

Eynesbury CofE C Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110820
Local Authority	CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Inspection number	288788
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Robert Drew

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Karl Wainwright
Headteacher	Ms Helen Rouse
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2003
School address	Montagu Street Eynesbury St Neots Cambridgeshire PE19 2TD
Telephone number	01480 398028
Fax number	01480 398029

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is average in size, with a 26place Nursery, and draws pupils from the centre of St Neots and outlying areas. The great majority is White British with very small numbers from several ethnic minority groups. Very few pupils use English as an additional language. Pupils' home background is broadly similar to the national profile, though fewer than average are eligible for free school meals. Attainment on entry is below average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities in Key Stages 1 and 2 is above average. The school was led by an acting headteacher at the time of the inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school's overall effectiveness is good, in line with the school's own judgement. This is because leadership and management have established good quality teaching, positive attitudes from pupils and a strong sense of community within the school.

Pupils can enter the school's Nursery with lower than average attainment but leave Year 6 with above average standards. Their achievement, or long term progress, is good. This pattern was broken briefly by results in 2006 but the upward trend in standards has been restored and is evident in the work of the current Year 6. Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage due to good management and teaching in these classes. Satisfactory teaching with some that is good helps sustain progress in Key Stage 1 while strong teaching in Key Stage 2, especially in Years 5 and 6, again allows pupils to make good progress. The school has established considerable expertise in helping pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and these pupils achieve well. Gifted and talented pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their abilities. The curriculum, while satisfactory overall, makes limited special provision for these pupils.

Pupils' personal development is good and they enjoy many activities in school. The school values personal development highly and pupils make good progress in this respect. The great majority develops confidence, social skills and strong personal qualities as a result of the expectation placed on them and the opportunities provided by the school. Behaviour is good and in some lessons exceptional. Attitudes are very positive. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show a good awareness of personal safety and health issues and readily contribute to school life and that of the wider community. These features reflect the good care, guidance and support provided by the school.

Leadership and management are good, with very effective contributions coming from headteachers and acting headteachers since the last inspection. A good capacity to improve has been demonstrated. Good self-evaluation through careful monitoring continues to lead to significant improvement. Teaching has been improved through good appointments and better training and support. The tracking of pupils' progress is good at whole school level, but less well used by individual subject leaders. Subject leadership is more variable with some subjects well led and managed and others where coordinators are just beginning to evaluate colleagues' work and monitor pupils' performance systematically. Pupils are not aware of the National Curriculum levels at which they are working or to which they could aspire.

Governance is good. Governors operate effectively and have a sound impact on pupils' progress. Their knowledge of the school is more effectively informed by the use of attainment data and they are increasingly able to act as 'critical friend' to senior staff. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards across the school for the most able pupils by consistently providing them with challenging work.
- Develop the leadership role of subjects to provide the systematic evaluation of standards and provision seen in areas of best practice in the school.
- Improve the pupils' awareness of their standards, and how to improve, through wider use of National Curriculum levels and more helpful marking.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average, confirming that pupils achieve well from their lower than average starting points. Children enter the Nursery with a variable command of essential skills but make good overall progress. Sound achievement in Key Stage 1 consolidates these gains so that assessments at the end of Year 2 in English and mathematics place pupils in line with national levels. Achievement in Key Stage 2 is good, reflecting good quality teaching and positive attitudes to learning from pupils. The noticeable dip in 2006 results has been effectively analysed and acted upon. Current Year 5 and 6 pupils are reaching higher standards than last year's pupils and are well on track to meet their challenging targets. This stems partly from improvements in the science curriculum and better teaching of investigative science. In all subjects, tracking of pupils' progress has improved since the last inspection. This has enabled staff to direct support early and accurately to pupils who are underperforming. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress, but the school is aware that greater gains could be made by its most able pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has a strong, inclusive ethos through which all pupils are valued for what they bring, individually, to school life. There is a strong sense of community, and pupils explained to inspectors why they found this to be 'one of the best things about the school'. Their 'Star Book' records many instances of thoughtful actions by pupils. One typical entry stated, 'Caught, on numerous occasions over the term, being courteous and polite!' Behaviour and attendance are good, and pupils' attitudes positive in response to challenging learning. However, where teaching is only satisfactory, sometimes pupils show a little immaturity. Nevertheless, clear boundaries for behaviour are usually observed, and pupils feel staff always have time to listen to them. Pupils know about keeping safe and healthy lifestyles, and take good opportunity for sport and exercise. Pupils are encouraged to have ownership of the school, and are clearly developing into good citizens.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, and pupils have fun in learning. Teaching for the older pupils, and those in the Foundation Stage, helps them make good progress. However, learning is more often satisfactory in Key Stage 1, where pupils make sound progress. This is because pupils are not involved fully in learning. Lesson planning across the school is generally good. It is particularly effective in the Foundation classes. The best teachers use questioning well to enable pupils to think through and explain their ideas. Teachers tend to plan well for group activities, although higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. This is partly because pupils are unaware of National Curriculum levels and the marking of their work is inconsistent. Nevertheless, pupils show positive attitudes and work at a good pace because they are usually actively engaged in lessons and working relationships are very good. Teaching assistants work

