

Edith Weston Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	120042
Local authority	Rutland
Inspection number	379942
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2012
Lead inspector	Geof Timms

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	90
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Jarron
Headteacher	Margaret Lishman
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Geof Timms

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed eight lessons, taught by four teachers, for a total of almost four hours, as well as spending other time looking at pupils' work. In addition, meetings were held with staff and members of the governing body, as well as pupils. The inspector took account of responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of assessment data, policies, reports and planning documents. The responses to 38 parental questionnaires were analysed.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average primary school. No pupils are currently known to be eligible for free school meals. A below-average proportion of the pupils is from minority ethnic groups or speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average. The main needs are moderate learning difficulties and speech, language and communication difficulties. A very high proportion of pupils joins or leaves partway through their primary school education. This is largely due to the fact that 82% of the pupils are from service families. The headteacher has taken up her post since the last inspection. There has been significant staff turnover in recent years. The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

The school has Healthy Schools status, an Activemark award and an International School award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is improving after a period of staffing turbulence and has strengths in the provision for the youngest children and in parts of Key Stage 2, but it is not yet good because there is not enough good or better teaching across the school to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve consistently well in English and mathematics.
- Children’s progress in the Nursery and Reception is good. Older pupils currently make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and attainment is broadly average. Too few pupils reach the higher National Curriculum levels, but the current Year 6 pupils are well on track to achieve their challenging targets.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Some very effective teaching, especially in Key Stage 2, is supporting improved progress, but staff have not had sufficient opportunities to spread this good practice. In some lessons the work does not sufficiently challenge all pupils. Interventions are well planned and effective. As a result all groups, including late arrivals, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
- Pupils’ behaviour is good. This has a positive impact on their learning and on how safe they feel at school. Attendance is above average. Pupils talk positively about how well they get on together and the lack of bullying. The parents and carers who returned questionnaires are equally positive.
- The leadership of teaching and management of performance are satisfactory. The headteacher has worked successfully, with effective support from the local authority, to improve the quality of teaching, despite subject leadership being hampered by staffing changes. The governing body provides satisfactory and improving support and challenge for the school.
- Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in English, especially writing, and mathematics and ensure that more pupils attain the higher levels, by:
 - ensuring that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better
 - spreading the existing good practice
 - ensuring that work is matched well to previous learning and provides all groups of pupils, but especially the most able, with sufficient challenge.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is satisfactory. Attainment levels vary because of the small size of year groups and the high numbers of pupils who join or leave partway through their primary schooling. In recent years the pupils' progress has been inconsistent due to the varied quality of teaching and the high levels of mobility, especially among service families. However, the work seen in lessons and in pupils' books shows that their progress in reading, writing and mathematics from often low starting points is often good, and satisfactory overall. Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, and has been more consistent over recent years than in Key Stages 1 and 2. Skills in communication and number when children start in the Nursery or Reception classes are very low. Good progress ensures that they develop their ability to link letters and sounds well, and improve their use of number and calculation.

In Key Stage 1, attainment has risen over the past three years. In 2011 it was broadly average, and the current pupils in Year 2 are on track to do even better in reading, writing and mathematics. However, although basic skills are developing more consistently, too few pupils are reaching the higher levels. Work to improve pupils' vocabulary through more opportunities to talk has been successful, and this is being reflected in better writing, which is now at a level broadly in line with pupils nationally. Pupils' understanding of sounds and letters is satisfactory, and their enjoyment of books is clear. In Year 1, for example, pupils enjoyed reading to an adult and could talk about their favourite stories.

In Key Stage 2 pupils' achievement is stronger and their progress currently more rapid. In reading and writing, progress is improving because volunteer help has been used to provide extra support in small groups or through one-to-one teaching. Reading skills are extended effectively but achievement in writing and mathematics remains weaker because here again, too few pupils are reaching the higher levels. The school has worked hard to address past weaknesses in provision, but a number of improvements to the teaching of writing are not yet fully embedded or reflected fully in pupils' attainment. In a typical mathematics lesson, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 achieved well during the inspection as they developed their practical knowledge and

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understanding of area by measuring the corridors ready to have carpet fitted.

Parents and carers are very positive about their children's achievements. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well provided for and make satisfactory progress. Pupils say that the school helps them learn new things. The school ensures that the high numbers of pupils who join late are welcomed and supported, so they make progress in line with their peers.

Quality of teaching

The school's leaders have made important changes to staffing and aspects of teachers' practice and skills, and these are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers are beginning to improve their practice through professional development and their willingness to accept advice and work closely with other schools and the local authority. However, they currently have too few opportunities to spread existing good practice. Pupils say the school helps them to do as well as they can and they clearly enjoy their learning. All parents and carers who returned questionnaires said that their children are taught well. The inspection findings support these positive views in some respects, for example in terms of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but also show that teachers do not always plan sufficiently challenging activities for all groups because they do not use the available information about pupils' prior learning well enough.

