

Eardisley CofE Primary School

Eardisley, Hereford, HR3 6NS

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress from their different starting points. Progress is rapidly improving especially in mathematics and reading.
- Pupils' work in art and design and when using new technology is outstanding. A wide range of imaginative topics support learning and have a positive impact on pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The outstanding behaviour and safety have not only been maintained since the previous inspection but improved further through the introduction of a range of values which have made pupils vastly more effective learners.
- The headteacher has provided outstanding and innovative leadership since she took up her post. The school has an excellent culture of helping staff improve their work through training including in leadership skills.
- The improvements made to pupils' progress and their learning habits since the previous inspection show the school has an outstanding capacity to improve still further.
- The governing body provides an excellent level of challenge and support for the school and has a very positive impact on promoting the school's place at the centre of the local community.
- All staff in the school share a clear commitment to raising standards and improving teaching and learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' standards in writing are not yet as good as in other subjects and their progress is not as rapid.
- Not enough of the teaching is consistently outstanding to ensure all pupils make excellent progress.
- Teachers do not always make clear to pupils exactly what they need to do to improve or to achieve the purpose of the lesson.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in seven lessons. All of these were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher, governors, pupils, staff, a representative of the local authority and parents.
- Samples of pupils' work were examined. Some pupils read books with the inspector.
- The inspector took account of the 33 responses to the online survey, Parent View.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils' progress and attainment produced by the school, procedures for safeguarding, the school's own evaluations of its work, reports to the governing body and the plans for raising attainment.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Eardisley CofE Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The new head teacher was appointed two years ago and the staffing has changed significantly since the previous inspection.
- More pupils join or leave the school at times other than is usual.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The school has a below-average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Very few pupils are supported by the pupil premium grant which, in this school, provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- 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?

- Raise standards in writing by providing more opportunities for pupils to use their skills by producing longer pieces of writing in a range of other subjects.
- Make more of the teaching consistently outstanding by:
 - continually making clear to pupils during lessons how they can improve and reach their next level
 - ensuring the pupils are fully aware of the purpose of activities and how these will support their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When they start school, children have levels of knowledge and understanding which are broadly in line with those typically found at their age. Children often have writing skills and demonstrate a level of independence that is below that expected. They make good progress in the Reception Year and their achievement is close to that expected when they enter Year 1.
- Standards in the 2013 national tests at the end of Year 2 were below average in writing, average in reading and above average in mathematics. Attainment at the end of Year 6 has been consistently around average over a number of years and the school is striving successfully to help pupils make more rapid progress. For example, since the previous inspection the work done in mathematics to help more pupils reach the higher levels has had a very positive impact on overall achievement in that subject.
- A high proportion of pupils joins and leaves the school at times other than usual. Although the school provides for them well and they rapidly make good progress from the good teaching available, the small size of the year groups means they have a big impact on overall outcomes. The current data on pupils' performance shows a clear picture of rapidly rising standards, especially in reading and mathematics, and progress markedly above what is expected nationally.
- The results of the Year 1 check on pupils' skills in linking letters and sounds (phonics) show standards in 2013 were well above the national average and a huge improvement over the previous year. This was due to the headteacher making rapid changes to the way phonics was taught and to the resources used. The current standards in early reading skills show a good level of knowledge and understanding, and a growing enjoyment of books and reading. In Year 1, for example, a pupil excitedly made the link between a story about a weather vane and the one he could see on the church tower across the road from the school.
- Standards in writing remain below those in reading and mathematics. The school has recognised this and has a range of plans in place to help raise standards. Changes to the teaching of handwriting have improved the presentation of pupils' work. The high quality teaching of phonics, especially in Years 1 and 2, is helping improve pupils' spelling skills. There are not yet enough opportunities for pupils to use their skills by writing at more length and in different subjects or for different purposes. Even so, they are capable of some mature and imaginative writing such as the poems about Hiawatha produced by Years 5 and 6.
- Currently in the school, progress in Year 6 is good and pupils are on track to achieve standards that improve on last year's, especially in mathematics where almost half of the year group are on track to achieve higher than expected standards. This reflects the ongoing picture of rapid improvement.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive effective extra help, and this is evident in their current good progress. The school's data show that there are no significant differences in the achievement of other groups. The number of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is too small to comment on their attainment without identifying individuals. However, many make progress at least in line with, and often better than, that of their classmates.

