

Elton Community Primary School

Alston Street, Bury, Lancashire BL8 1SB

Inspection dates

7–8 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have not acted swiftly to secure improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and pupils’ outcomes.
- Most pupils’ reading, writing and mathematics skills are below the expected standard. Pupils’ progress in almost all classes across all subjects is inadequate.
- Disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able make insufficient progress.
- Attendance rates are below the national average.
- Middle leaders lack the expertise to effectively drive improvement in their subject areas.
- Teaching is weak. Teachers have low expectations of what pupils can achieve and poor subject knowledge. They do not plan activities that suitably challenge and engage pupils.
- The early years requires improvement because teaching does not stimulate children’s imagination or effectively support their learning.
- Governors have not effectively monitored the school’s performance. Consequently, they have not robustly held leaders to account for improving pupils’ outcomes.
- Where teaching is weak, pupils are often not on task; they become restless and their learning is affected.

The school has the following strengths

- New senior leaders are determined to improve the effectiveness of the school. They have an accurate view of the school’s weaknesses and are taking swift action to tackle the issues. However, it is too early to see any impact of their work.
- Pupils are happy and feel safe and secure.
- Safeguarding is effective.

Full report

In accordance with sections 44(1) and 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school to enable all pupils to make good or better progress by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of pupils' progress and outcomes
 - improving teachers' subject knowledge so that they are able to show and explain concepts well
 - planning lessons that engage and interest pupils
 - assessing pupils' understanding throughout lessons and adapting teaching where needed
 - ensuring that teachers' explanations and the activities set are appropriately challenging for pupils with different abilities
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length and showing pupils how to structure their writing
 - ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to explain their reasoning and use and apply their mathematical skills
 - improving the quality of provision in the early years by ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to develop their number, writing and personal social skills.
- Improve leadership and management, including governance by:
 - rapidly improving the impact of leaders in improving the quality of teaching and learning
 - ensuring that the pupil premium grant is appropriately and effectively spent to rapidly raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils
 - developing the quality of middle leadership so that subject leaders contribute fully to improving teaching and standards in their subject area
 - using performance management more rigorously to hold staff to account for pupils' progress and their leadership responsibilities
 - improving the impact of governors in challenging leaders to bring about rapid improvement
 - increasing pupils' attendance and reducing the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent by engaging parents more effectively
 - ensuring that assessment procedures are robust, leaders identify any underachievement and support programmes are sharp and effective in raising attainment

- developing current initiatives to improve overall effectiveness of the school so that all pupils make good progress.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leadership and management are inadequate. As a result, teaching and learning have not improved and many groups of pupils have made inadequate progress.
- The headteacher is highly ambitious for the pupils and staff. She is proactive, determined and committed to the vision of creating a good school. She has completed a very incisive and accurate analysis of the school's strengths and areas for development and has taken action to tackle weaknesses. However, the drive for school improvement rests heavily on her because there is limited leadership capacity in the school.
- Leadership and management of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been ineffective. Systems for tracking pupils' progress are not tight enough, leaders do not make best use of external agencies and teaching is not sufficiently adapted to meet pupils' needs. The spending of additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has not yielded good progress, except for those pupils who attend the specialist on-site provision because they have impaired hearing.
- Leaders have not spent the funds available for the support of disadvantaged pupils effectively. A lot of money is unspent. Interventions planned for disadvantaged pupils are not effective or sharp enough to bring about rapid improvement. Consequently, these pupils do not make enough progress.
- Leaders do not use assessment information effectively to track pupils' progress, identify underachievement and hold teachers to account for the outcomes of pupils in their classes. Consequently, pupils who are falling behind are not given additional support so that they can quickly catch up to their peers.
- The school's curriculum is poorly planned and fails to interest many pupils. Pupils' books show that there is lack of coverage of subjects beyond English and mathematics. Lessons focus predominantly on low-level activities which do not effectively develop pupils' skills and knowledge across year groups. For example, in science, pupils have limited opportunities to carry out practical scientific investigations. As a result, pupils' skills in drawing effective conclusions from results are weak and undeveloped.
- Middle leaders are being coached by the headteacher to improve their skills so that they can contribute to school effectiveness. They are monitoring assessments and pupils' books in their subject areas. However, they are not leading improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and in standards in their subject areas. Leadership across the school is weak.
- Until recently, leaders have not been rigorous in addressing weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher conducted a thorough teaching and learning analysis to set a baseline from which to measure improvement. She has set clear non-negotiable expectations for daily teaching and has a more robust system for the system for the monitoring of teaching and learning. She visits classes and makes checks on pupils' workbooks regularly.
- Challenging performance targets have been set for staff, which are closely linked to

