

Eardisley CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116804
Local Authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	326451
Inspection date	13 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Patricia Potheary

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	68
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Penney
Headteacher	Michelle Chapman
Date of previous school inspection	21 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Eardisley Hereford HR3 6NS
Telephone number	01544 327262
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Eardisley is a smaller than average primary school which takes pupils from a wide mix of social backgrounds. There are very few pupils who have statements of special educational needs but an average number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils are overwhelmingly White British, with, very occasionally, pupils from other countries who may speak little English. There is one Reception group in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) who are taught alongside pupils aged five to seven. There are two other mixed-age classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Eardisley is a good school. There is a productive and harmonious atmosphere where pupils and staff take great pleasure from the business of learning. Pupils in all age groups achieve well, making good progress in academic subjects and outstanding progress in their personal development. This results from strong leadership and teaching and excellent teamwork by all staff, whose main focus is raising standards. When children join Reception their skills and experiences are broadly typical for their age and by the time they reach Year 6, standards are above average. This good progress is evident for pupils in all age groups and of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The one exception is the progress made by more able pupils in mathematics, which is satisfactory. Staff recognise this and are taking steps to raise standards in mathematics, in part, by developing the way it is taught and with a particular emphasis on the progress of the more able.

Pupils enjoy school enormously, describing how teachers 'make the lessons really interesting'. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary, with incidents of any kind being very rare. The school works particularly well to promote pupils' understanding of the lives of others. This is most notable in the links with schools in Dudley and Tanzania, with pupils taking a very keen and respectful interest in the different religions, ethnic origins and cultures of pupils from such different backgrounds to themselves. They feel it helps them mature and be better prepared for life in the wider world.

The outstanding curriculum is exceptionally rich. For a school with a small staff, the wealth of projects and activities is extensive, largely because they make such good use of volunteers. The curriculum also provides many opportunities for pupils to make a very strong contribution to the school and wider community. This includes, for example, managing their own budget for designing and building the organic vegetable garden, which they use for cooking, charitable giving and enterprise.

School leaders understand the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They ensure that pupils are suitably cared for, very strongly supported, and guided well in their academic work. They monitor individual pupils' progress very carefully and provide skilled support for those needing it. However, the system used does not ensure that all pupils make good progress against longer-term targets, which are not made clear. This means that, for a very few pupils, progress over time is sometimes slower than it could be.

Parents are very positive about all aspects of the school, particularly the good care and support pupils receive and the progress made. It is, as one explained, 'a wonderful village school that values children and parents'. With their good basic skills, their well-developed teamwork and their willingness to take on responsibility, pupils are well prepared for their next school and future careers.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in Reception is good and meets the needs of children well. Close links with parents and pre-school provision ensure a smooth and happy start. Good teaching and thorough assessment, which involve the children very well, secure good progress in all the areas of learning. Children then make a seamless transition into Year 1 having securely reached the

expected goals for their age. Strong leadership is successfully focused on improvement, most recently through developing the use of phonics to help children's reading and writing skills.

Children can choose from a good range of motivating, fun-filled activities but also spend time being guided by the teacher. In one imaginative lesson they made cakes for Red Riding Hood to take to grandmother, and in another phonics activity, one child exclaimed excitedly, 'This is great as you fish for a sound and say it, but you never know what it will be.' Although some high quality activities are provided outside, the designated area is small and there is no regular flow of learning between inside and out. The school has plans to improve this aspect of children's learning, which includes introducing the Forest School.

Children's partnership skills and personal development are excellent and they socialize very well. One group, totally engrossed with a taped story, took turns leading the learning. The systems to support children's welfare are outstanding and children already show an impressive understanding of how to keep healthy and safe, pointing out, for example, that too many sweets make you put on weight, 'and is bad for the teeth'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress made by more able pupils in mathematics.
- Set and monitor longer-term targets for pupils so that teachers can clearly identify those who are not making sufficient progress over time.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in English, science, and information and communication technology (ICT). Progress in mathematics is usually good for those of average ability and below, but a small minority of more able pupils do not make expected gains over time in this subject. There are no evident differences in progress between other ability groups or boys and girls. Progress and achievement have increased recently, with improvements to teaching and assessment, and this is having the most noticeable effect on younger pupils as they work their way through the school. As a result, standards are rising and are now above average overall. Pupils do well in several other subjects, including sport and the arts, where they develop a wide range of skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is outstanding in every aspect. Apart from their increasing involvement with, and respect for, groups different to their own community, pupils have very strong links locally, playing a regular part in the life of the village. This includes taking part in local theatre productions and running stalls at village events. There is a strong spiritual element to many lessons and the 'values' education increases their joy in each other's achievements. They feel and act very safely and are not aware of any seriously unkind behaviour. Pupils' exceptionally good contribution to the school and wider community is evident throughout the day. During playtime, for example, the older pupils showed great kindness to the younger ones, taking care to see that they were involved in games. They play a keen part in the work of the school, instigating several changes, including the newly built toilet facilities. Almost all pupils take part in sport after school and think this is one reason why they enjoy school so much. These include competitions and challenges in netball, hockey, orienteering, cricket, athletics and tag rugby and attendance at the local outdoor pursuits centre. Their very well

