

Eileen Wade Lower School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique reference number | 109443 |
| Local authority | Bedford Borough |
| Inspection number | 377921 |
| Inspection dates | 12–13 January 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Margaret Goodchild |

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

| | |
|--|---|
| Type of school | Lower |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 4–9 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 46 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Deborah Inskip |
| Headteacher | Mary Harris (Executive headteacher) |
| Date of previous school inspection | 9 July 2007 |
| School address | High Street Upper Dean Huntingdon PE28 0ND |
| Telephone number | 01234 708260 |
| Fax number | 01234 708260 |
| Email address | ewade@schools.bedfordshire.gov.uk |

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Age group | 4–9 |
| Inspection date(s) | 12–13 January 2012 |
| Inspection number | 377921 |



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Margaret Goodchild

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Parts of 13 lessons were observed and all three teachers and the two teaching assistants were seen. Meetings were held with a group of pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to self-evaluation and monitoring, the analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' planning and procedures for safeguarding pupils. Questionnaires returned by 35 parents and carers were scrutinised together with those completed by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Eileen Wade Lower is much smaller than most schools of its type although the number on roll has increased in recent years, with several pupils joining the school other than at the usual starting time. The school serves the needs of the four small villages in its immediate area but also takes some pupils from further afield. Currently, all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, though the school has seen an increase in the percentage requiring additional support in some year groups. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. An after-school club is managed by the governing body. There have been a number of staff changes since the previous inspection and the current team has been in place since September 2010. When the previous headteacher left in 2008, her position was filled by an executive headteacher. This arrangement was formalised in September 2011 with the federation of Eileen Wade Lower and Milton Ernest Lower School, whereby the two schools share an executive headteacher and governing body.

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 | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 2 |
| Leadership and management | 2 |

Key findings

- This is a good school that has built effectively on the many strengths found at the last inspection.
- Pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning. Attainment is above average in most areas of learning at the end of the Reception year and in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Attainment at the end of Year 4 has improved since the previous inspection and has been well above national expectations in English and mathematics over the last two years.
- Teaching is good and teachers usually plan their lessons well, providing pupils with varied and stimulating learning opportunities. Occasionally, these are not matched closely enough to the full range of learning needs in the class.
- Pupils are clear about their targets and benefit from a great deal of individual support, clear explanations and verbal feedback about their work. The marking of pupils' books is encouraging but does not always inform them about how a piece of work could be improved.
- Parents and carers rightly believe that behaviour and safety are good. The school has a warm, family atmosphere in which pupils are valued as individuals and their social development is promoted outstandingly well.
- The school is led and managed well. The executive headteacher, senior leadership team and governing body provide clear direction to its work. There is a good track record of school improvement based on accurate and realistic self-evaluation, although findings from ongoing monitoring are not always formally recorded. This makes it more difficult for leaders to identify quickly patterns in performance.
- The federation has already begun to have a positive effect on the school's capacity to improve and brings opportunities for developing further the role of subject leaders and that of the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on pupils' good achievement and existing strengths in teaching by:

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

- ensuring that learning opportunities are always matched equally well to the needs of all groups in mixed-age classes
 - consistently marking pupils' books in a way that makes clear how they could improve their work.
- Strengthen the contribution of leaders at all levels in driving school improvement by:
- using the federation to full effect in developing the role of subject leaders
 - ensuring that key findings are always formally recorded after leaders check aspects of the school's work
 - extending the monitoring role of the newly federated governing body.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils achieve well throughout the school and there is no significant difference in the achievement of different groups of pupils, including those who are more able or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Parents and carers rightly believe that their children are making good progress, and those whose children have moved to Eileen Wade from other schools comment on how much their learning has improved. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do well from starting points that are broadly in line with national expectations. This enables them to attain above average standards by the end of the Reception year in communication, language and literacy, numeracy and most aspects of personal, social and emotional development. Pupils continue to make good progress in developing their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in Years 1 and 2. Girls and boys do equally well, and the very few pupils known to be eligible for free school meals outperform similar pupils nationally. The rate of progress tends to accelerate in English and mathematics in Years 3 and 4, and the school has been successful in raising attainment in mathematics and science since the last inspection. Attainment in reading is above average both at the end of Year 2 and by the time pupils leave.

Mixed-age classes provide good opportunities for pupils to move beyond expectations for their own year group, with instances of individual pupils in Year 2 working at the same level as some Year 4 pupils. There is occasional variation, however, in the progress of different year groups when pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 learn together. Equally, in the younger class, children in the Reception year did not make as much progress as pupils in Year 1 in some lessons sampled during the inspection, although their work and records show that both groups have made good progress over time. This is because progress in lessons is usually good and it is occasionally outstanding. In a good mathematics lesson with some outstanding features in Years 2, 3 and 4, all groups of pupils made at least good progress in solving a complex mathematical problem. Older and more able pupils approached this in a sophisticated way that involved a great deal of abstract thinking as they tested out different possibilities. A small group of pupils with special educational

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

needs and/or disabilities made equally good progress, working with a teaching assistant to approach a simplified version of the task in a very practical way. This enabled them to grasp the key concepts so that they were able to demonstrate their understanding.