Teachers generally make good use of the curriculum to provide a wide range of activities, but there are times when the planning does not take sufficient account of individual pupils' prior learning and so does not offer them sufficiently challenging activities to move their learning on sufficiently rapidly. Children's learning needs in the Nursery and Reception are well provided for in a wide range of adult-led and child-initiated activities. There are good opportunities for Nursery and Reception children to work and play together. In one good session, children explored the school grounds for nests. This work was followed up with a range of creative activities such as making nests using small twigs. Teachers help pupils to learn about other faiths and cultures and this promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Occasional examples of outstanding teaching include imaginative and challenging activities for pupils. In one such lesson, older pupils compared and contrasted two poets, closely studying aspects such as language, rhythm and the use of metaphors and similes. Outside expertise is used well to teach physical education and also outdoor education. For example, groups of Year 2 and 3 pupils worked with a forest school leader in the excellent environmental area, exploring the habitats of minibeasts.

The feedback provided for pupils, both orally and through marking, helps them understand what they have done well and what they need to improve. All staff work closely with teaching assistants and other adults, and this has a positive impact on the learning of disabled pupils and of those with special educational needs. The improved tracking of pupils' progress and resulting interventions are helping to ensure these pupils make better progress.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school is a harmonious community. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is typically good, as is evident from questionnaire responses and other evidence. Pupils are polite and friendly to those they know and respectful towards visitors. Their good behaviour in lessons helps their learning and they cooperate and collaborate effectively. Older pupils discuss their work together in pairs or small groups in a very mature way, for example. Pupils throughout the school enjoy talking about and sharing their work. Their enthusiasm for school is reflected in their above-average attendance.

Pupils spoken to said behaviour was very good in lessons and at other times as well. They have a good understanding of what constitutes different types of bullying, and are confident that if there was any it would be dealt with well by adults. They talk confidently about the adults they trust and would go to if they had a concern. Parents and carers are also very positive about behaviour, and say that their children feel safe and the school deals well with any issues that arise. Relationships between pupils, teachers and parents and carers, and especially between the school and the service families, are good.

Leadership and management

Work led by the headteacher is having a positive impact on raising standards and improving teaching. There is a strong team spirit and all staff say they are proud to be members of the school. This positive ethos is evident in much of the school's work. Leaders have a clear vision and are focused on raising standards. Significant staff changes have meant that some leadership roles have changed. Even so, subjects are led effectively and the school has good systems for tracking pupils' progress and monitoring the success of provision.

The headteacher has introduced a detailed tracking system that enables staff to see clearly how well their pupils are progressing. This means any underachievement can be more quickly recognised and addressed. This is used by leaders and also provides teachers with more information about how well their pupils are learning. Extra support and expertise are provided to suit the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The school has made good use of local authority support in recognising and confirming strengths and weaknesses. In addition, it has made effective use of staffing skills and excellent practice in other successful local schools to inspire and share new ideas. This represents a clear willingness to look beyond the school's own staff for good practice. Even so, some excellent teaching within the school is not yet used enough to model such practice for others. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs appropriately. They

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talk enthusiastically about how they enjoy the cross-curricular and topic work. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is successfully promoted through opportunities to learn Mandarin and Latin, and the links with a school in China. The members of the governing body have improved their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and now hold the school appropriately to account. The school is very effective at promoting equality and tackling discrimination. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements fully meet current government requirements.

Although a number of the grades awarded are not as high as in the last inspection report, this does not represent lower standards but does reflect changes in the inspection criteria.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



19 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Edith Weston Primary School, nr Oakham, LE15 8HQ

Thank you for the way you welcomed me to your school recently. I really enjoyed my visit, reading your questionnaires and talking with many of you. I especially enjoyed having lunch with you. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. This is important because it helps the teachers provide you with interesting work as well as keeping you safe and happy in school. Keep it up!

Edith Weston is a satisfactory school. I expect that it will improve further in the future because you are all working so hard together to make it successful. You work well, and are reaching higher standards than you have in the past. Even so I think more of you are capable of reaching even higher levels, especially in writing and mathematics. I have asked your teachers to try and help more of you improve your writing and your mathematical skills.

The teachers are working hard to help you learn. I have asked them to share their skills and good ideas with each other, and to make sure that all the activities they provide for you are challenging enough to help you learn new things.

Your headteacher, the senior staff, and the governing body provide satisfactory leadership. They regularly seek ideas and skills from other schools and this is helping make your school even better. I liked the way your school works with the local community, and especially with the service families, to ensure you are developing your basic skills. This is also helping you to get ready for secondary school and your future lives.

Thank you again for your friendliness and help. I hope that you continue to enjoy your time at Edith Weston and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms
Lead inspector

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