

Epsom Primary School

Pound Lane, Epsom, KT19 8SD

Inspection dates

2–3 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 are not high enough.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good. Opportunities to offer pupils a high level of challenge and deepen their learning are missed in some lessons.

The school has the following strengths:

- The strong leadership and very high expectations of the headteacher, together with leaders and governors have rapidly improved the quality of teaching across the school. Pupils' standards are rising as a result.
- Most pupils from all backgrounds make rapid progress in their learning as a result of improved teaching.
- Pupils demonstrate a love of learning and have increasingly high expectations of themselves. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Pupils are cared for very well and feel safe and happy in the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors saw teaching in every class. They observed 19 lessons of which thirteen were observed jointly with the headteacher or other senior leaders. One assembly and pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime were also evaluated.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other members, the headteacher, staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including supervision and support for pupils who need extra help. They examined pupils' work in their exercise books and on classroom and corridor wall displays, and heard groups of pupils read.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents including plans for the school's future development, lesson plans, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings, records of how pupils' learning is monitored and records of how the quality of teaching is checked.
- The views of parents and carers were taken into account, including those expressed in 170 responses to the online Parent View survey and in discussions with the inspectors at the end of the school day.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at 55 returned questionnaires and discussions with several members of staff.

Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Keith Homewood

Additional Inspector

Christine Bennett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the additional government funding known as the pupil premium is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Some of these pupils have speech, language and communication needs, while others have moderate learning difficulties. A small number of pupils have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- Pupils come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. Nearly half the pupils are of White British heritage.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided with two morning nursery sessions and three Reception classes.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is slightly higher than in most other schools.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2012. A Strategic Teaching and Learning Coach was appointed in April 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching across the school is consistently good or better so that all groups of pupils, including the most able, receive a high level of challenge in all classes.
- Ensure that pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics as the end of Key Stage 2 are at least in line with national expectations.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement and is not yet good because too few pupils make the progress they are capable of to attain well by end of Key Stage 2.
- A very large majority of children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills at lower than expected levels for their age. As a result, most children make reasonable progress but still have skills at lower levels than expected by the time they leave the Reception Year.
- Pupils' results in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved after a period of decline. As a result, more pupils now reach expected standards in these subjects than in most other schools. Pupils' results in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 remain slightly lower than in most other schools.
- Pupils' results in national tests in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 have also improved after a period of decline, but remain below those found in most other schools. Pupils' results in national tests in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 have not improved and also remain below those found in most other schools.
- At the end of Key Stage 1 the most-able pupils achieve as well as their peers nationally. However, fewer of the most-able pupils reach the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 2 than in most other schools.
- Over the past year pupils' progress has begun to accelerate. Almost all pupils from Year 1 to Year 6, including those from all cultural backgrounds represented in the school, are beginning to make good progress in their reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils made good progress during the majority of lessons seen during the inspection.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding generally attain lower results than other pupils in the school and compared to their peers nationally. However, the gap in progress between eligible pupils and other pupils is being closed successfully by the school. The gap in performance at the end of Key Stage 2 has narrowed to about one term, and there is no longer any gap at the end of Key Stage 1. Eligible learners now make more rapid progress than other pupils in their classes, often from considerably low starting points.
- Most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make faster progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Several of these pupils also make more rapid progress than other pupils in their classes.
- Pupils enjoy reading and like the way that reading is taught in school. Pupils read in school every day and the books they read are interesting and linked to their interests well.
- Pupils present most of their work to a good standard because of their teachers' high expectations during lessons.
- A very large majority of parents and carers expressed positive views about the achievement and progress of their children.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement as it does not ensure that Key Stage 2 pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils' results in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 remain too low. However, the quality of teaching has greatly improved over the previous year, with the result that most pupils now make rapid progress from their starting points.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and encourage them to do their best. Pupils' aspirations for their learning and quality of work are rising as a result.
- The best lessons seen were pacy, highly engaging and contained a high level of challenge. Teachers demonstrated strong knowledge about their subjects and conveyed this clearly. For example, one good Year 6 mathematics lesson about how to find multiples featured a good use

of questioning and dialogue and a rising level of challenge as pupils were led through a well-structured sequence of activities. This led to strong learning by all pupils.