Quality of teaching

Inspection findings endorse the view of parents and carers that teaching is good. Teachers have high expectations and provide pupils with varied learning opportunities that capture and sustain their interest. In a very carefully planned lesson in Year 1, writing 'fossil diaries' drew on pupils' fascination with dinosaurs and involved them in much discussion and detailed thinking. This lesson provided well also for children in the Reception year who engaged in creative activities and role play on the theme of dinosaurs. In this and other lessons seen, teachers' skilled questioning probed pupils' thinking and the small class sizes ensured they received a good deal of individual attention. Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with their teachers and this contributes to the good promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An outstanding English lesson in Years 3 and 4 showcased both the promotion of pupils' personal development and the teaching of reading. In the process of analysing a poem entitled 'Shyness', the teacher's highly skilled questioning led pupils to an in-depth exploration of their own experiences as well as to a very thorough understanding of the writer's choice of language and the precise meaning within the text.

In most lessons, different groups of pupils are challenged well and the school makes good use of assessment information in its curriculum planning, particularly in dividing pupils into groups based on their prior attainment for English and mathematics. Having four mixed-age ability groups for the teaching of reading, writing and spelling supports teachers in matching work closely to the next steps in pupils' learning and ensures that all groups make good progress. While classrooms are small now that school numbers have increased, creative use of the limited space at teachers' disposal supported the matching of tasks to the prior attainment of different groups of pupils in some of the best lessons during the inspection. Pupils say that teaching is good and confirm that work is usually challenging. They are able to talk in detail about their learning and know their targets well. Both schools in the federation are about to revise their marking policy and pupils say, rightly, that teachers provide them with a good deal of encouragement when marking their books but do not always inform them about how they might improve their work. Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' learning, especially where it provides them with opportunities to investigate topics and solve problems.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents and carers say that behaviour is good and appreciate the fact that the school keeps their children safe. Teachers usually convey high expectations for behaviour and are confident to allow pupils to get excited in the knowledge that they can quickly restore order. Pupils agree that behaviour is good and that their learning is

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

rarely disturbed by inappropriate behaviour. Most pupils work hard and behave well in lessons, readily co-operating with the staff. Pupils show a good level of awareness about how to avoid risks and indicate that bullying is rare. The school has a clear anti-bullying policy: any reported bullying is tackled immediately and taken seriously. Pupils say that they feel very safe because 'teachers protect you, like your Mum but they're in school'. Pupils respect one another and their kindness is most evident in the way older pupils support younger ones, expressing the view that it is up to them to make sure smaller children 'are happy'. Regular attendance is promoted well. Attendance is above average and pupils arrive punctually for school.

Leadership and management

The executive headteacher and senior teacher have high expectations and teamwork is strong. The school works well in partnership with parents and carers and most express a high level of satisfaction with its work. Senior leaders and the governing body are ambitious for the school and have approached the opportunities brought about by the federation with enthusiasm.

The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection including in resolving the issues identified at that time, and it has a good capacity to improve further. The professional development of staff is linked well to performance management and identified priorities. Thorough systems for tracking pupils' progress enable senior leaders to keep a close check on the school's effectiveness, including the achievement of pupils who join the school after the usual starting time. Leaders use the resulting information well to set challenging targets and to ensure all groups receive equal opportunities. Senior leaders' evaluation of teaching is accurate though conclusions drawn from ongoing monitoring and leadership discussions are not always recorded. For example, leaders have until now not recorded their findings when scrutinising pupils' work, making it more difficult to identify recurring strengths or points for development. The school's small size means that each teacher has carried a large number of subject responsibilities. The federation is bringing the opportunity to spread subject responsibility and expertise across the two schools. Leaders have just begun to draw on this potential. Members of the governing body not previously involved with Eileen Wade are becoming familiar with aspects of its work and the monitoring role of the governing body is being strengthened to assist in drawing the work of the two schools together.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and provides a good range of enrichment activities. Since the previous inspection, science has been given a higher profile, with a revised curriculum and specialist teaching and this has helped to raise achievement. The curriculum provides good opportunities for spiritual, moral and cultural development. Pupils learn about other cultures, including through sponsoring a child in Tanzania, and take an active part in the local community. They have exceptionally good opportunities to develop their social skills, and gain a clear sense of right and wrong. Arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements. The school is rigorous in vetting any adults who come into contact with pupils and ensures staff receive regular training in safeguarding and child protection. The after-school club is

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

managed well and staff pay good attention to promoting pupils' physical and emotional well-being.

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.



16 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eileen Wade Lower School, Huntingdon, PE28 0ND

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed my visit and having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. You told me how much you enjoy going to Eileen Wade Lower, and I agree with you and your parents and carers that it is a good school.

These are some of the best things about your school.

- You make good progress and often do more difficult work than pupils of the same age in most schools.
- Teaching is good and your teachers make learning interesting.
- You behave well and work hard in lessons.
- You feel very safe and get on extremely well together.
- You are kind to each other and older pupils take care of younger ones.

Your school is led and managed well and it has made good improvement since it was last inspected. Your headteacher and the other teachers want to make the school as good as possible for you. I have asked them to make sure that work in all your lessons matches the next steps in learning for everybody in the class, and that teachers always tell you how to improve when they mark your books. School leaders are also going to make the most of the opportunities that have come from your school working with Milton Ernest Lower school.

You can help your school to improve by always doing your best and asking your teachers if you want more information about how to improve your work. I wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Goodchild
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**