

Eynesbury Church of England Primary School

Montagu Street, Eynesbury, St Neots, PE19 2TD

Inspection dates 23–24 October 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are no better than average.
- Progress in reading, writing and mathematics is not consistently good for all pupils.
- The progress made by pupils in mathematics is not as good as that made in English.
- Although there is some good teaching, it is not good in all classes and the teaching of mathematics is weaker than the teaching of English.
- In a few classes, planning of learning for pupils does not always take into account what they learnt in previous years and what they already know.
- Advice given to pupils as to how they can improve is not always clear and, sometimes, they are not given the opportunity to respond.
- The senior leadership team is relatively new and has not yet developed all the skills needed to check for good progress in all areas of the school thoroughly.

The school has the following strengths

- Last year, pupils made much better progress in all subjects, and particularly in reading.
- Some teaching in the school is good and at times outstanding.
- Behaviour is good throughout the school, both in and out of lessons.
- Children get a good start to learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress.
- Pupils have plenty of opportunities to take part in musical and sporting activities.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils is a strength of the school and is evident in all areas of school life.
- The headteacher has a clear idea of how to improve the school and, with the new leadership team, is already improving pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- The governing body is very supportive of the school, and is increasingly effective in holding the headteacher and staff to account for the school's performance – which showed improvement last year.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 21 lessons or parts of lessons, of which seven were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, school staff, including senior leaders, and a representative of the local authority. Informal discussions were held with parents.
- The inspectors took account of the 54 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), parent written communications and previous questionnaires carried out by the school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at: information from the school's checks on its performance, school improvement plans, analysis and tracking of pupils' progress, leaders' records of classroom observations and safeguarding arrangements. They also sampled pupils' work, listened to pupils read and checked information on pupils' attendance.

Inspection team

Susan Hughes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Isobel Randall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding to help particular pupils) is below average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and of those who speak English as an additional language are both lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is above average, and the proportion of those supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The senior leadership team with its current membership has been in place since September 2012.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, so that all pupils make consistently good progress, particularly in Year 3, through ensuring:
 - work in class is well matched to pupils' different abilities, especially in mathematics lessons
 - teaching and the planning of learning are based on accurate knowledge of pupils' current understanding of the subjects taught and what is needed for them to make better progress
 - marking of pupils' work and other guidance from teachers give pupils clear advice on how they can improve and also time to do the things that are pointed out to them.
- Strengthen the leadership and management by ensuring:
 - pupils' learning is thoroughly checked when they move between year groups and key stages
 - all senior and middle leaders have the skills required to analyse and make good use of pupils' progress data
 - leaders hold all staff accountable for the achievement of pupils within their area of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards are broadly average by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Standards in reading writing and mathematics improved last year in both key stages because pupils made much better progress than in previous years.
- Good progress was made in most year groups last year. However, progress was slower in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 3, and in mathematics in Year 4. Generally very good progress in reading means that pupils made better progress in English than in mathematics.
- Pupils start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills slightly below those typically expected for their age. Although the level of skills on starting school changes from year group to year group, children make good progress and typically enter Key Stage 1 with broadly average standards.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to that of other pupils. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language make outstanding progress in reading and good progress in other subjects. Teaching is very effective in giving these pupils confidence and they get lots of practice in speaking in lessons.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics – better than that of most other pupils. The additional funding is used very well to provide extra materials and opportunities for teaching and learning in small groups, with work set at the right level for each individual.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is weaker in some classes than others. Where teaching is good, tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities. However, this approach is not consistent across the school and in some mathematics lessons all pupils start with similar work, which means that more-able pupils are not given work that is demanding enough for their ability levels.
- Teachers do not always check pupils' levels of subject knowledge well enough. In the best lessons, work successfully builds on what pupils already know. For example, Year 6 pupils were able to make good progress with ordering fractions because the teacher accurately checked what they already knew about equivalent fractions. However, such accurate assessment is not consistently used in all lessons and, in some classes, pupils work at levels that are either too easy or too difficult for them.
- Marking of pupils' work is not consistently good. Literacy books are well marked in most classes. In the best examples, the use of 'stars and wishes' gives pupils a good understanding of how to improve. However, marking is not so thorough in other subjects. Marking in mathematics requires pupils to correct work but does not direct them to the next steps in their learning.
- Guidance on how pupils can improve their work is not always effective enough. Pupils in Key Stage 2 generally understand the level at which they are working in English and mathematics. Targets written in their books – saying what they should be working on to improve – are clearly linked to subject progress, but steps as to how to achieve this progress are less clear. When

guidance is provided, pupils are not always given the time or the opportunity to respond by doing the things pointed out to them.

