

Eaton Valley Primary School

Dagger Lane, West Bromwich, West Midlands B71 4BU

Inspection dates

28–29 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership to the school. She is well supported by a capable and proactive senior team. Middle leaders are trusted to develop their areas of responsibility. As a result, teaching continues to improve.
- A strong sense of teamwork underpins the positive relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are happy and enjoy school life.
- Leaders and governors know the school well. Their self-evaluation is accurate and they successfully respond to areas that require improvement.
- Staff appreciate the high-quality training and support that they receive. Teachers and support staff enjoy improving their practice.
- The teaching of reading has improved and pupils love the interesting books that they read. However, teachers do not provide consistent opportunities for pupils to show that they have a deep understanding of the texts that they read.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. Their calculation methods are secure and they apply these successfully to word problems. Their reasoning skills are less well developed.
- Phonics is taught well and the proportion of pupils who achieve the phonics screening check was just above the national average in 2017.
- Teachers' questioning skills are a strong characteristic of their effective teaching. Questions deepen pupils' understanding and further challenge their thinking.
- Teachers use good subject knowledge to show pupils how to acquire news skills. However, pupils are sometimes over-reliant on teachers' support and do not independently apply their skills. This occasionally slows their progress.
- Leaders make good use of the pupil premium funding and the funding to enhance physical education (PE) and sport. They demonstrate where activities or additional support has made a successful impact. This information is not evaluated well in the end-of-year analysis.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and overall attendance rates are positive. Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. Leaders analyse individual pupils' behaviour and attendance well. However, they do not analyse groups as effectively.
- Eaton Valley Primary School is a diverse and inclusive school. Pupils are respectful and tolerant of one another.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well catered for.
- Leadership and teaching in the early years is good. Children settle well, enjoy learning and make good progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve leadership and management by:
 - making sure that leaders and governors use information on the impact of pupil premium funding and PE and sport funding to produce an effective overall analysis
 - carrying out a more effective analysis of attendance rates and behaviour incidents for different groups of pupils.
- Sustain improvements to pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that teachers provide high-quality opportunities for pupils to practise their higher-order reading skills, so that they can demonstrate a deeper understanding of what they are reading
 - making sure that teachers provide effective opportunities for pupils to prove their mathematical understanding through reasoning
 - enabling pupils to be less reliant on adult support, so that they independently apply their skills across the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher provides astute guidance to the school. She has a clear vision and high expectations, which are shared well among staff, pupils and parents. Her leadership enables a sense of trust and teamwork across the school.
- The senior leadership team is cohesive and effective. They put a strong and successful focus on improving teaching. Senior leaders are outward-facing and work with leaders from other schools to seek ways to improve. Challenges to school improvement are tackled proactively. For example, leaders cope well with high levels of pupil mobility. They also manage staffing changes with minimal disruption for pupils.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and thorough. Leaders know their school well and have precise and measurable improvement plans. They identify and successfully address appropriate priorities. In 2016, standards in reading and mathematics declined at the end of key stage 2. Leaders responded by ensuring that pupils were challenged to meet the demands of the curriculum. As a result, standards improved markedly in 2017.
- Middle leaders are empowered and given time to lead. They are accountable for pupils' progress and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses for their areas of responsibility. Leaders work closely with teachers to track the progress that pupils make. Pupils falling behind are given successful support to help them catch up.
- Leaders and staff have regular and useful discussions about how they can improve their practice. High-quality training and effective performance management makes a significant contribution to the good teaching in the school. Newly qualified teachers are given equally positive support and guidance. Comments from teachers included, 'I am really proud to be a staff member here' and 'I get the support I need. I would not be the teacher I am without this school.'
- Leaders use a range of thoughtful ways to evaluate and improve the quality of teaching. Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching provide teachers with precise feedback on how to improve. Teachers also watch each other teach in groups of four. After observing one another, they discuss the aspects of teaching that were good and what could be improved. This shares good practice across the school.
- Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding by putting in place a range of successful strategies for disadvantaged pupils. For example, teaching assistants' good-quality additional support in reading helps to accelerate pupils' progress. While leaders can demonstrate the successful impact of individual strategies, they do not gather all of this information so that it can be analysed precisely in one place. As a result, leaders and governors do not evaluate which strategies are more successful and how funding should be best used in the future. This also applies to the overall analysis of the PE and sport premium funding.
- The special educational needs coordinator provides knowledgeable support to staff and parents. She works proactively with teachers to focus on early identification of needs. Carefully planned provision enables pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to make good progress.

- Leaders have ensured that overall attendance rates and the behaviour of pupils have continued to improve. As a result, pupils attend regularly and behave well. However, leaders do not routinely analyse the attendance and behaviour incidents for groups of pupils. This means that they do not have a deep analysis of trends or weaknesses that might occur.
- Pupils enjoy the wide-ranging curriculum topics that they study. The learning that pupils do in English links well to these topics. In Year 6, pupils were engrossed in their class book, 'I was there' about the 1066 Battle of Hastings. Pupils were also excited about designing and creating their own Tudor equipment, ready for a re-enactment of a battle. Pupils acquire good knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects.
- Wider enrichment activities in school make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy a range of extra-curricular clubs, such as archery, choir, swimming, sign language and crafts. Additional funding for PE and sport is used well to provide specialist sports coaching at lunchtime. Pupils take part in and achieve success in competitive sports competitions against other schools.
- The majority of parents are positive about school and the quality of education that is provided at Eaton Valley Primary School.