- Most teaching features activities and support well matched to the needs of individuals and most groups of pupils. For example, in a Year 1 phonics lesson, groups of pupils were given different tasks with levels of challenge that matched their needs and abilities, and pupils with English as an additional language received one-to-one support that enabled them to get the most out of the lesson and make good progress.
- Teaching assistants are often used very effectively to support the learning of pupils of a range of abilities, both in and out of lessons. Some pupils receive additional one-to-one or small-group support in basic literacy and numeracy. This has contributed to the rapid progress and to pupils' improving results.
- Some teaching lacks pace or misses opportunities to extend learning as far as possible, especially the learning of the most-able pupils. For example, in one mathematics lesson an opportunity was missed to explore the relationship between the numbers 21 and 42, with the result that pupils' knowledge about number was not developed as much as possible.
- Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage look after children well. Planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is based on children's interests and needs. Children learn and make progress during adult-led activities. Their learning is less effective when led by themselves as they sometimes lose focus and do not get as much as possible out of the activities available to them.
- Well-presented displays of pupils' work and other aspects of the school, such as the awards it has received for the international content of its curriculum, encourage pupils to value learning.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' achievement is accurate. All teachers offer pupils feedback about their work. Pupils receive clear advice about the strengths of their work and how they can improve it. However, there is some inconsistency in the way that work is marked across the school. Pupils' errors in spelling and punctuation are not always pointed out.
- Homework is used effectively for pupils to practise their skills and apply their knowledge. The school operates an effective and supportive homework club' that develops parents' and carers' skills in ensuring their children complete their homework successfully.
- Pupils interviewed by the inspectors spoke highly of the teaching they received. Pupils stated that they enjoyed their lessons and said that their teachers supported their learning well and made learning fun.
- A very large majority of parents and carers who left an opinion for the inspectors thought that their children were taught well and made good progress as a result.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils demonstrate a love of learning and have increasingly high expectations of themselves. However, pupils' attention sometimes drifts away from their learning in the minority of lessons that lack pace. Behaviour and safety of pupils are not outstanding because many pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunities to develop the necessary skills to take responsibility for their own learning, and are over reliant on adults for guidance.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, in the playground, in the library and when travelling around the school is friendly, courteous and calm. This was witnessed during lessons, during the lunchtime break, and in discussions held with groups of pupils.
- Relationships between pupils and adults and pupils and other pupils are good. Staff and pupils act with respect for each other at all times.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and how to protect themselves while using the internet. They understand different types of bullying (including cyber and prejudice-based bullying) and feel there is little in the school. Pupils approve of the school's management of behaviour, including lunchtime detentions, and feel that any poor behaviour is properly dealt with.
- The school operates an effective behaviour management system that encourages pupils' good

behaviour at all times. The school gives clear advice about different levels of behaviour and how these will be responded to. This ensures that pupils monitor their own behaviour carefully and keep it within acceptable limits.

- Inspectors did not witness any low-level disruption during any of the lessons they observed.
- Punctuality and attendance have improved as a result of the school's imaginative and highly effective outreach to parents and carers, including parents and carers who need encouragement to engage with the school. Attendance, including that of pupils' eligible for pupil premium funding, is now slightly above that found in most other schools.
- An overwhelming majority of staff and a very large majority of parents and carers who expressed an opinion thought that behaviour in the school was good and well managed.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and governors have very high expectations and are strongly committed to rapid school improvement. The school's senior leadership team has been reorganised very well and is in a very strong position to lead further improvements to the school. Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because leaders have not yet secured consistently good teaching across the school and as a result pupils' progress at the end of Key Stage 2 is slower than that found nationally.
- The recently appointed Strategic Teaching and Learning Coach is used effectively to coach and support other members of the teaching team. Teachers are offered good extra training linked to the school's priorities. The quality of teaching has strongly improved as a result and all inadequate teaching has been eradicated.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors monitor the quality of teaching and of pupils' achievement systematically, thoroughly, accurately and effectively. Improvement planning, the performance management of staff and decisions about pay awards are explicitly linked to targets relating to improvements in pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Pupil premium funding has been spent on one-to-one and small-group support for eligible pupils. This has contributed to the gap in progress between eligible pupils and other pupils being narrowed successfully by the school.
- The school has reorganised its suite of subjects so that it is in line with the new National Curriculum and has received recognition for the strong international content of its curriculum. The school intends to use sports premium funding to provide physical education training for staff and to develop the school's sports field.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the broad range of subjects taught, including history, dance and extended topic work. The school also offers additional experiences, such as a formal evening awards ceremony, that promote pupils' positive attitudes to learning and achievement. The school promotes equality and the valuing of people from all different cultures.
- The school ensures that all pupils are safe. It keeps detailed, thorough and up-to-date safeguarding records and meets statutory requirements. It works very well with other agencies to support the safety and well-being of pupils and ensure that they can get the most out of school.
- The school has established strong partnerships with the local authority and local schools. The local authority has helped ensure the accuracy of the school's assessment of its pupils.
- The highly effective headteacher and school leadership team have the confidence of the school's governing body, the local authority, a very large majority of parents and carers and all of the staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are trained, active and capable. They have a good understanding of information about pupils' achievement and how it compares with similar schools nationally. They offer a

good level of challenge to the school and monitor the school's success in improving teaching and raising pupils' achievement. Governors set the headteacher pertinent performance management targets focused on securing improvements in pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. They ensure and monitor the efficient management of financial resources, including the effective use of pupil premium funding. Governors have a strong visible presence in the school and meet their statutory duties well.

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	124956
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	426665

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	485
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Wilcox
Headteacher	Emma Smith
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 October 2010
Telephone number	01372 720608
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