

Elton Community Primary School

Alston Street, Bury, Lancashire BL8 1SB

Inspection dates

6–7 November 2018

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| 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 | Inadequate |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and her leadership team have shown considerable energy and determination in bringing about substantial improvements since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching has improved strongly and is now good.
- There has been significant improvement in the performance of pupils at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Most current pupils are making good progress across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well and show positive attitudes to their learning.
- Trustees and governors have a clear overview of standards. They have played an important role in ensuring that school leaders have secured rapid improvement.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress. The same is true of pupils who are disadvantaged.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and enables pupils to acquire a wide range of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Children in the early years now make strong progress from their starting points.
- Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe.
- Subject leaders now have a clear picture of standards in their subjects and systematically check on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Leaders support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- Although current progress in writing is good, it is not as strong as progress in reading and mathematics.
- The progress of the most able pupils is not as strong as it could be.
- The strategies that leaders have used to reduce absence and persistent absence, though partially successful, have not had a positive enough effect.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that leaders embed their strategies further to strengthen pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics, so that:
 - progress in writing more closely matches that of reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6
 - they sustain the significant improvements in pupils' achievement that they have recently secured.
- Ensure that teachers more consistently provide challenging work for the most able, especially in writing, so that more of them achieve as highly as they can, attaining greater depth by the end of Year 2 and the higher standard by the end of Year 6.
- Continue to develop a range of strategies further to reduce pupils' rates of absence and persistent absence.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and her leadership team have been unswerving in their determination to bring about rapid improvement to the quality of education in this school since the previous inspection. They have done so with considerable success. The quality of teaching is now good. The majority of pupils make strong progress in a range of subjects. Leaders have also addressed successfully all the areas for improvement that inspectors identified at the last inspection.
- Senior leaders' plans for the school's development contain suitable actions and focus closely on pupils' achievement. A range of strategies, introduced since the last inspection, have been effective in securing strong improvement in pupils' progress. For example, a new approach to writing makes close links to reading skills to support pupils' learning. In mathematics, there is now a greater emphasis on developing reasoning skills, while at the same time reinforcing pupils' knowledge of basic skills by frequently revisiting them. Leaders have improved their checks on the quality of teaching by, for example, more detailed scrutiny of pupils' progress through half-termly meetings with teachers. They have put in place more accurate assessment and they successfully target support for pupils who need to catch up. They have also ensured that there is relevant training for teachers in place, which has strengthened their effectiveness.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. It contributes well to the good progress pupils make across a variety of subjects. It is also effective in supporting pupils' personal development and aspirations. This is because it centres on using inspirational characters, past and present, to stimulate pupils' learning and to develop a deeper appreciation of important values, such as respect.
- Leaders provide effective opportunities for pupils to develop social and emotional aspects of their learning. For example, the school has commissioned an external provider to carry out activities each week, which are designed to encourage skills such as cooperation. These activities have also contributed well to the improved behaviour that is now evident in the school.
- Leaders make effective use of the funding to support pupils with SEND. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) organises support for pupils effectively, liaising with outside agencies as required. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. This includes those who attend the on-site unit for pupils who are hearing impaired.
- Current pupils who are disadvantaged make good progress from their starting points. The difference between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally is reducing. Leaders make effective use of the pupil premium funding to provide support in different ways. For example, they employ staff to provide extra teaching in English and mathematics for small groups.
- Pupils and staff benefit from leaders' effective use of the primary school physical education and sports premium. Leaders commission sports coaches to provide exciting after-school clubs, such as gymnastics. They also develop teachers' skills successfully by demonstrating how to teach aspects of physical education.

