

# The Ellis Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106638
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	366239
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Bowles HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	162
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	J Horner
<b>Headteacher</b>	P Randall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17–18 March 2010
<b>School address</b>	School Street Hemingfield Barnsley South Yorkshire S73 0PS
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<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	24–25 May 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and observed the nine teachers working in the school. They spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at teaching and learning in lessons and in pupils' books. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils and spoke informally to parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, policies, safeguarding documents and details of the progress made by pupils. They also considered the survey of parents' and carers' views recently conducted by the school.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas for improvement which had been identified at the previous inspection in March 2010.

- Pupils' attainment and achievement, particularly in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in raising children's achievement and the leadership and management of the provision.
- The consistency of the quality of teaching.
- The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels, including governance, in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance to raise pupils' attainment and achievement.
- The extent to which the school promotes equality of opportunity and community cohesion more effectively.

## Information about the school

The Ellis is a Church of England Primary School which serves three parishes and the village of Hemingfield. The school is slightly smaller than average in size. All but two pupils have a White British background and none has English as an additional language. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school's new premises opened in September 2007. The Ellis Trust provides some funding for school resources. Policies are shaped by the school's Anglican character. It has achieved Silver Healthy Schools status and the Activemark. The school is developing links with schools in London and France and is part of Barnsley's Olympic Partnership. Following the last inspection in March 2010, the school was subject to special measures.

**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: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. The Ellis School provides a satisfactory and improving quality of education, with some good features. Outcomes for its pupils are at least satisfactory and some are good. The pupils' good behaviour, sense of safety and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development result from strong relationships with adults and the good quality of care, guidance and support. Under new leadership, the provision for and outcomes of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved well and are good.

Leaders and managers now monitor performance well and this has improved the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 is satisfactory and improving, as a result of consistently satisfactory and sometimes good teaching. Even so, teachers do not always use assessment to adapt their teaching well to the needs of their pupils. While learning has been made more relevant to pupils' needs and responsive to their interests, pupils' experience of other cultures, and their opportunities to apply their skills in real-life, exciting contexts, are patchy. Given pupils' broadly average attainment when they start Year 1, their achievement by the time they leave the school is satisfactory rather than clearly good, although it is getting closer. Leaders understand these areas for development, and plans to tackle them are underway. The school has made speedy progress in addressing the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. This is thanks to the united efforts of the staff, who have been well led by the strengthened and determined leadership team. Although inspectors did not agree with all of the grades the school's leaders proposed, their evaluation shows a clear grasp of strengths and areas for development and improvement plans are clear. The capacity to improve further is good.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment to above average.
- Ensure assessment fully informs teachers' planning, including within lessons.
- Ensure the curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to apply their learning in relevant and realistic contexts.
- Broaden pupils' cultural horizons.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

All groups of pupils achieve satisfactorily and some do well. Inconsistencies in learning and progress across the school have been considerably reduced, because all teaching is now at least satisfactory and pupils in every classroom are sufficiently engaged in and contributing to their own learning. However, there is still some variation in the quality of learning and pupils' progress from class to class. Occasionally, when teaching is over-lengthy, unclear or lacks challenge, pupils lose interest, but in general they respond enthusiastically and take pride in their work. With better systems for monitoring pupils' progress now established and effective, the school ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make broadly similar progress to others. Ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils is given due priority. The performance of boys has caught up with girls', to the extent that the school is now taking steps to level up the progress of girls in mathematics, with varying success in different classes.

'We are all happy here,' said one pupil, reflecting the general opinion of this warm school community. Attendance is average but all other signs are that most enjoy school. Pupils do their best to abide by the school's five well known 'Golden Rules' and there is very little evidence of unkindness or anti-social actions. Behaviour is good. Pupils say any name calling is dealt with promptly. The school fosters their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through assemblies and teaching which emphasise respect and kindness. At times, for example, when pupils tend their beans in the garden plot, or discuss their philosophical questions, teaching creates wonder and a sense of responsibility. Pupils feel well looked after and look after each other sensitively. They turn confidently to adults in school when upset or worried. Pupils know what they must and must not do to keep themselves safe. Their contribution to the community is satisfactory overall. Some have trained to be Fire Wardens, others are Eco Councillors. Pupils empathise with the plight of people affected by the earthquake in Japan, give charitably and are interested in visitors from outside their own community, but their understanding of global issues and the diverse culture of their own country are more limited. Pupils know how to live a healthy life but some prefer unhealthy choices. In view of their average levels of skill, they are satisfactorily prepared for economic well-being in the future.

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

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory and improving. The majority of lessons seen were good, in that they challenged the different pupils in the class well and engaged everybody's interest through enjoyably varied and purposeful activities. There were lively interactions between pupils and with the teacher: good questions probed pupils' understanding carefully and teachers adapted their plans skilfully to respond to pupils' emerging needs. This helped all groups of pupils to make good progress. A minority of lessons seen were satisfactory, because they to some extent lacked those same qualities. The teacher-led part of the lesson was sometimes too lengthy and teachers did not discover or take enough account of what pupils could, or could not, already do. This limited pupils' contribution and slowed the pace of learning. Discussion and the assessment of progress involved pupils rather superficially and did not always deepen pupils' understanding.