Governance of the school

- The governance in the school is effective, the governors:
 - have an experienced and capable chair, who has high expectations and provides clear direction
 - are knowledgeable, skilled and determined to get the best for the school community
 - have a good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement
 - demonstrate robust challenge to leaders
 - are focused on continual improvement
 - use regular visits to make appropriate checks on the progress of the school development plan
 - carry out their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Keeping pupils safe is at the heart of the school's work. Leaders and staff have a crystal clear understanding of their responsibilities. Staff benefit from regular training and updates, which further sharpen their knowledge about important risks. For example, staff have a deep understanding of the signs and risks associated with female genital mutilation. The culture for safeguarding is positive and pupils are kept safe from harm.
- The designated safeguarding lead ensures that other leaders and staff have a good understanding of pupils who might require support. Staff report concerns vigilantly and

the safeguarding lead follows up concerns thoroughly. Leaders challenge external agencies when the quality of support for families or the school is not good enough.

- Thoughtful teaching of safety in the curriculum ensures that pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online and know what they would do if they were concerned about something. The e-safety council works on projects to help other pupils understand about the dangers associated with the internet. Pupils feel that bullying is very rare and when it does happen, adults swiftly and successfully address it.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching at Eaton Valley Primary School is thoughtful and interesting. Consistent and effective whole-school teaching approaches provides pupils with a good-quality education. Relationships between staff and pupils in lessons are extremely positive. Pupils know what is expected of them and they enjoy learning.
- Several key characteristics are central to the effective teaching in the school. Teachers plan work that is well matched to pupils' abilities. They also assess pupils' learning well during lessons and provide effective additional support, if pupils are finding something tricky. Staff's questions are often open-ended and encourage pupils to think deeply about what they are learning. As a result, pupils are appropriately challenged in lessons and their learning progresses well.
- Teachers show good subject knowledge when introducing new skills and ideas to pupils. Pupils see clear and precise demonstrations of what they need to do to be successful. As a result, pupils develop age-appropriate skills in reading, writing and mathematics. However, sometimes pupils are over-reliant on adult support and do not get sufficient opportunity to apply newly learned skills independently.
- There is a positive culture for reading in the school because staff have made it a high priority during the last academic year. During the inspection, Year 3 were engrossed in their class book, 'Stig of the dump', and enjoyed learning new vocabulary and describing how a character was feeling. Teachers use these class books to teach pupils new skills, such as predicting what might happen next or summarising key information. Pupils do not get sufficient opportunity to demonstrate independently that they have a deep understanding of what they are reading. For example, some higher-level reading skills, such as inference, do not produce well-developed answers.
- Pupils also have an individual reading book, as well the class text that they are studying. They enjoy their individual reading books because they are appropriately challenging and well resourced. Staff track their reading records closely and pupils who do not read at home regularly are given additional reading at school. Several parents commented to inspectors on how happy they are that their children are developing a love of reading.
- Teachers demonstrate accurate subject knowledge when teaching pupils how to acquire new skills and ideas in mathematics. As a result, pupils are confident when carrying out calculations and other mathematical procedures. They also apply their skills efficiently by solving word problems. Mathematical reasoning is not as well developed. Pupils do not get sufficient opportunity to prove that they have a deep understanding of some mathematical ideas and concepts.

- Pupils develop appropriate grammar, punctuation and spelling in their writing. They also display a good understanding of the different features of non-fiction and fiction writing.
- Teaching assistants provide high-quality support to pupils in class and through additional interventions. They work proactively and effectively to support a range of ability groups, which makes a positive contribution to pupils' progress.
- Examples of pupils' high-quality work on display set the tone for the vibrant learning environment in classrooms and around school. Other useful displays, with learning prompts and vocabulary, are used well to enhance pupils' learning further.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good
- Pupils are confident and enjoy interacting with adults and with each other. They work hard in lessons and are curious to learn new things. Pupils' positive attitudes make a strong contribution to their progress.
- Staff provide opportunities for pupils to work in groups and practise their cooperative skills. For example, in mathematics, some pupils are occasionally used as 'maths experts' to add discussion to other groups. They work sensitively and other pupils appreciate their support.
- Pupils are proud of their diverse school. They show tolerance and respect for each other's different cultural backgrounds. Staff use assemblies and classroom teaching to help secure pupils' understanding of different festivals and religions around the world.
- Opportunities for responsibility enhance pupils' personal development. The school council are proactive and played a key role in getting the new artificial play surface in the playground. Other pupils enjoy being sports leaders and e-safety leaders.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying. They feel that it happens rarely, but when it does, adults quickly address it.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Staff manage behaviour seamlessly and sensitively. Any behaviour that does not meet an acceptable standard is quickly addressed, so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them. As a result, pupils' conduct in class and at social times is positive. They are courteous, polite and respectful.
- Leaders and staff put in place good-quality additional support for pupils who have complex behaviour needs. External services are used well to provide specialist strategies to help pupils manage their behaviour. This impacts well on pupils' behaviour and exclusions are extremely rare.
- Leaders have a system for logging behaviour incidents that take place. However, they do not do a sufficient analysis of these incidents over time. As a result, they cannot

recognise trends of behaviour incidents, such as patterns of behaviour for different groups of pupils or the particular times of the day that incidents occur.