improving outcomes for pupils. Teachers are receiving a wide range of professional training activities to strengthen their practice. Experienced teachers are developing stronger practice and providing support and guidance to less-experienced teachers. Teachers are also visiting other schools to observe teaching and learning.

- The sports premium is used well to increase the number of pupils taking part in sporting activities.
- The school promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well through subjects such as religious education and personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils learn to appreciate and respect people from different cultures and religions. Pupils develop awareness of the workings of democracy and the rule of law through the school council, as they take part in devising the school rules.

Governance of the school

- There has been substantial recent change in the composition of the governing body. Governors, until recently, have not checked the school's performance effectively. Members have not been aware of the quality of teaching and learning, or of pupils' achievement in each year group and in different subjects.
- Governors have not questioned or challenged leaders sharply enough about action taken or decisions made. Consequently, they have not brought about swift improvement in standards.
- The academy trust has tackled underperformance at leadership level and appointed the current senior leadership team. The trust has recently appointed a director of education, who provides support for school improvement to schools within the trust. The trust has taken recent action to support the school, including through the appointment of a new governing body. Similarly, action has been taken to commission an independent review of the governing body in order to develop governors' skills further.

Safeguarding

- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Recruitment checks are thorough and complete. Rigorous policies and procedures are in place to ensure that pupils are safe. Staff undertake regular training to update their knowledge of child protection procedures. All staff and some governors have recently had training on the 'Prevent' duty so that they can take appropriate action to minimise the risk to pupils of radicalisation. Leaders work with parents and provide guidance on the importance of keeping their children safe online, including the appropriate use of social media.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching is too weak across the school. Therefore, it does not effectively meet pupils' needs and as a result large groups of pupils make inadequate progress.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' progress. In most lessons, pupils are not expected to persevere at a task or to produce outcomes of a high standard.

- Teachers do not have a secure subject knowledge, which means that they are unable to model what is expected of their pupils. For example, in English lessons, when showing pupils how to write, teaching does not unpick fully the language features that pupils need to be able to write effectively. As a result, pupils do not securely develop writing skills and techniques.
- Teaching does not engage and inspire pupils across a range of subjects because activities lack purpose and challenge. Consequently, pupils stop trying hard or lose concentration.
- Teachers do not adapt activities and resources effectively to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. Often, teachers do not vary their questioning to ensure that all pupils are challenged and can understand and participate fully in lessons, particularly the most able. Consequently, most pupils make inadequate progress.
- In mathematics, a lot of time is spent on repeating number work which pupils already understand. Opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in solving mathematical problems or developing their ability to reason are limited. Pupils' workbooks show that teachers do not address errors with pupils or plug gaps in knowledge for some pupils.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers focus too much on the activity that pupils will do as opposed to the skill that is being taught. Tasks are often low-level. There are few opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes or consolidate basic skills.
- Teachers' feedback is of limited effectiveness. This hinders pupils' progress further.
- There is some effective practice across the school. Here teaching builds upon what pupils already know and understand. Opportunities are provided to enable pupils to apply their skills successfully. For example, in a key stage 2 mathematics lesson pupils were able to use their knowledge and skills to solve complex problems involving coordinates. The teacher checked on pupils' understanding, probed their responses and moved learning on effectively.
- Teaching assistants are sometimes deployed effectively. Some work well when questioning, explaining and adapting learning to secure pupils' understanding. However, on other occasions, teaching assistants are less effective because they do not allow pupils to think for themselves. As a result, pupils become over-reliant on a high level of support, which limits the development of their independence.
- The headteacher has introduced many changes and established some 'non-negotiables' to underpin better teaching. In some classes, aspirations have been raised and pupils are now learning more quickly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.

