

Easton Community Primary School

Easton, Woodbridge, IP13 0ED

Inspection dates 16–17 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good and rapidly improving progress in most subjects, but especially in reading and writing.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They get on well together and this helps them learn and stay safe.
- The school is very effective at supporting pupils with a wide range of disabilities and special educational needs so that they make above average progress.
- Teachers provide a good range of well-planned activities through some interesting topics.
- The staff work together effectively to create a happy, hard-working school. They know their pupils well and provide different activities well-suited to individual pupils.
- The interim acting headteacher and headteacher have led the school well. The leadership of teaching is good and strongly focused on the progress made by all pupils. This has resulted in the evident improvements made since the last inspection.
- The governing body has an excellent knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in aspects of mathematics are inconsistent and not as good as those in reading and writing.
- In the past boys made slower progress than girls. The school has worked hard recently to address this, and although clear improvements are evident, the school is yet to fully evaluate the impact of this work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons or parts of lessons.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence including: the school's documentation relating to safeguarding; the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan; the school's data for tracking pupils' progress; and work in pupils' books. Inspectors listened to pupils reading and talked to them about their books.
- The inspector had meetings with the headteacher, staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector conducted two joint observations with the headteacher, who was available for only one of the two inspection days.
- The inspector took into account the parents' and carers' responses to the school's own survey and responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- A well-below average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average, although this varies widely from year to year.
- The majority of the pupils are White British.
- In 2012, the school exceeded the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has recently been subject to significant changes in senior staffing.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in mathematics by
 - improving teachers' knowledge and skills in teaching mathematics
 - ensuring pupils' learning builds on the knowledge and skills they already have, especially when learning about shape, space and measure
 - providing enough opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations and solve problems
 - giving pupils more opportunities to apply mathematics in other subjects.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies used to raise the attainment of boys so that their success can be recognised and any gaps addressed.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most pupils start at the school with abilities, knowledge and skills close to the levels expected for their age. However, because of the small number of children in each year group, this can vary year-on-year. There is evidence of good progress since the previous inspection, with above average attainment by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The most recent data for Year 6 show that pupils made good progress in reading and writing. They have good communication skills and talk and listen well to adults and to each other. They read widely and their writing is often imaginative and accurate. Although an above average proportion reached the higher levels in the 2012 national tests in mathematics, results were lower than in writing and reading. Pupils' learning about shapes, space and measurement is undeveloped because not enough opportunities are provided for them to solve practical problems or carry out investigations.
- Pupils' books show that they make good progress over the year. The youngest children build on their early reading skills and their good ability to link sounds and letters, to write some simple sentences. Reading skills develop rapidly through the school and pupils read a wide range of fiction to a very mature level. Although attainment in reading fell in 2012 compared to the previous years' consistently above average standards, pupils' progress from their starting points was better than that typically found. This is good given the above average proportion of boys and pupils with special educational needs. Their use of information and factual texts is less well developed.
- Pupils achieve particularly well in lessons where they find things out for themselves, for example in a Year 5 and 6 science lesson on light sources. In subjects such as history and art and design, too, pupils' learning is helped by practical activities involving a lot of speaking and listening, and good challenging expectations of the quality of the finished work. Work of high standard can be seen throughout the school. Such activities also support pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium and those who are disabled or have special educational needs is often better than that of their peers. The school tracks these pupils closely. The support for those who find learning harder is very effective, especially in reading, writing and for their physical development. In the past, boys' achievement has been below that of girls in most year groups, especially in reading and writing. The school has addressed this through resources and planning but is yet to evaluate the success of this work fully.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The overall good quality of teaching has been sustained through good leadership during a time of significant changes in staffing. Even so it is not outstanding yet as there remains some inconsistency in provision and in teachers' skills, especially in teaching mathematics. However, the good teaching is the main reason for the good progress made by pupils throughout the school. Staff say they are proud to work at the school.
- Where the teaching is weaker, lessons are not as tightly planned and activities do not build sufficiently on pupils' earlier knowledge and understanding, especially in mathematics. In a small

number of lessons, noise levels are higher than necessary and pupils do not always receive the support they needed.

