

Ettington CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125631
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	315275
Inspection date	2 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Andrew McDowall

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 on roll	
School	149
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sian Case
Headteacher	Rosemary Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	22 September 2003
School address	Churchill Close Ettington Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 7SP
Telephone number	01789 740236
Fax number	01789 748172

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, with a particular emphasis on higher attainers in Key Stage 1 and mathematics and science in Key Stage 2; teachers' use of assessment and target-setting; and the quality of leadership and management in the school, with a particular focus on monitoring. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, school assessment data and documentation and discussions with staff and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school. Two thirds of the pupils attending the school live in the village of Ettington. Almost all of the pupils attending the school come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, as is the proportion who are entitled to free school meals. A building programme to improve classroom and office accommodation has recently been completed. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been in post for three weeks.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. This is a school that has drifted in recent times. The staff have not been provided with the leadership necessary to ensure all pupils make good progress. Standards at Key Stage 1 have been falling and the school has not acted decisively enough to arrest this fall. However, under the leadership of the consultant headteacher in the last two terms, and the new headteacher this term, the school is rediscovering the drive and commitment needed to bring about improvement.

The school is popular with the parents and numbers are growing steadily. The great majority of parents express support for the school, but a minority feel that more could be done to stretch the brightest pupils and they are correct. The school is a very happy place. The pupils really enjoy school and everyone gets along well together.

Standards are above average but achievement is only satisfactory overall. It is not yet good because of the considerable variation in performance between the key stages. When they start at the school, children have skills and abilities that are above national expectations. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Standards in Key Stage 1, as measured by end of key stage assessments, have been falling in recent years from well above average to broadly average. Current standards, as seen in the pupils' books, are a little higher than this. Lower and middle attaining pupils are currently making satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. This is not always the case for higher attaining pupils, especially in writing. The rate of progress accelerates considerably in Key Stage 2, where all pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6, with many reaching the higher levels in the national assessments. Here, standards in mathematics and science have been exceptionally high in recent years. However, this is not the case in all classes and progress in writing is only satisfactory overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress throughout the school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school grounds have been developed well and provide the pupils with a very good range of stimulating environments in which to work and play. Behaviour in and around the school is good and the pupils are an overwhelmingly happy bunch who are proud of their school and enjoy being with their friends. Attendance is good. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe and have a sound grasp of what they need to do to stay healthy. School meals are popular and pupils are increasingly bringing healthy snacks to school. Relationships between the pupils and with the staff are relaxed. This enables the pupils to develop good self-confidence and assurance in social situations. Consequently, they work well together in lessons and the school playground is a happy and welcoming place. The recently adopted, more creative approach to curriculum planning is firing the imagination of the pupils and further enhancing their enjoyment of learning.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The pupils respond well when they are offered practical activities that engage their imagination. For example, during the inspection a class of older pupils was observed to be fully involved and making good progress in a drama lesson where they were asked to work in groups to solve a mystery and act out part of the story. Expectations of what the higher attaining pupils can do are sometimes too low. They are often set the same work as the rest of the class when they are capable of more. Consequently, they do not make the progress they should, particularly in writing. The quality of marking,

although satisfactory overall, is variable and does not always tell the pupils what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum is improving, but is not yet good because the school has not amended it to address the weaknesses in standards at Key Stage 1. There are also occasions when the curriculum does not stretch the higher attaining pupils well enough to enable them to make good progress. It is generally broad and balanced although there has been a strong emphasis on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in the latter part of Year 6 to the detriment of other subjects. Provision for musical tuition is good with approximately a third of the pupils learning to play an instrument. A small number of school clubs and the bi-annual residential visit enrich the curriculum. In addition, the Children's University provides a range of additional activities for the pupils to enjoy. Plans are in place to increase the number of school clubs.

Pastoral care is good. The staff know the pupils well and the pupils report that they feel safe in school and have confidence that the staff will provide help if they need it. Recent steps have been taken to make the school environment a safer place for the pupils, and arrangements to ensure staff working at the school are suitable to work with children are robust. The school recognises that some of its health and safety policy documentation is in need of review. The school is beginning to track the progress of each pupil. However, this information is not yet used effectively by all class teachers to guide planning, particularly for the higher attaining pupils and in writing in Key Stage 1.

The new headteacher has made a positive start and the staff have responded very well to her leadership. They share a commitment and a strong determination to address the issues facing the school. She has correctly identified the key priorities for the school and has produced appropriate improvement plans. Recent changes, such as the revised marking policy and the creative curriculum planning, are already bringing about improvement. The school has been very successful at Key Stage 2 in recent years, but action was not taken to address the fall in standards in Key Stage 1. Consequently, the school has not been effective in promoting improvement since the last inspection. However, continued good standards in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 along with the new drive and enthusiasm in the school mean that the school does have the capacity to improve.

Governors provide good support to the headteacher. The new build has been managed well and this has enhanced and improved the accommodation. Financial planning is satisfactory. The governors recognise that their role in monitoring the standards in the school has been weak. However, they are now fully informed and able to hold the school to account. Senior staff have limited opportunities to monitor the work of the school. Consequently, they are not fully aware of what needs to be done to bring about improvement in each class.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Parents value the supportive environment and the care their children receive when they start school. The school induction procedures ensure children settle quickly, and lively teaching, supported by good planning, ensures they make good progress. Because expectations are high, children develop skills and abilities that are above national expectations in all areas of learning. The curriculum is broad and good use is made of the outside environment to support early learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in Key Stage 1, particularly for higher attaining pupils and for all pupils in writing.
- Ensure assessment information is used better to plan activities that challenge and extend the higher attaining pupils in all classes.
- Develop more rigorous systems that involve senior staff for checking on the quality of teaching and learning in the school in order to bring about improvement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted Inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	3
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?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ettington CE Primary School, Ettington, CV37 7SP

You will recall that I visited your school recently to meet with you and your teachers and to look at your work. Can I say a big thank you to you all for talking to me and telling me all about what you like at school. I was impressed with the way you all behave, how friendly you all are to each other and how much you enjoy school. I really like your new building and I think the outside areas of the school are very interesting. The new library will also be good when it opens. Your attendance is also good. Keep it up.

I looked at some of your books and your test results and I think that by the time you leave you are achieving high standards. However, there are a couple of areas where I believe the school can help you to do better. First, I have asked all the teachers to plan more difficult work for those of you who find your work easy, to help you to improve. The second thing is for the school to improve the progress you make in writing in Classes 1 and 2. You can help by remembering your targets whenever you are writing and trying hard to keep all your work neat and tidy.

Your new headteacher has many good ideas on how to make things better at school and the staff are all working hard. They look after you well at school and I was very pleased when you told me you feel safe. The final thing I have asked the school to do is to improve the way the teachers check on the quality of teaching in the school, to make sure it is as good as it can be to help you all do your best work.

Thank you again for being helpful and friendly when I came to your school.

Yours faithfully

Andy McDowall Lead inspector



3 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ettington CE Primary School, Ettington, CV37 7SP

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Lead inspector