- Leaders of English and mathematics have a secure understanding of the strengths of their subject and their areas for development. They have been effective in introducing new strategies that have contributed strongly to pupils' greatly improved progress in these subjects. For example, in English, there is a greater emphasis on writing for a real purpose, such as sending letters of thanks after a visit to a local fire station. Although progress in writing is good and improving, it is not as strong as progress in reading and mathematics. This is because there were more gaps in pupils' understanding, linked to previous weaker teaching, which leaders needed to address. They are now doing so successfully.
- Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics have developed a much clearer overview of their subject since the last inspection. They now have a firm grasp of the quality of education in their subject. They carry out checks on the strengths and areas for development in teaching and learning and provide feedback to support improvement where it is needed. The work of subject leaders makes an effective contribution to the good progress most pupils make in a wide range of subjects.
- Leaders have developed an effective behaviour policy that focuses on pupils showing respect to each other and to adults. This has contributed to a reduction in the number of exclusions since the previous inspection. The few exclusions that have taken place in the last year have been valid and only for a fixed term. There were no repetitions of exclusions. Leaders have followed appropriate procedures at all times. The improvement in behaviour has ensured that there is now a secure platform for pupils to learn effectively and make strong progress.
- Leaders have taken a range of actions to reduce absence and persistent absence since the last inspection. They have continued to develop their strategies, including the recent appointment of an attendance officer, who is based in school. There is a range of rewards for pupils for their good attendance. Leaders also contact promptly the parents and carers of the most frequent absentees to discuss strategies to improve their attendance. Although there has been some reduction in persistent absence actions have not been fully effective and pupils' rates of absence and persistent absence are still above the most recent national average.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is strong. The board of trustees and the local governing body have a secure understanding of the quality of education the school provides. They are very clear about the current strengths and areas for development of the school and have been determined to improve since the previous inspection.
- Trustees and governors have been effective in ensuring that school leaders bring about rapid improvement to the school. Trustees hold leaders to account rigorously. Trustees and governors alike ask searching questions to challenge leaders in a range of matters. These include pupils' progress, the effectiveness of strategies for improvement and the effective use of extra funding, such as the pupil premium.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. The designated safeguarding lead maintains detailed and well-organised electronic records of any concerns that staff raise about pupils. Staff are well trained and knowledgeable about safeguarding procedures. They also know their pupils well and are alert to changes in behaviour or demeanour.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know how to stay safe. For example, adults give them the information they need to be safe when they are using the internet. Pupils also know that adults will help them if they have any worries.
- The school's required record of checks on members of staff is thorough and compliant. The school also has an appropriate safeguarding policy that is up to date and follows the government's current guidance.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved substantially since the last inspection. Because of the greatly strengthened support and guidance that leaders have provided, teachers now have typically high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. This ensures that the majority of current pupils are making strong progress in their learning.
- Teachers use assessment effectively, ensuring that they typically provide work that matches the needs and abilities of their pupils. Teachers question pupils effectively to ensure that they have understood. They expect them to think for themselves, asking questions such as, 'How do we know that?' to encourage pupils to make inferences from a text carefully. Teachers typically challenge the most able pupils effectively by providing them with tasks that deepen their learning. For example, in mathematics in Year 6, pupils grapple with complex problems involving multiplying fractions. However, in writing, for example, teachers sometimes provide work that does not deepen pupils' understanding or provide enough challenge
- Teachers build warm relationships with their pupils and encourage positive attitudes. These contribute effectively to the successful learning that is now evident for most pupils across most subjects.
- Teachers are effective in ensuring that pupils learn from their misunderstandings. Evidence for this is seen in pupils' books. For example, in mathematics in Year 1, some pupils initially misunderstood how to order numbers to 20. A few weeks later, they showed considerable progress, as they correctly ordered numbers beyond 20 and identified missing numbers in a sequence.
- Teachers mainly show strong subject knowledge. They use this to plan lessons that hold most pupils' attention well and enable teachers to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively. In mathematics, for example, they now provide more opportunities for pupils to use their skills in reasoning and problem-solving. However, on some occasions in key stage 1, teachers do not plan learning time as productively as possible. Sometimes, pupils have to complete tasks, such as writing a title to their work, which take up valuable learning time.
- Pupils now have more opportunities to apply the skills they learn in English and mathematics in other subjects across the curriculum. This improvement has been

