

Eynesbury CofE Primary School

Montagu Street, Eynesbury, St Neots, PE19 2TD

Inspection dates 19–20 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve levels above the national average at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, in the Year 1 phonics screening check and at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards are improving in Key Stage 2 and pupils make good progress throughout the school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a good start to their school life. The environment is attractive and stimulating and teaching is good. Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught particularly well and pupils make rapid progress.
- The school is well led and the strong focus on continual improvement is raising standards throughout the school. The governing body is knowledgeable and experienced and is effective in holding the school's leaders to account.
- Teaching is good and improving as a result of good leadership. Teachers ask challenging questions to encourage pupils to think deeply and deepen their understanding of concepts.
- Behaviour is good and pupils are polite and friendly. The school's rules are clear and pupils follow them. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and they say that they feel safe at school.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils learn about a wide range of subjects and are given opportunities to practise their writing in many of them. Music is taught particularly well and pupils are given the opportunity to play a wide range of instruments and to perform in the school orchestra.
- The school prepare pupils well for life in modern British society. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is a particular strength of the school. Pupils are taught about democracy and are encouraged to develop an understanding of people who have different beliefs or cultural backgrounds.
- Parents say that they are happy with the school. They feel that their children are safe, make good progress and are taught well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The role of subject leaders is underdeveloped. While improvements have been made since the last inspection, leaders are not effective enough in raising standards in their subjects.
- Parents of children in early years are not sufficiently involved in considering their children's progress with the school.
- Pupils do not always make the progress that they should because teaching is sometimes dull and rather slow paced, making it difficult for pupils to sustain their concentration.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching and learning. They observed parts of 19 lessons throughout the school, some jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors looked at pupils' exercise books, listened to pupils read and talked to them about their work. Inspectors examined the school's documentation on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- The view of parents were taken into account including: 93 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire; 25 'free text' responses on Parent View; informal conversations on the playground; one letter that was received and those of the 15 parents who attended a meeting with the lead inspector. Inspectors also listened to the view of staff and evaluated the 24 staff questionnaires that were received.
- Meetings were held with the pupils, staff, parents, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of school documents, including information about safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation, and attendance and behaviour records.

