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 | NA |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | Yes | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes | NA |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 | NA |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 | NA |

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 2 | NA |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 | NA |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 | NA |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 2 | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected | Yes | NA |

| | |
|---|-----|
| The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy | |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health | Yes |
| The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe | |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them | Yes |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution | |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being | |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form | NA |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy | NA |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school and for being so helpful when we asked you questions. We enjoyed talking with you, looking at your work and finding out about the things you like doing.

We think you have a good school. The things we particularly like are:

- your school is a very friendly and pleasant place to be and you enjoy your learning
- your teachers make lessons lively and interesting and they expect you to work hard
- your writing is improving really well
- everyone seems to get on well with one another
- there are lots of interesting activities, both in lessons and in school clubs, especially in art, music and sports
- your headteacher and the teachers are doing a really good job in always trying to make the school a little bit better.

To make things better still, we have asked your school to:

- make the playground for Reception children a lot more interesting so they can use it for lessons
- make the work for some of you in Year 6 just a little bit more challenging, especially in mathematics and science
- make sure that all the teachers tell you how to make your work even better when they mark it.

We hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make Elworth Primary School a good place to be.