- Too many pupils do not have the motivation and resilience to be successful learners. As a result, these pupils do not persevere with tasks set or develop positive attitudes towards learning.
- Pupils are happy, feel safe and secure in school. They have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe on-line. They feel confident sharing their concerns through the class 'worry box' or speaking directly to an adult. Most parents say that their children are happy at school.
- Pupils confirm that incidents of bullying are rare and are quickly dealt with by teachers. They understand that it is wrong to call people names. There are very few incidents of racist and homophobic behaviour.
- Pupils are keen to take responsibility through their roles as 'play zone monitors', 'playground buddies', school councillors and house captains. They willingly support younger pupils on the playground and feel that their views are listened to.
- Through assemblies, pupils explore key values like friendship, respect and cooperation. Teachers teach pupils to respect other faiths and cultures. Pupils understand and appreciate a diversity of cultures in school. They are respectful and play and work well together. Pupils acquire some awareness of cultural diversity through the topics they study, like the Chinese New Year and Diwali, and through African drumming sessions.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning vary depending on the quality of teaching they receive. When pupils are challenged and stimulated they are attentive, eager to answer questions and apply themselves well in lessons. However, on other occasions, when teaching is not secure, there is low-level disruption in classes that stops the flow of learning. Pupils are often disengaged, not on task and become restless. Pupils' books show a lack of pride.
- The atmosphere at lunchtime in the dining hall is sometimes loud and noisy. This is mainly due to pupils having to wait for long periods of time for lunch. Routines are not tight enough and this sometimes leads to poor behaviour.
- Behaviour around the school is usually calm and orderly. In the playground, pupils play well with their friends, taking turns and sharing the equipment. Behaviour in assemblies is good; pupils enter quietly, listen attentively to what is being said and participate well.
- Pupils' attendance is slightly below the national average. Too many disadvantaged pupils are persistently absent from school. Levels of attendance have declined this year. Staff have procedures in place to improve attendance and are working closely with parents and external agencies to tackle this.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils make insufficient progress from their individual starting points. As a result, the majority of pupils do not have the skills in reading, writing and mathematics appropriate to their age.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 in 2016 was well below the national average

in mathematics and writing.

- In reading, pupils achieved better and standards were broadly in line with national average. Pupils heard to read by inspectors in Years 2 and 3 read with confidence, enjoyment and fluency. This reflects the fact that progress in reading in key stage 1 is better than that in mathematics and writing. The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check improved in 2016 but was still well below the national average.
- Attainment by the end of Year 6 is below the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. In 2016, pupils' progress in reading and writing was well below national averages whereas their progress in mathematics was broadly in line with national average.
- The school's own information about pupils' progress shows that large numbers of pupils currently in the school are making inadequate progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Generally, boys perform less well than girls.
- An extensive scrutiny of pupils' work conducted during the inspection confirmed that progress across year groups in core subjects for a sizeable proportion of pupils is poor. Some pupils' weak skills in reading, writing and mathematics mean that progress in other subjects such as history and geography stalls. This is because pupils do not have the basic skills to enable them to learn effectively in other subjects and to complete tasks set.
- Attainment in writing is well below expectations in all year groups. Pupils struggle to write at length as they do not develop stamina or have a secure understanding of language structures. They often use grammar incorrectly; spelling is poor and their vocabulary is also very limited.
- In 2016, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 made insufficient progress and the difference between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally widened. Disadvantaged pupils who are currently at the school are making weak progress across all year groups.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is poor. Evidence in books shows limited progress for this group as teaching is not suitably adapted to meet their needs. Also, planned programmes to help support them are not sharp enough to accelerate their progress.
- The small number of pupils that attend the school's specialist provision because of impaired hearing achieve well from their starting points. Adults use their specialist knowledge to provide high-quality guidance, support and resources that are well matched to pupils' needs.
- The majority of the most able pupils make insufficient progress from their starting points. Very few pupils reach the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management of the early years requires improvement. Current practitioners are new to post and lack experience of teaching in the early years. They do not have a clear enough picture of the strengths and weaknesses in early years.
- Most children start school with skills and knowledge which are typical for their age.

