



# Queen Eleanor Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 133366  
**Local Authority** Milton Keynes  
**Inspection number** 298250  
**Inspection dates** 27–28 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Steven Hill

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Galley Hill
<b>School category</b>	Community		Stony Stratford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Milton Keynes MK11 1PA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01908 562955
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	181	<b>Fax number</b>	01908 569889
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Brin Carstens
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Brian Kite
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 March 2003		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is in a residential area of Milton Keynes. Most pupils are from a White British background, with small numbers from a range of other heritages, the largest groups being of Pakistani or Black African origin. A small number of Traveller pupils are also on roll. Pupils' social and economic circumstances are relatively disadvantaged, with about half taking free school meals. Mobility has been exceptionally high for some years, although it is now falling. An above-average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. An average number of pupils speak English as an additional language. When children start in the Foundation Stage, their attainment is much lower than that usually found. At the time of the last inspection, this was a combined school, taking pupils up to Year 7. At that time, it was judged to have serious weaknesses in achievement, teaching, curriculum and leadership.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Queen Eleanor School provides a satisfactory education with some significant strengths. The school's previous designation as having serious weaknesses no longer applies. Good improvement since the last inspection is due to strong leadership and management from the headteacher, senior management team and the governing body, and hard work by all staff. Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are thriving in the school's positive, inclusive ethos.

Achievement is satisfactory, although standards are below average because of children's very low attainment when they start. Children get off to a good start in the Foundation stage, and build on this by making steady progress across the school. Achievement has improved year on year since the last inspection. The progress of pupils in the older classes is now good in science. However, achievement in writing is a relative weakness, because pupils do not have enough chances to practise these skills in different subjects.

Improvements in teaching have led to better standards. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, so they are keen to learn and behave well in lessons. Care is taken to match work to pupils' needs, and good use is made of skilled teaching assistants, particularly in helping pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. Effective use is made of the school's very good assessment procedures to support this. Occasional weaknesses in teaching occur when there are gaps in subject knowledge. Teachers then miss opportunities to help pupils to learn better.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They behave well, enjoy school and are keen to learn. They get on well with each other and with adults. The care, support and guidance provided for pupils are good. Very thorough procedures to monitor pupils' academic progress help the school to give effective extra help to those who need it. Staff show a great understanding of pupils' pastoral needs and work with sensitivity and energy to address them. Great care is taken over keeping pupils safe, and they feel secure and happy in school. However, formal procedures to record risk assessments are not in place.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Although covering most areas adequately, there is not enough in place to enliven it and generate pupils' interest through such activities as drama and art.

The school has already accurately identified the areas that need to improve. This, alongside the school's good record of improvement since the last inspection, shows it is well placed to improve further. This is due to good leadership and management. Effective monitoring of both standards and teaching has enabled the school to address issues effectively and raise achievement. Good use is made of data about pupils' progress to modify and improve what is taught. Thorough and rigorous monitoring of teaching by the headteacher has enabled him to give detailed feedback to colleagues to help them improve. So far, subject leaders have not had enough such opportunities, so full use is not made of teachers' expertise to support each other in raising standards.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in writing, particularly by giving pupils more opportunities to practise in different subjects.
- Develop a more exciting curriculum to develop pupils' enthusiasm, interest and creative skills.
- Give subject leaders more opportunities use their expertise alongside colleagues in the classroom, to help them to improve their teaching.
- Implement formal procedures to record risk assessments for different activities.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and continues to rise because of improved teaching and the impact of leadership in bringing consistency. Results of national assessments show year-on-year improvements in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Provisional results for 2006 suggest that pupils in Year 6 achieved slightly better than pupils nationally. Achievement in science is good, but achievement in writing is a relative weakness. This is because pupils do not do enough work in writing and their standards of presentation and handwriting are often weak.

Standards are below average. Children start with attainment that is well-below expectations and, despite good progress in the Foundation Stage, still lag behind the standards usually found by the time they start in Year 1. Satisfactory progress across the rest of the school means that standards have generally remained below average overall. Whilst standards are broadly average in science by Year 6, standards in writing still lag too far behind those found nationally.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and bilingual pupils, achieve similarly to their classmates. Traveller pupils also achieve satisfactorily in relation to their starting points.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' are happy, and feel safe and supported in this nurturing and inclusive environment. They enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their work. They understand how to stay safe, and keep healthy through healthy eating and exercise. Behaviour is good, both around the school and on the playground, where pupils take full advantage of the new arrangements and equipment for lunchtime activities. The majority of pupils are attentive and respond very positively in lessons. Attendance is below average but is improving rapidly due to the good work of the school. Pupils have satisfactory skills to prepare them for their future lives. Pupils who arrive at different times of the year soon settle happily into the school community.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They understand the school rules and play and work together happily. They move around the school calmly