The quality of teaching**is good**

- Teaching is never less than good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. A small proportion of the teaching is outstanding and the school is keen to ensure more is of this quality. Teachers, and support staff, are very positive about the direction the school has taken since the appointment of the current headteacher. However, the development of a consistently outstanding team has been hindered by a significant number of staff changes, both temporary and permanent.
- The school is continually seeking to improve practice in teaching and the headteacher has encouraged staff to be innovative. For example, the improvements in mathematics teaching, well led by the subject leader, have been partly the result of a project with a national association of teachers of mathematics. The school was able to make good use of outside expertise and this developed to involve other schools locally.
- Teachers create a very positive and purposeful climate for learning in classrooms. A large part of this is based on the values introduced to the school by the headteacher. Pupils and staff are able to talk about how these help create the conditions for excellent learning. For example, pupils themselves decided 'determination' was one of the most important values that would help them become successful learners. Pupils talk positively about how they enjoy lessons and how the teachers help them learn new things.
- The current Reception Year is being taught as a separate group for the first time for many years. The teacher and teaching assistant are developing a good quality of provision for the children. There are much improved relationships with the local private nursery provision. In addition, the support of volunteer helpers has a very positive impact on children's learning. This was evident in the outstanding efforts made by a friend of the school to make an excellent 'mud kitchen' for children's role play.
- At times, teachers do not make clear to pupils the link between activities and the learning they want them to make. Because of this they do not build on their previous learning. This happened for example when Year 1 and 2 pupils were following up a complex and challenging tongue twister activity with a more simple whole class task. Pupils do not always know what they need to do to reach the next level.
- Most lessons have a good pace and teachers use time and support staff well to ensure all pupils stay attentive and on task. For example, in a well-taught lesson in Years 3 and 4 the teaching assistants led a variety of groups and activities very effectively and used their initiative to support specific pupils to help move their learning on. This was particularly effective in supporting two of the most-able mathematicians so that their challenging activity could be successfully completed.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and pupils often have time to respond to the teacher's helpful comments. However, the feedback from teachers in lessons does not always make clear exactly what pupils need to do, or what their next steps should be, to reach the next level. Even so, the effective use of targets pasted into books to help pupils' self and peer assess the success of their learning helps promote a mature approach to their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**are outstanding**

- At the previous inspection these aspects were found to be consistently major strengths of the school. The current leadership has built on them even further through a range of innovative ideas and activities, and pupils' attitudes towards school are exemplary.