They make steady progress and by the end of the Reception Year the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development is broadly in line with the national average. Therefore, pupils are well prepared for learning in Year 1.

- The progress made by disadvantaged children lags behind that of other children of a similar age nationally. The performance of boys is better than that of girls. However, leaders are adapting the curriculum to ensure that the provision meets all learners' needs.
- Teaching requires improvement. When children are with the teachers, they often learn well. Teaching is focused and effective, and most activities are purposeful and promote learning well. Teachers explain ideas clearly, check children's understanding and adapt explanations to support pupils' understanding. However, learning is not always as effective when pupils are independently exploring the activities available.
- The provision indoors and outdoors does not give children purposeful and challenging activities. Children are quite often not engaged in constructive play or exploration. Instead, they tend to spend a lot of time wandering around and not using time effectively. There are limited opportunities for children to develop their number and writing skills. As a result, progress is sometimes slow.
- Leaders have introduced a new assessment system for tracking children's progress. Teachers are still getting used to this system, so information gathered is not being used quickly or regularly enough to plan next steps in learning. Books show that feedback does not highlight common errors or provide further activities to reinforce misconceptions. As a result, children repeat their mistakes.
- Most children behave very well. They are polite to each other and to adults. A small number behave less well and sometimes lose concentration, find it difficult to listen, and call out. Children are happy, settled and safe. There are good relationships between adults and pupils. Children learn and play in a safe environment.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust and welfare requirements are met.
- Parents are happy with the provision for the children in early years. They appreciate the positive relationships with staff and feel involved in their children's learning. The regular 'stay and play' sessions provide an opportunity for parents to find out about what their children are learning in school and parents frequently use the 'I am special' books to share comments from home.

School details

Unique reference number	141167
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10022793

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	335
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sheree Ailion
Headteacher	Rachel Pars
Telephone number	0161 705 2674
Website	www.eltonprimary.bc-et.co.uk
Email address	R.Pars@bury.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Elton Community Primary School converted to an academy in September 2014. The academy sponsor is Bury College Education Trust.
- This school is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The early years consists of Nursery and Reception classes. Nursery children attend on a part-time or full-time basis.
- The school has a specialist resourced unit for children with hearing impairment which is managed by staff from the local authority's sensory needs team. There are

currently seven pupils on roll, many of whom also have speech and language difficulties.

- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The headteacher started at the school in January 2017.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish on their website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons, sometimes jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work books across all classes and in a range of subjects. They observed an assembly and heard some pupils read in Years 2 and 3.
- Inspectors observed pupils as they moved around school and at lunchtime and breaktime.
- Inspectors spoke with parents before and after school and took account of the six responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, representatives of the academy trust and the local governing body. A telephone call was made to a representative of the local authority.
- There were no responses to the online pupils' questionnaire. Therefore, inspectors considered the views of pupils obtained during a meeting with pupils and through informal discussions during lessons.
- Inspectors scrutinised published data and the school's assessment information to determine the progress pupils are currently making across the school.
- Inspectors reviewed key documents, including: safeguarding policies and case files; performance management records; its self-evaluation; the school improvement plan; monitoring records; behaviour logs; attendance records and minutes of meetings.
- Inspectors spoke with staff and considered the 31 responses to the online Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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