Inspection team

Wendy Varney, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lindsay Hall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school with one class per year group from Nursery to Year 6. The Early Years Foundation Stage admits pupils, part-time, in the term after their third birthday. Reception children attend full time.
- About a fifth of pupils are disabled or have special educational needs. This is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium (15%) is below average. The pupil premium provides additional government funding for those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and the proportion who speak English as an additional language, is below average.
- The school meets current floor standards; these are the minimum expectations, set by the government, for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teaching so that pupils make even better progress by addressing dull teaching that slows the pace of learning and makes it difficult for pupils to sustain their concentration.
- Develop the role of middle leaders so that they are fully effective in raising standards in their subjects, by:
 - arranging for staff to undertake leadership training to extend their understanding of their roles
 - providing opportunities for leaders to monitor their subjects more fully, for example, through observing lessons and scrutinising pupils' work regularly.
- Develop assessment processes in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that parents are fully involved throughout their child's time in Nursery and Reception.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led and the headteacher has a clear passion for the school and a strong desire for it to continue to improve. The headteacher knows each pupil by name and 'meets and greets' the pupils at the start of each day. There is a clear focus on ensuring that the school meets the needs of each individual child.
- The school has a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Parents speak very positively about it and one parent commented that, 'My daughter even wants to come to school at the weekend'. Parents say that staff are approachable and that any issues they raise are dealt with quickly. The school promotes equality of opportunity well. Pupils are taught to value all people and to understand that discrimination is wrong.
- The school's curriculum covers a full range of subjects. The new National Curriculum was introduced in September and staff are continuing to work on the introduction of a new assessment system in light of this. Music is taught very well and pupils reach a good standard. The school has an orchestra and a choir and a wide range of instruments (including cornet, drums, saxophone and flute) are taught. One pupil commented that 'nearly everyone learns an instrument' at the school.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern British society. The school's strong teaching of religious education is used well to broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding of other world faiths. For example, a group of pupils visited places of worship of a number of religions, as part of a recent 'faith tour', and then presented what they had seen to the whole school in assembly. Pupils are taught about the importance of following the rules and of democracy (through the election of the school council).
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is a strong feature of the school. Assembly is used to reinforce key themes, such as the importance of bravery and courage. The school has established a link with a children's centre in Uganda whose choir recently performed at the school. The school is also linked with a school in Australia. Pupils are taught to care about others and they readily undertake charity work such as participation in Operation Christmas Child.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is being spent effectively. The school has used the funding to engage physical education specialists, to teach alongside existing staff, and Year 5 and 6 pupils have been trained as sports leaders. Teaching assistants and lunchtime staff have been trained to develop active play at break times. A wider range of sporting activities is now in place including increased participation in sporting events and competitions.
- The pupil premium is being used effectively to raise standards and to ensure equality of opportunity. For example, the grant is sometimes used to pay for instrumental lessons for individual pupils and the school is rightly proud of pupils' successes in this area. A variety of interventions are in place to support individual pupils and this provision is reviewed regularly.
- Arrangements for safeguarding children are sound and effective. The school ensures that all statutory requirements are met.
- The school receives effective support from the local authority. A local authority advisor visits every half term and the local authority has also brokered support from an external advisor. Very recently, the local authority arranged for the school to be involved in a school-to-school peer review programme and the headteacher is finding this to be a useful process.
- The role of subject leaders is underdeveloped. Most monitoring activity is done by the school's senior leaders and subject leaders do not routinely monitor their individual subjects (for example, by observing lessons or by looking at pupils' books). Not all subject leaders have undertaken training courses to develop their middle leadership skills. They do not yet show the knowledge, drive and experience to lead their subjects to a higher level.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors know the school well and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The governing body has a good range of knowledge, skills and experience. Governors understand the data they are given on the school's performance and are able to use it to hold the headteacher to account.
- Governors know the quality of teaching at the school well. They do not rely exclusively on information from the school's leaders but use the local authority's visits to provide assurance that internal judgements are correct.
- Governors have appropriate involvement in the school's performance management processes. They receive detailed, anonymised, information from the headteacher in order for them to make decisions on pay. The link between pay and performance is clear.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are sensible, responsible and work and play well together.
- 'Respect' is the school's key word in teaching pupils how to respond towards other people and pupils are taught this from the time they join the school. The school uses a restorative approach to dealing with conflicts and 'respect agreements' are drawn up to ensure that issues are not repeated. Pupils are taught to use a traffic light system to decide whether they can deal with an incident themselves, whether they need to involve a peer mediator or whether they need an adult to help.
- The school has a behaviour management system that is used in all classrooms. Pupils are used to the 'behaviour cloud' and know the system well. The school code of conduct is well established and each class draws up its own set of rules at the beginning of each year.
- Pupils take pride in their work, ensuring that it is neat and well presented. The work in pupils' exercise books is of good quality. Pupils are given responsibilities around the school (for example, setting up the hall for assembly) and carry out their duties sensibly.
- Attendance rates are above the national average and improving.
- Pupils usually show good attitudes to learning and behave well. Lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour. However, pupils' attitudes to learning are not consistent. In some lessons, when teaching delivery is less dynamic, pupils are not as engaged with their learning as they could be.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe at school and their parents feel that they are safe too.
- Pupils are taught about a range of safety issues, for example, fire safety, internet safety and 'scoot smart' (how to stay safe when riding your scooter), at a level appropriate to their age.
- Pupils feel safe from bullying and have confidence that school staff will deal with issues when they arise. School records show that bullying is rare and that incidents are dealt with thoroughly and appropriately.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved and is now good. Performance management has been used effectively to raise standards in teaching. However, the emphasis now needs to be on continuing to improve the consistency of good and better teaching rather than on being able to teach an 'outstanding' lesson as a standalone unit.
- Teachers plan well to meet the needs of all the pupils in the class. The work in pupils' books shows that the most-able pupils are given sufficient challenge. Disabled pupils and those with special educational

needs are also given appropriate challenge and support.