The curriculum is satisfactory. There are good features, such as the effective approaches to learning about sounds and letters observed in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the range of enrichment activities. Cross-curricular topics have been developed to appeal to both boys and girls and with a clearer focus on specific skills. This has helped improve outcomes for older pupils. More ambitious changes are under way to create a broader and more coherent curriculum. Pupils have enjoyed some recent projects, which have enabled them to learn and practise new skills in realistic contexts which are relevant to life beyond school, and which they

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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have enjoyed helping to design. The school is forging links with schools in London and France, intended to broaden and enrich such opportunities. However, at present, these innovations are patchy and it is too early to see sustained impact.

The quality of care, support and guidance is good. Inclusion is a strength of the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified and effectively supported from an early stage. Staff work well with other agencies to secure the well-being of vulnerable pupils, and monitor them carefully. Arrangements to ensure regular attendance are usually effective. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong. Parents and carers find the staff easy to approach and helpful, and have commented favourably about communication about their children’s progress and how they can help it. The school site is secure and staff have good awareness of the school’s clear procedures for safeguarding, child protection and managing risks.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

With a largely new team of staff and a considerably enhanced senior team, the headteacher has, since the last inspection, begun to realise her ambitious vision for the school and its pupils. Action to overcome the school’s weaknesses has been concerted and effective. Decisive action has eradicated inadequate teaching. Some challenging targets have been achieved. Regular, systematic monitoring of performance takes good account of pupils’ progress, the quality of provision and the views of pupils, parents and carers. On this basis, the governing body and school leaders have made an honest and searching self-evaluation. Although the school was over-optimistic in grading itself in some areas, leaders at all levels show a clear grasp of strengths and areas for development and what they need to do next. Senior leaders have invested their resources wisely to move the school forward, focusing on recruitment, professional development and performance management. They have made good use of local authority support, which is no longer needed. Having learned from other schools, they now share their own experience and expertise.

The school’s engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory and improving, although there is scope to make sure the full range of families are involved. Partnership work in the interest of pupils’ well-being is good, but has yet to make a significant impact on their learning. Safeguarding and the protection of children are given high priority. Equality of opportunity is much improved and satisfactory now

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that all groups of pupils achieve as is expected, but would be better if progress were consistently good. Incidents of harassment are virtually unknown, but pupils lack good understanding of people with backgrounds different from their own. The school has begun to implement a well-informed and practical plan to promote community cohesion, which it has reviewed and refreshed. The next stage involves larger numbers of pupils having more contact with other school and communities. This represents a satisfactory start on an adventurous plan.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The school’s moderated assessments indicate that children make strong progress in the two years of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their starting point is typically slightly below what is generally expected, but progress is good and attainment at least average. This good achievement is the result of major changes made by the team of practitioners under the impressive influence of a new and well-informed leader. Expectations are high, and the curriculum is now finely adjusted to the well-understood needs of these children. Teacher-directed work gives children a good foundation in numbers and the link between letters and sounds. Independence is fostered well and the younger children learn well from the slightly older ones in the unified provision. The outdoor environment hums with fascinating activities. It is safely supervised and well used in all areas of learning. Parents and carers are regularly welcomed to join in activities, find it easy to speak to staff and say their children love to be here. All the adults know exactly how to lead activities and assess children’s progress, because they work well as a team and have continuous professional development.

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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so. The school's own recent survey of parents and carers indicates that most are well satisfied with the work of the school. The comments of parents and carers spoken to informally during the inspection were similarly positive, particularly about the approachability and helpfulness of the staff.

## 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	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.

**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.**



26 May 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of The Ellis CE VA Primary School, Barnsley, S73 0PS**

Thank you for the welcome you gave to Mrs Harrison and myself when we visited your school recently. I am writing to let you know the good news that your school no longer needs 'special measures' to help it improve. It gives you a satisfactory quality of education overall, with some good features, and it is improving.

The school's strengths include the Early Years Foundation Stage, the care, support and guidance it gives you, and your behaviour, sense of safety, and understanding of the spiritual, moral and social sides of life. Your headteacher and other leaders have done a great job of making the school better, by carefully watching that you make progress and making changes to improve the way you learn.

At this point, teaching and the curriculum (what you learn) are satisfactory. You are overall average at attending school. You learn and make progress as well as is expected, and attain results at the end of Year 6 which are at least average. You are fairly typical, too, about making healthy choices and contributing positively to the community. By now you will have heard enough of words like 'average' and be wondering how you can do better. These are our recommendations for the school:

- raise attainment to above average
- find out what pupils really can do, and set work which is neither too hard nor too easy for you, so you move forward quickly and surely
- give pupils interesting opportunities to apply what they learn to life outside school
- give pupils a better understanding of the lives of people in other communities.

I wish you every success.

Yours sincerely,  
Susan Bowles  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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