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They have excellent attitudes towards their learning in lessons and talk enthusiastically about how much they enjoy coming to school and learning new things. In all lessons observed pupils were very well behaved and deeply engaged in their work. For example, in Years 1 and 2 pupils responded well to some excellent teaching of phonics and talked knowledgeably about the sounds they have learned.
- When they start school, children quickly gain an interest in learning and a real thirst for knowledge. For example, in Reception, one group worked very effectively with cubes to solve some addition problems. They show real enjoyment in their work and very proudly volunteered to show the inspector a display about volcanoes. Older pupils are polite, friendly and, during the inspection, were happy to talk to the inspector about their work and school life. They spoke about particular things they enjoy, such as science and geography or different sports.
- The quality of presentation of pupils' work is high throughout the school and shows the pride pupils take in their efforts. The school provides a helpful range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and to learn more about the world around them. Membership of the school council and the nature club ensures pupils have a clear voice in many aspects of school life.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Parents are very positive about how happy and safe their children are at school as well as how effective communication is between school and home. Pupils say they feel safe in school and their views are supported by parents. Leaders ensure that entry to the school is very secure and all staff are rigorously checked for their suitability.
- Pupils say examples of misbehaviour are rare. They are clear that there is no bullying. Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying, such as through the use of computers or mobile phones. A particular strength of the school is the pastoral care such as that provided by an adult who runs an early morning club for pupils who benefit from a calm start to the day before joining their classmates. This has had an outstanding and measurable impact on specific pupils.
- Attendance figures, although currently slightly above average, do not reflect the work the school puts in to ensure full attendance because of the small size of the year groups. There are no persistent absentees and any patterns of absence are well tracked and monitored.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The leadership and management are outstanding because the headteacher, staff and the governing body all have a clear shared vision, firm commitment and strong ambition to do the best they possibly can for the pupils at the school. The impact of their resolution is evident in pupils' rapidly improving progress and teaching that is at least good across the school.
- The headteacher has introduced a number of innovative improvements to the school since her appointment. She has instilled in the whole school community a clear belief in the values-based learning which is helping pupils develop as mature human beings and very effective learners. Governors, pupils and parents talk very positively and knowledgeably about this exemplary work. It is being used to improve provision in other schools locally, as well as nationally and internationally.
- The headteacher has developed a clear culture of challenge and support in which teachers and other staff work in close partnership. There is a climate of continual improvement and an impressive attitude by all teachers to accept criticism and advice. The headteacher has well-

established links with a range of national organisations which have a very positive impact on practice in the school.

- Although this is a small school with few staff, a major strength has been the development of shared leadership. The headteacher has ensured opportunities for staff to take on more responsibility and train for further leadership roles. The way teachers have shouldered this responsibility reflects their own comments that the school has a culture which is 'all working towards one goal.'
- The school's self-evaluation is very accurate and honest and shows a deep awareness of what remains to be done to improve the school further. There is a shared ambition among all to make Eardisley an outstanding school. As one staff member wrote, 'The culture of the school makes it a wonderful place to work.'
- The outstanding partnerships have been maintained since the previous inspection. The school provides leadership and works closely in a number of ways with other schools and within the local authority and further afield. The local authority rightly recognises the strength of school leadership in the limited support and challenge it needs to provide for the school.
- Funding available through the pupil premium is used well to help eligible pupils to take a full part in school life, and receive, where appropriate, specific resources such as reading books, and additional help from adults. The progress made by these pupils is monitored closely, including by the governing body.
- The use of money available to promote physical education and sporting opportunities is used appropriately with a focus on increasing participation in a number of sporting activities and also on developing training further for teachers, as well as making good use of external expertise. .
- The curriculum is in the process of being very effectively improved in preparation for the next school year when national changes are introduced. Activities are clearly directed at ensuring the learning and progress of the pupils. Topics, such as a full day learning about forensic science, bring learning to life and enabling pupils to use skills in real-life situations. There are an excellent range of sporting and other clubs and extra-curricular activities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides outstanding levels of support and challenge and has a very positive impact on the school's performance. For example, the way governors monitor data to check pupils' progress provides them with in-depth information about the success of the school. Governors check on the school's work through a range of visits, meetings with staff, regular meetings with the headteacher and detailed reports from the school. They also take a full part in school life through helping in school, going on school visits and taking assemblies.
 - Members of the governing body have a sound understanding of the system used to determine teachers' effectiveness in enabling pupils to make progress. Governors check rigorously how effective these systems are applied to improve the quality of teaching. Decisions about teachers' pay are closely and appropriately linked to performance and responsibilities.
 - Governors track finances well and assist the school in deciding how to spend additional money to support pupils eligible for the pupil premium and to extend sports and physical education opportunities.
 - The governing body makes sure that arrangements for pupils' safeguarding meet the current national requirements.

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	116804
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	431498

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	88
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Marcus Small
Headteacher	Bridget Knight
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2009
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