- Historically, overall attendance rates in the school are positive and have been broadly in line with national averages. In 2016, persistent absence was high for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and for pupils in receipt of free school meals. Leaders analyse pupils' individual attendance well and put in place effective strategies to boost attendance. As a result, persistent absence for these groups improved last academic year. However, leaders do not sufficiently analyse attendance for groups of pupils. Further work is important here, so that persistent absence continues to improve.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress across the school because of good-quality teaching and well-planned additional support. Pupils' good progress is reflected in a range of assessment information and the work seen in pupils' books.
- Good phonics teaching in Reception and Year 1 equips pupils to learn new sounds and read tricky words. The proportion of pupils who achieved the phonics screening standard at the end of Year 1 was just above the national average in 2017.
- Over the last two academic years, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected and higher standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 were similar to the levels seen nationally. However, in mathematics, not enough pupils are reaching the expected standard by the end of Year 2. Pupils do not get high-quality opportunities to apply their understanding through problem-solving and reasoning.
- By the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress is broadly similar to the progress made by pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders responded well to a dip in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in 2016. This measure rose considerably in 2017. Furthermore, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher standard was above the national average in 2017.
- However, attainment and progress in reading is not as high as it is in mathematics and writing. While the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading rose in 2017, it is still not high enough. The middle prior-attaining pupils do not get sufficient challenge in reading because they do not demonstrate that they have a deep understanding of the texts that they are reading.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Leaders use additional funding effectively and put in place precise additional support to accelerate pupils' progress.
- Pupils are taught grammar, punctuation and spelling well. They apply these skills with increasing accuracy in their writing. In the last two years at the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the grammar, punctuation and spelling test has been similar to the national average. In 2017, the most able pupils did well because more pupils attained a higher standard than the national average.
- Pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is also good. Staff teach different subject skills and knowledge progressively across the school. During the inspection, inspectors observed pupils in science acquiring new learning about electricity. Pupils were challenged and enthused by the content.

Early years provision

Good

- Pupils make a good start to their education in the early years. Staff's positive relationships with children create a learning environment in which children thrive. As a result, children are happy, behave well and enjoy learning.
- Effective leadership enables the provision to keep improving. The early years leader has a good understanding of the strengths and needs of the setting. She uses this knowledge to address any areas that require improvement. Staff expertise is also used wisely to help address particular priorities or to meet children's needs. Leaders have also ensured that staffing changes have not interrupted pupils' learning.
- The curriculum provides a good balance of direct teaching and opportunities for children's imaginative play. Adults' effective questioning helps children to reflect and think for themselves. Staff interactions during children's play are useful and not intrusive. As a result, children develop good skills, knowledge and understanding across the different areas of learning.
- Leaders and staff use assessment information wisely. Meaningful observations identify where children need to consolidate their learning or where they need to be challenged further. Staff skilfully adapt their support to certain individuals or groups throughout the day, which has a positive impact on their progress. Leaders and staff take part in regular moderation, which secures accurate assessment procedures.
- Work in children's books and the school's assessment information show that children make good progress in the early years. In 2017, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development dropped below the national average. However, leaders provided convincing information to show that a significant proportion of children had complex needs. This prevented some of them from reaching the expected standards across every area of learning.
- Additional funding is used productively. Children who have SEN and/or disabilities are quickly identified so that they receive the precise support that they need. Disadvantaged children are tracked carefully and well provided for. As a result, they make good progress.
- Children in the Nursery are very well catered for. Staff plan a range of exciting and interesting activities to challenge children's thinking. During the inspection, children were seen building playdough shapes and using mathematical language to describe what they had made. They were happy to work on their own or cooperate well in groups. Children could use words such as, 'square', 'rectangle', 'triangle' and 'circle'.
- All of the statutory welfare requirements are met. Pupils are kept safe at all times because of the good-quality care that they receive.

School details

Unique reference number	103923
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10043149

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	467
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Mr Bill McLoughlin
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Ramsay
Telephone number	0121 553 1593
Website	www.eatonvalley.sandwell.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@eatonvalley.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 September 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is a larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is just above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 30 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken with senior leaders.
- The inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with two groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, as well as other senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of governors and the local authority adviser.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including assessments and records of pupils' progress. They also scrutinised the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is monitored and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors took account of 23 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors considered 14 free-text responses from parents. They also talked to parents at the start and end of the school day. Inspectors evaluated 30 responses from the staff survey.

Inspection team

Matt Meckin, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tracey Kneale CBE	Ofsted Inspector
Kevin Butlin	Ofsted Inspector

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