

Inspection of a good school: Elm Park Primary School

Nicholls Lane, Winterbourne, Bristol BS36 1NF

Inspection dates:

6–7 November 2019

Outcome

Elm Park Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Elm Park is a happy and friendly school. Leaders and teachers share a passion for igniting pupils' enthusiasm and nurturing their talents. The school's values, 'Inspiring, Enriching, Achieving,' are at the heart of its work. Pupils love learning because teachers make it fun. For example, the school provides exciting opportunities, such as ukulele lessons, choir and a robotics club. Pupils and staff are justifiably proud to be members of the school.

Adults form caring relationships with pupils. Pupils say they always have someone to turn to if they are upset. Adults have high expectations of pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour. Pupils respect adults and listen carefully to instructions. Pupils persevere with their work, because they want to do their best.

Pupils are polite and sociable. They form strong friendships with their peers. Pupils behave well in and out of lessons. They know they are responsible for their actions and say sorry when they are in the wrong. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem. They are confident that adults quickly sort out any problems.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The acting headteacher leads with energy and enthusiasm. She is fully committed to improving the school. She is well supported by the acting deputy headteacher and the leader for infants. They are well respected by staff. Most parents and carers are pleased with the school. However, understandably, several parents are unhappy about unavoidable staff changes over the last year. They believe this has been unsettling for their children.

Governors are well informed about the school and support leaders well. The school makes effective use of support from the Frome Valley Alliance and the local authority. This is helping to strengthen leadership and teaching.

Leaders ensure that the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is well planned. This means pupils strengthen their knowledge and regularly practise the skills they are

learning. They read regularly at home and at school. This helps them to become confident, fluent readers. In mathematics, pupils develop secure knowledge. For example, Year 1 pupils can use their knowledge of 2-D shapes to describe 3-D shapes. Year 4 and Year 5 pupils can apply their knowledge of how to multiply to help them find factors.

Pupils' education is enhanced by memorable experiences, which bring their learning to life. Pupils love the 'bang' days, which spark their interest in subjects such as history. For example, pupils are motivated to find out about inspirational women, such as Helen Keller and Amelia Earhart.

Leaders and teachers are keen to ensure that pupils develop the skills and depth of knowledge needed for future learning. They have recently improved teaching sequences in several subjects, such as history and science. However, it will take time for this to become fully embedded.

All pupils benefit from learning at the school. The school's improvement driver, 'no child left behind', focuses on meeting all pupils' needs. Pupils with gaps in their learning, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from additional teaching. Staff adapt learning where necessary, which helps pupils to catch up.

Leaders and teachers provide stimulating educational experiences. These inspire pupils to learn. For example, pupils try mindfulness sessions, curling and yoga. They enjoy trips to the Lifeskills Centre and Bristol Museum. Visitors, such as refugees and religious leaders, enhance pupils' appreciation of different cultures and faiths.

The early years is a welcoming and interesting place for children to learn. Adults form supportive, caring relationships with children. Children know what is expected of them and behave well. Children are keen to find things out and they enjoy exploring. For example, when children fill containers with sand, corks and water, they can use words such as 'full', 'empty' and 'half empty' to describe what they see. Reading is taught well. Children enjoy choosing books for pleasure. They love listening to stories such as 'Traction Man'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff care deeply about pupils and are sensitive to their needs. All staff have received appropriate training. They fully understand their responsibility for keeping pupils safe. Adults consistently follow the school's procedures for referring any concerns they might have.

The school provides helpful guidance for parents. For example, they share information about keeping safe on the internet. Leaders work closely with a range of external partners to ensure that families receive help and advice when they need them. Pupils say that they feel safe at school. Parents agree.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have recently revised teaching in several subjects, such as history and science. In these subjects, well-planned sequences of lessons are in the early stages of being taught. Leaders and governors will need to ensure that teaching in these subjects consistently builds on what pupils have previously learned.
- Several parents are concerned that unavoidable changes of staff over the last year have been unsettling. Leaders must continue to work closely with parents, and further improve communication, to secure parents' confidence in the school.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 109117 |
| Local authority | South Gloucestershire |
| Inspection number | 10088399 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 231 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Sandra Allen |
| Headteacher | Andrew Evans |
| Website | www.elmparkprimary.com |
| Date of previous inspection | 14–15 January 2016 |

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The deputy headteacher has been acting headteacher since June 2019. The key stage 2 leader is currently acting deputy headteacher.
- The school belongs to the Frome Valley Alliance.
- The school operates a breakfast club. An after-school club is run by an external provider.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below that of pupils nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.

Information about this inspection

- I held several meetings with the acting headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). I also had meetings with the acting deputy headteacher and the leader for infants.
- I held a meeting with three governors. I also met with two representatives of the local authority.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. I held discussions with subject leaders. Together, we visited several lessons in both key stages. I talked to pupils about their learning. I also spoke with teachers.
- I reviewed the school's safeguarding records and checked the school's single central record. I discussed safeguarding arrangements with the acting headteacher. I also spoke to pupils and adults about safety.
- I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons. I also observed their behaviour in breakfast club and during breaktime and lunchtime.
- I spoke to pupils, staff and parents in order to gather their views of the school. I reviewed 68 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, along with 65 additional free-text comments. I also considered 141 responses to the governors' latest questionnaire for parents. I took account of 19 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Catherine Beeks, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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