pivotal in extending pupils' skills. For example, in key stage 2, pupils use their mathematical skills to take measurements in science or write about Christianity in religious education. Year 1 pupils attempt complex sentences for their age, as they use their writing skills in history. Most-able pupils write sentences such as, 'This is the castl (castle) that the queen youst (used) to live in.' Teachers also provide frequent opportunities for pupils to discuss their idea in pairs, which effectively develops their communication skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Most pupils are confident and have positive attitudes to their education.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and know how to stay safe. They are knowledgeable about a range of safety issues, such as how to respond in the event of a fire. They know that they should never share personal information when they are using the internet. They have also learned about safety matters connected with electricity, which teachers linked to work that they completed in science. One pupil summed up the help that staff give to pupils by saying that teachers 'tell you everything you need to know to support you'.
- Pupils said that bullying in school, including racist and homophobic bullying, is rare. They are confident in the ability of the adults in the school to manage effectively any incidents that may occur.
- Pupils enjoy the clubs that leaders provide, which contribute effectively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Clubs on offer include football, choir and gymnastics. Pupils also have opportunities to develop their sense of good citizenship. They take on roles of responsibility, including 'sports leaders' at breaktimes or school councillors. They also regularly raise funds for a range of good causes, such as charities for the homeless.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of fundamental British values because they enjoy regular activities that help them to find out about them. These include assemblies and visits from, for example, a barrister to talk about the rule of law. The school's curriculum reinforces the notion of respect and pupils find out about other faiths, for example, in religious education lessons. Pupils also have a well-developed sense of equalities, especially with regard to people who have protected characteristics under the Equality Act of 2010. They understand, for example, the different types of families that exist with various parental relationships.
- Many pupils take care with their work and present it neatly. However, pupils sometimes present their work untidily, indicating an occasional lack of pride.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- School is an orderly place and pupils typically display good conduct around school.

There are a few occasions in class where pupils in key stage 1 misbehave, but teachers have effective skills to manage behaviour. Pupils are usually quick to comply with instructions and they come back to order promptly.

- Pupils who attend the unit for those who are deaf show good behaviour and conduct. This contributes effectively to the strong progress they make.
- Pupils play happily with each other at playtime and lunchtime. Leaders have provided a well-resourced play area and they ensure that staff supervise it effectively.
- Pupils' overall absence rate and persistent absence rate are both currently above the most recent national average. Leaders have a range of strategies in place and have recently put in place new ones. They have had some success in reducing the rate of persistent absence, but it is still too high.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Evidence from published assessment information shows that pupils' outcomes improved substantially in 2018 compared to 2017. In 2018, progress and attainment improved towards, or sometimes exceeded, the national average in key stage 1 and key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress in writing, though improved, was not as strong as that in reading and mathematics. Leaders have been successful in strengthening the quality of teaching and learning to bring about these outcomes and, typically, pupils are ready for the next stage of their education. However, the proportion of pupils who reached the higher standard in key stage 2, or greater depth in key stage 1, was below the national average.
- Leaders have sustained the improvement in achievement for current pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Most pupils are currently making good progress from their various starting points, with the strongest progress being in reading and mathematics. This can be seen in the school's own assessment information and in pupils' books.
- Pupils' progress in reading has greatly improved. Leaders have introduced a range of strategies since the previous inspection to bring this about. For example, they have reorganised the use of the school's library, so that pupils use it more frequently. This has increased their interest in reading and contributed to their improved skills. Parents also have times during the week when they can read with their children in the library. Because of leaders' actions, pupils read with good fluency and accuracy for their age. Pupils in Year 1 learn phonics effectively. Typically, a large proportion of pupils in Year 1 meet the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Leaders ensure that teachers plan regular opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge of phonics to their reading and writing.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics has shown strong improvement. A greater emphasis on reasoning and on revising basic skills has ensured that most pupils effectively acquire the knowledge they need. In Year 3, for instance, pupils rapidly progress from carrying out simpler calculations, such as adding one-digit to two-digit numbers, to completing multiplications of pairs of two-digit numbers, using a formal method.
- Progress in writing is good and is catching up with reading and mathematics. In writing in Year 1, for instance, pupils now organise their writing more effectively than they did at the start of the year. They attempt to join sentences using more challenging words

like 'because', not just simple conjunctions like 'and'. In Year 6, pupils now write with sophistication in language and style. For example, they can correctly use the passive voice. Most-able pupils use more difficult punctuation accurately, such as dashes to indicate a parenthesis. Progress across a range of other subjects is also strong. Pupils acquire appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills well. For example, in key stage 2, pupils learn effectively about ancient Greece in history, while in key stage 1, they can write similarities and differences between various mammals in science.

- Disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2018 showed progress in reading, writing and mathematics that was improving towards or in line with other pupils nationally. Current pupils who are disadvantaged across the school are now making considerable progress from their different starting points. Attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics is growing closer to that of other pupils. This is because leaders provide them with effective support in the form of, for example, extra sessions in small groups to improve their skills in English and mathematics.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make considerable progress. The SENCo organises support for these pupils well and leaders regularly check that the various teaching activities are effective. Pupils who attend the unit for pupils who are deaf also make strong progress, because there is effective teaching which is closely geared to their needs.
- Teachers mostly provide suitably challenging work for the most able pupils. However, there are times when this is less consistent, particularly in writing. Although the progress of the current most-able pupils in reading, writing and mathematics is improving, it is still not as strong as it could be.

Early years provision

Good

- Children come into the early years with skills and knowledge below those that are typical for their age. This is especially true in communication and language and in knowledge of number. Pupils make good progress from their starting points. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development has increased in recent years. The most recent proportion, in 2018, was close to the national average, which represents substantial improvement.
- Workbooks and assessment information show that current children are making strong progress. This is also true for children who are disadvantaged. For example, they have secure knowledge of a range of two-dimensional shapes in mathematical work. They are also developing their writing skills well, considering their starting points.
- The leader of the early years is experienced and knowledgeable. She has a clear overview of the strengths and areas for development of the early years provision. She has made a significant number of improvements since the last inspection. She has successfully sought expertise, for example, from a local school with outstanding practice to support her work. The new, digital system for tracking and assessing children has given leaders a more accurate overview of children's progress. It has also enabled leaders to identify gaps in children's learning more readily and provide appropriate support. This ensures that teachers plan children's next steps effectively.
- Children show good behaviour and attitudes. They are happy and well settled, showing

strong social skills, such as knowing how to take turns. They share resources well. Children show from their behaviour that they feel safe. They were, for instance confident enough to speak to inspectors during visits to the early years provision. Staff follow the same safeguarding procedures as the rest of the school and are all well trained. All the welfare requirements for these children are met.

- Parents play an important part in their children's education. Leaders have established close communication channels through the digital tracking and assessment system that they have introduced. Parents attend meetings before their children arrive in the early years to become familiar with the setting. During their children's time there, parents have other opportunities to be involved in their learning. For example, parents of Nursery children take part in 'Funky Fingers Friday', in which they help them to develop their fine motor skills. The strategies to involve parents play an effective part in the strong progress that children make.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Teachers provide demanding and interesting activities for the majority of children, both indoors and outdoors. For example, most-able children are already successfully answering questions involving adding and subtracting 1, using numbers up to 20. Children have many opportunities to climb and balance on equipment outdoors, supporting their physical development well and their ability to take controlled risks. Teachers question children effectively. They typically develop questions, often in response to children's comments, which deepen children's learning. However, teaching assistants are less consistent in this. Leaders provide a range of activities, such as a trip to nearby farm, to enrich children's learning. These activities also make an effective contribution to children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Leaders ensure that there are effective arrangements for transition into the early years and on to Year 1. Staff carry out home visits before children start in the Nursery. They also visit other providers, such as independent nurseries, to gather important assessment information. Children reaching the end of their Reception Year visit Year 1 to become familiar with their new learning environment. These activities ensure that children settle quickly when they arrive in the early years provision and help the majority to be ready for Year 1.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 141167 |
| Local authority | Bury |
| Inspection number | 10053609 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| 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 | 313 |
| Appropriate authority | The board of trustees |
| Chair | Mark Granby |
| Headteacher | Rachel Pars |
| Telephone number | 0161 705 2674 |
| Website | www.eltonprimary.bc-et.co.uk |
| Email address | rachel.pars@eltonprimary.bc-et.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 7–8 March 2017 |

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 with SEND 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 six 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.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out observations of learning in all year groups. Some of these were joint observations with the headteacher. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher were present at inspection team meetings.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including: the school's self-evaluation summary, action plans for school improvement, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, assessment information, minutes of meetings of the governing body and records connected with the safeguarding of children.
- Inspectors had discussions with: various stakeholders, the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, other members of staff, the chair and another member of the board of trustees, members of the local governing body, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and analysed pupils' work in a range of subjects. They also looked at the work of children in the early years.
- There were insufficient responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, for the inspection team to analyse during the inspection.

Inspection team

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mark Quinn, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Doreen Davenport | Ofsted Inspector |
| John Shutt | Ofsted Inspector |

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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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