- Where teaching is good, teachers set high standards and encourage pupils through praise and encouragement. For example, in French lessons, Years 3 and 4 pupils were eager to respond to the teacher's questions, even though she was critical of their pronunciation, because she praised their perseverance and improvement.
- Support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. Additional adults in the classroom work sensitively and unobtrusively so that they do not interrupt what the teacher is doing but provide appropriate support to pupils where needed. Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding have the opportunity for individual help or to work in small groups where the work is well planned to help them make good progress.
- Reading standards are improving rapidly because the teaching of the sounds letters make (phonics) is well taught. This is reflected in the good results of the national phonic screening check for Year 1 and shows in the obvious love of reading that so many pupils have.
- Homework is provided and marked regularly. While some pupils say that it is too easy, others feel it is set at the right level for them. Most parents feel that their children receive appropriate homework for their ages.
- Teachers consistently set pupils good examples as mature and responsible people. They encourage pupils to be equally responsible and develop good social and moral skills and understanding. For example, pupils keep a sensitive eye on classmates who may need support and readily share materials and ideas.
- The teaching of music is a strength of the school. Pupils in every year group get the opportunity to play musical instruments, take part in musical activities and perform. During the inspection, music was being played by different pupils, either individually, in small groups or in class lessons, most of the time.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour in and around school is good. Pupils are polite to each other and to adults, stepping aside for people to pass and holding doors open. They talk about the importance of respect for themselves, each other and their environment and reflect this in their behaviour.
 - Pupils have a clear understanding about what bullying is. They can talk about different types of bullying, such as cyber-bullying, racism, physical and emotional bullying. They say that the traffic-light system for behaviour works well. Any poor behaviour and rare examples of bullying are well dealt with.
 - Peer mediators from Year 6 are held in high regard by pupils. They receive two days' training and are well equipped to deal with minor incidents at playtime. Pupils say that they are good at their job and appreciate them being around.
 - Pupils know how to stay safe in a range of situations. For example, Year 6 pupils talked enthusiastically about visiting the fire station the previous year and learning how to keep safe and respond to potentially unsafe situations. They learnt about what to do in an emergency and
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some basic first aid.

- Pupils understand road safety and can talk about keeping safe when playing outside school, for example in the park. The school sees the teaching of water safety and swimming lessons as particularly important as it is situated so close to the river.
- All parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire agree that their children feel safe in school and are well looked after. They also all agree that their children are happy to come to school. Most pupils attend regularly.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher is dedicated to the school's improvement. She has developed a new leadership team, which has clearly defined areas of responsibility. However, not all members of the team show enough confidence in analysis of data on pupils' progress to be able to identify where it is not good enough across all subjects.
- Pupils learn from an appropriate range of subjects. Some subjects are covered as topics and literacy, numeracy and communication skills are increasingly well developed within themes, such as the Victorians or Ancient Egypt. Occasionally, however, some aspects are repeated or not developed effectively as the continuity of learning between year groups and key stages is not checked closely enough.
- The leaders and managers of the school are very clear about its strengths and where it needs to improve. Plans are in place to address weaker areas identified through accurate self-evaluation. Consequently, action taken to tackle weaknesses is well focused. For example, a teacher has been assigned to a specialist mathematics training course so that she can lead improvement in the quality of mathematics teaching in the school.
- Teachers' performance is checked against how much progress their pupils make. Targets for teachers are used to measure whether promotion up the pay scale is justified by the results achieved. Leaders' regular observations of teaching and learning check accurately on how well each individual teacher is doing. However, good teaching is not yet consistent across all years, although there is, already, plenty of good practice as shown by pupils' improved progress last year, especially that of disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium.
- There are good partnerships with local schools. Staff share good practice and undertake joint training. Pupils have opportunities to work with those from other schools, developing social skills and offering competition and challenge. The movement of pupils from primary to secondary school is smooth because of the way the schools share staff and work so well together.
- A strong sense of spirituality underpins all the school does. Close links with the church and assemblies develop the teachers' and pupils' sense of purpose. Pupils respond in a respectful and mature way to opportunities to pray and reflect. The importance of taking time for thought is illustrated in the 'thought pebble' jars by the entrance and prayer chains made at harvest.
- The school gives pupils lots of opportunities to discuss moral issues through a project to develop social and emotional aspects of learning. This initiative is very helpful to their personal development and reflected in their good behaviour and clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils also discuss issues currently arising in the national news and learn to appreciate different

viewpoints. They are encouraged to identify worthwhile causes for fund-raising in school and react positively to the initiatives pursued.

- In addition to developing a love of music and the arts, the school promotes understanding and respect for other cultures. Through religious education, pupils learn about and visit different places of worship. The visits of the Destiny Africa Children's Choir brings first-hand experience of African music and culture. A link with Eynesbury School in Australia has just been confirmed.
- The local authority has supported the school through regular visits from an adviser and by providing training sessions for subject leaders. The local authority recognised weaker areas of the school's performance where improvement was required. For example, it helped school leaders to engage a specialist from outside the authority to support them in collecting and analysing data on pupils' progress and achievement. Consequently, staff are better informed in planning learning and leaders are better equipped to identify weaker progress and take action to support improvement. The impact of leaders' better understanding of performance in every class is not yet apparent in performance in every class.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The impact of the governors on the school's improvement continues to strengthen. The governors take an active role in checking on the school's performance. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have become more involved in school improvement planning. Visits to the school are regularly undertaken by all governors. The visits have a sharp focus linked to school improvement priorities and are fully reported back to the rest of the governing body. The Chair of the Governing Body has a good understanding of key skills needed by the governing body. He has recently recruited new governors who can bring these skills and other expertise to support the school's improvement. This means that governors are now more effective in holding the headteacher and senior leaders to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and attainment, which is reflected in the better progress pupils' achieved last year. Governors make sure that teachers do not move up the pay scale unless they can show good teaching and good progress by pupils and are now rigorous in ensuring that this happens. The governors have a clear overview of how pupil premium funding is spent and how it impacts on pupils' progress. Their careful analysis of the performance of the pupils involved and the support they receive makes sure that the money is well spent and that these pupils make good progress. However, they are less well informed about the progress of pupils in general. Governors ensure that all requirements for the safeguarding of pupils are met.

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	401159

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	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karl Wainwright
Headteacher	Helen Rouse
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2010
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