and are polite and welcoming to visitors. Pupils care for each other and for their surroundings, and have a strong sense of moral responsibility. They willingly contribute ideas for improving the school through the school council and feel that their views are acted upon. They undertake initiatives such as fundraising for play equipment. The older pupils take their responsibilities seriously and describe themselves as role models who can help look after younger and more vulnerable pupils.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The improved teaching is the major factor in pupils' improved learning and achievement. The clear feedback, provided by the headteacher's monitoring, is ensuring that more and more good lessons take place. Good relationships and clear expectations by teachers ensure good behaviour in lessons. Pupils like their teachers, are keen to please them and try hard with their work as a result. Lessons are generally managed well and teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to engage pupils' interest and enthusiasm. However, a minority of pupils find concentration difficult, and sometimes teachers have to spend a lot of time ensuring pupils are paying attention, so that the pace of the lesson slows. Other lessons that are just satisfactory include some strengths. However, gaps in subject knowledge mean that opportunities are missed to involve pupils more, particularly by giving them opportunities to talk about their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is now satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. Since the last inspection, the school has improved provision in information and communication technology. As a result, pupils' skills are better and meet national expectations. Pupils' personal development is promoted well as they are successfully taught to avoid risks and stay healthy and safe. Clubs, particularly sporting activities, are a particular strength and contribute well to learners' enjoyment and achievement. However, there is limited use of more creative aspects of the curriculum, such as drama and art, to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and self confidence. There are also missed opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and enjoy special occasions, such as their involvement with the local community and visits outside the school.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school shows a high level of commitment to making sure pupils are well cared for, happy and safe. Staff in Nursery and Reception ensure that children and their families feel welcomed and supported when they begin school. Other pupils who join at different times are also supported well.

Throughout the school, the help and academic guidance for pupils to improve their work is good. There are effective tracking systems in place to ensure that pupils make as much progress as they can. The school, in its teaching, successfully helps children to understand the importance of eating healthy food, keeping fit, and being careful about their personal safety. There are robust procedures for child protection in place. However, the great care taken of pupils is not formally recorded in risk assessments.

Very good support is given by teachers, teaching assistants and learning mentors to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Strong links with other schools and outside agencies back this up very well. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility through the work of the school council. The vast majority of parents are supportive of the school and feel that their children are well cared for.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Strong leadership from the headteacher has enabled colleagues to make significant improvements in teaching and learning. As a result, standards have risen and achievement is now satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection has been good, and continues.

Self-evaluation is good and is based on effective monitoring of teaching and standards. Very thorough procedures to check up on how pupils are learning enable the school to identify individuals who start to fall behind and to give them extra help. Where problems are more general, affecting groups of pupils, teachers act quickly to modify the curriculum. This has ensured that identified areas of weakness, such as problem solving in mathematics, or interpreting results in science, receive more attention in lessons.

Subject leaders provide a clear lead to colleagues and work hard to support them in their teaching. However, they have not all had enough opportunities to monitor pupils' work systematically. Although some have had opportunities to work alongside colleagues in class, this has not been extensive enough to make full use of the specific subject expertise within the school and has resulted in some underachievement in writing across the curriculum.

Governors took very effective action to increase their role in the school after the last inspection, and have played a strong part in the improvements made. They have given very good support to the headteacher, by acting as a critical friend in asking searching questions. They have also backed him in making difficult decisions. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They fulfil most of their duties well, but have not ensured that the proper recording of risk assessments for different activities is in place.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	3

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
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	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**

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you at work in lessons. This is what we thought.

Queen Eleanor is a satisfactory school, and has got a lot better since the last inspection. This is because the headteacher, staff and governors have worked very hard to improve things. The headteacher keeps a careful eye on your lessons and how you are doing, so he knows just what needs to be done next.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. You get on well with your teachers, behave well in class and try hard with your lessons. A few of you are not very good at concentrating, so teachers sometimes have to spend too long settling you down. You can help things to improve by all paying more attention in class. We think it would be a good idea if teachers spent more time in each other's classes, so they can give each other tips about how to help you learn even more.

You are learning more and more, and do particularly well in science, but you still need to do better in writing. We have asked your teachers to give you more chances to practise writing in different subjects. We hope you will try hard to improve your writing this year. Now that you are so much better at literacy and numeracy, we have also asked teachers to give you more exciting things to do, such as drama and art, to make learning more interesting.

All the staff take great care of you, so you are happy and enjoy school. However, they need to keep more careful notes of this, to make sure they don't forget anything.

We hope that you carry on getting better at your work, and enjoying school.

Best wishes,

Steven Hill. (Lead Inspector)