- Good relationships are evident in classrooms and staff know their pupils well. Teaching assistants are used well to support learning. Staff use probing questions well to encourage pupils to think more deeply and to assess their understanding.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their writing across a range of subjects. Teachers use links between subjects well to provide as many opportunities as possible to write for a range of purposes and in different styles.
- The quality of teachers' marking is developing. In some classes pupils are given clear 'next steps' to develop their work and are beginning to respond directly to teachers' comments. However, this is not yet consistent across all classes and all teachers. Assessment is accurate and peer marking and self assessment are being used well. A system of 'hot' and 'cold' tasks (that is, before and after teaching input) is being used well to show the progress pupils make in a topic.
- Teaching of spelling and grammar is now a main focus throughout the school and standards are improving rapidly. The teaching of phonics is already a strength and staff focus strongly on extended pupils' vocabulary at every opportunity.
- A member of staff has completed a MaST course to become a qualified mathematics specialist teacher. As a result, she is able to provide specialist coaching for members of staff and teaching in mathematics is improving as a result. The school is involved in a project, with other local schools, to develop deeper understanding of specific mathematics skills.
- A minority of parents said that they feel that the school gives too much homework to pupils. Inspectors do not agree with that this is the case; the school's homework policy is a matter for the school to decide but it is reasonable and proportionate for the pupils' age and stage.
- Although teaching over time is good, on occasions teachers' dull delivery slows the pace of learning. When teaching lacks pace and does not engage the pupils' interest, the pupils struggle, understandably, to sustain their concentration.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Early Year Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly typical of their age, although there is variation from year to year. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the proportion who reached a good level of development was well above the national average this year.
- Phonics is taught particularly well and pupils make good progress. They apply the skills that they are taught in their phonics lessons in other situations. For example, in the Reception Year, pupils used chalk to write words such as 'ring', 'vest' and 'box' on the playground floor, independently.
- The proportion of pupils who reached the required level in the Year 1 phonics screening check was well above the national average this year. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average and rising.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are rising overall and are broadly in line with the national average. Standards are below the national average in mathematics and in spelling and grammar. School data show that pupils in each year group make good progress across a range of subjects and that standards are continuing to rise.
- Pupils read widely and well. They are able to name their favourite authors and talk about books that they have read.
- Pupils with disabilities and those that have special educational needs make good progress from their individual starting points. Provision for this group of pupils is good and support is managed well.

- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well and make the same good progress as their peers.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. At the end of Key Stage 2, in reading, pupils achieved above the national average and above the level of achieved by their classmates. In writing, pupils were about a term behind all pupils nationally and half a term behind their classmates. In mathematics, pupils were about three terms behind all pupils nationally and two terms behind their classmates. In spelling, pupils were about two terms behind all pupils nationally in spelling and grammar and about a term behind their classmates. The attainment gap between pupils entitled to pupil premium and all other pupils has closed in reading and is narrowing in all other areas.
- The most-able pupils are well challenged and make good progress. The work in their exercise books shows that they are given more independent work to do and tasks designed to 'stretch' them. The improvements in teaching and standards overall have not yet had an impact on the achievement of the most-able pupils in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2.

The early years provision

is good

- The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a high-quality learning environment for children at the earliest stages of their school careers. The classrooms are attractive, stimulating and well-equipped and pupils benefit from a large, well-designed, outdoor area.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage leader was new to the post in September and has had little time to develop in the role. Transition arrangements into the Early Years Foundation Stage, and from it into Year 1, are good. Children behave well, understand routines and follow the rules. They are keen to learn and settle to a range of tasks quickly.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. They support children's play well and know when to intervene and when to 'step back'. They promote good language and communication skills, when speaking with the children, and develop children's vocabulary at every opportunity.
- Opportunities for developing early literacy skills are particularly well developed. Phonics is taught very well and pupils make rapid progress. Children are given lots of opportunities for mark making and handwriting is taught alongside phonics skills.
- Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is accurate and has been moderated recently by the local authority. However, assessment is not as well developed as it could be because parents are not sufficiently involved in the ongoing review of their children's progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	110820
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	441986

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karl Wainwright
Headteacher	Helen Rouse
Date of previous school inspection	23 October 2012
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