well together with teachers, and help pupils to make good progress because they know their needs well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

This is satisfactory. It meets statutory requirements and has strengths such as the good materials and programmes to support pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. The imaginative off-timetable event to promote different learning skills, seen during the inspection, is another positive feature. Pupils develop key skills well which equip them for their next stage of education. Some subjects have well planned schemes of work with formalised approaches to assessment, but this is inconsistent. The curriculum enables teachers to ensure good progress but does not provide sufficient opportunities for able pupils to excel. There are opportunities for competent musicians to work with other talented pupils off-site and some extension classes in literacy and numeracy, but there is less provision through day to day teaching than usual. Extra-curricular activities enhance the curriculum satisfactorily, with some very good music and sport provision.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care and pastoral support provided for all groups of pupils is good. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is particularly strong. This is in spite of difficulties, now resolved, resulting from long-term staff illness. A strong team of support staff have continued to help the school's leadership successfully to ensure good provision. The school's partners through the 'Outreach Service' are complimentary about the school's positive approaches to pupils with a special need. The welfare and safeguarding of children are good, reflecting important priorities for the school. Academic guidance is sound, and pupils agree they are well-supported. However, the use of data information is not effectively developed. This would give pupils a greater sense of aspiration, particularly the most able, together with clarity about how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed and this ensures good academic progress and personal development by pupils. The headteacher and acting headteacher have provided continuous and clear direction for the school. They have also sustained the strong professional commitment of colleagues. Good improvements have been made to the school's facilities, especially its Nursery. The school has improved teaching quality, raised attendance levels and defined the expectations of subject leaders more clearly. Despite shortcomings in the use of assessment data, practice is already better than at the time of the last inspection. When the rising trend in results was briefly interrupted, analysis of the causes was accurate and the school used well chosen strategies to redress the problem. This is indicative of the school's good self-evaluation skills and its good capacity to improve further. There is effective monitoring at senior level but this activity is less well developed amongst subject leaders. Governors show strong commitment to the school and are well informed. They have become more effectively equipped to challenge senior leaders appropriately.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

26/03/07

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eynesbury Church of England Primary School, Montagu Street, Eynesbury, St Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 2TD

Thank you for helping this inspection go well. You made us feel welcome and we are very grateful to those who gave up part of lunch time to speak to us.

Your school is a good one because:

- you receive good teaching
- you are positive about school and work hard in lessons
- standards are above average and you make good progress
- the headteacher leads the school well.

If it is to become even better, the school needs to:

- make sure more of you reach the highest levels in tests
- help staff in charge of subjects lead and support the other teachers more effectively
- make you more aware of the standards you are working at and how to improve.

I hope you enjoy the rest of your time at this school.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Drew

Lead inspector