developed understanding of how to keep healthy results from this exceptional provision. Some mentioned the guidance they receive on how to produce a healthy packed lunch, which they appreciate. Attendance is higher than average, reflecting not just pupils' excellent enjoyment of school but the seriousness with which they value their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan well to make lessons exciting, with a good variety of activities from games to role play and quizzes, which pupils thoroughly enjoy. Great respect is shown between pupils and for adults. Pupils are encouraged well to take responsibility for their own learning, working maturely in groups and independently. There is a purposeful buzz from activity in classrooms. Lessons in all age groups are of good quality, and some are outstanding. Teaching assistants contribute substantially to the progress being made. Despite this, the planning to raise attainment is sharper and more focused in some lessons than it is in others. This is because, in a few cases, systems for assessing and setting targets do not provide sufficient information for pupils and teachers to aim high enough. Very good attention is paid to literacy, numeracy and the use of ICT to enhance learning in all subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, who have a say in what should be provided to suit their particular interests. There are good quality additional activities for more able pupils to extend their horizons. The breadth of the curriculum leads to good academic progress and outstanding personal development. The extensive array of enrichment activities includes plentiful, high quality arts and community projects. One film pupils made about the history of the school, for example, was shown at the local cinema. The curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for the development of safety awareness, including how to stay safe when online, through several subjects and from visitors such as the police. Preparation for the next stage of pupils' lives begins early, with teamwork, budgeting, designing multi-media presentations and learning about the different jobs people do being among the activities provided.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Procedures to safeguard pupils meet requirements. The care provided for pupils, including the links with parents and other agencies, is excellent. Many parents appreciate this aspect of the school very much. Support and guidance for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and they do well, with most reaching national averages in English and mathematics by the time they leave school. Arrangements ensuring a smooth transition to the next school are very strong, with excellent liaison by all staff involved. The guidance to help pupils do well in their work is greatly improved and is good overall. There is now accurate assessment and regular tracking of pupils' progress towards challenging individual targets. Despite the resulting good progress for the majority, a few pupils do not always catch up on any ground lost in previous years. This is because teachers do not have a clear view of where each pupil needs to be by the end of Year 6, based upon their original starting points. The school recognises this and intends to develop systems to ensure that good progress is secure for all pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management at all levels, including governance, have overseen good improvement since the last inspection, especially in the last two years, including raising standards and increasing the progress made by pupils. There have been particular improvements in science and writing. The school's self-evaluation and the issues identified for further improvement are accurate and the capacity to improve further is good. There is plenty of good quality information on pupils' progress to guide this work. School leaders focus strongly on individual performance and this detailed knowledge, in such a small school, has been effective so far. Nevertheless, not enough time is spent looking at trends over time or at the progress made by different ability groups. Leaders recognise that a more regular overview of performance will be helpful in the drive to secure further improvement.

The school takes good care to promote equal opportunities and a respect for different groups in the local and wider community. School leaders can demonstrate the positive impact this has had. This is evident in the equal success for different groups in the school and also in the attitudes and enjoyment shown by pupils, and those they mix with from further afield, towards the differences they find in each other's lives.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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 learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eardisley CofE Primary School, Eardisley, HR3 6NS

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you, joining you for lunch and seeing some of your lessons.

Your school is a good school, with many interesting things going on, just as you described. Senior staff work hard to keep developing the school, and for this reason, the standards you reach and the progress you make are improving.

Skilled teaching helps you to make good progress in your lessons. As a result, you do well in English, mathematics and science. We like the way you really enjoy your lessons and always try to do your best. You told us that your teachers make lessons fun and interesting and we can see that they help you do as well as you can. We have, though, asked them to make sure all of you make good progress in mathematics, especially those who find they can work quite quickly. We also want them to keep an eye on how well you are doing compared to where you were when you started in Year 1. We are sure that you will discuss this with your teachers and help them by working hard and sharing your ideas.

An outstanding curriculum helps you to make excellent progress in your social and personal skills. You were keen to tell us that the school also keeps you safe and looks after you very well. It is therefore very pleasing to see that you are helping yourselves by taking plenty of exercise and eating a healthy diet. Your behaviour is excellent, especially in the way you value learning and respect others, including those who have different beliefs and ways of living.

The responsibilities that you take on within the school and wider community are impressive, especially the way you contribute your ideas to helping the local neighbourhood and to improving the school. It is good to know that you feel the school takes your views seriously and that you can make a difference. You clearly enjoy coming to school. We think that this, alongside your good quality basic skills and mature attitudes, will help prepare you well for your next school and future lives.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Potheary

Lead inspector