- Where the teaching is strongest, pupils have excellent opportunities to explore and discuss their learning. They work collaboratively, share ideas openly and show real pride in their achievement. In one session, for example, Year 1 pupils investigated with great excitement and interest the magnetic qualities of a variety of materials. This made good gains in their understanding of magnetism through an activity that stretched and challenged them very successfully.
- The teaching of the youngest children is effectively carried out in a mixed-age class. Staffing levels are high and staff have a good understanding of how to work with the children on adult-led activities, and when to let them follow their own ideas. Because of this, for example, a small group of boys used clipboards to devise a writing activity as they explored the 'castle' built in the classroom. The provision of improved outdoor resources is also helping the youngest children develop their skills in exploring and understanding the world around them.
- The work of teaching assistants is successful in helping pupils with statements of special educational need to have access to the full curriculum and work alongside their peers for the majority of the day. Support for others in small groups or on a one-to-one basis, especially for reading and writing activities, is also effective.
- Improvements made to the feedback given to pupils, especially through the marking of their work, have been successful and as a result they are better able to talk about what they need to do to improve. Individual targets are provided by teachers and the dialogue between pupils and staff as a response to the marking is often playful but effective. Homework, especially the 'big think' half-termly research projects, builds well on the learning done in school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The pupils' behaviour in and around the school, in lessons and at break and lunchtimes, is consistently good. There are occasional outbursts of boisterousness but these are quickly and effectively controlled by staff.
- The headteacher and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and they respond by being mainly polite and respectful to others. This is supported by an effective programme of personal and social development, partly through assemblies, and by good relationships between pupils and staff.
- Attendance is above average. The school works well with the families of the very small number of pupils who are persistently absent to encourage them to attend well. Pupils' good behaviour is reflected in a lack of exclusions, so very few pupils miss any significant amounts of schooling.
- Parents and carers say their children are safe at school. This is supported by the comments of the children themselves and by inspection evidence. Pupils say there is no bullying but if there were they have trust in the adults to deal with it.
- Pupils clearly enjoy being at school and especially talk positively about being given responsibilities. They enjoy a wide range of after-school activities and in taking part in clubs and teams. The youngest children settle quickly and soon make friends and integrate into school life.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, interim acting headteacher and governing body have provided the school with good leadership during an extended period of change. This has been very effectively dealt with to ensure as little disruption as possible to the pupils' learning, as shown by the good achievement evident and the good improvements made to all aspects of the school's work since the last inspection.
 - The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. These are reflected in the headteacher's development planning. Staffing issues are being addressed. The appraisal system is being used effectively to provide appropriate professional development where necessary. This has been used, for example, to improve the teaching of phonics (how sounds and letters are linked).
 - Subject leadership has been shared appropriately in this small school. Most teachers have a number of responsibilities which they carry out effectively. The curriculum has been very effectively developed recently with some high quality enrichment activities through visits and visitors. Good links have been made so pupils use the skills learned in one area in a different subject. However, opportunities to use mathematical skills in other subjects are less well developed.
 - Pupil premium funding has been used effectively to increase staffing, enabling smaller groups and fewer age groups in each class. This has been successful, as is evident in the progress made by the pupils the money is intended to support.
 - Performance management is used effectively to improve teaching and identify where teachers need extra support or further training. Regular meetings held with staff enable the headteacher to link pupils' progress to the quality of teaching. All teachers have a better understanding of the systems for tracking pupils' progress and identifying any underachievement.
 - The local authority supported the school well during the leadership changes, providing an effective leader who sustained improvement and continued to innovate. Improvement has continued under the headteacher, both to teaching and buildings and school grounds.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - This has a number of outstanding aspects. These include very effective systems for organising monitoring visits to check on the school's work, such as meetings with staff, joint scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of teaching and learning. This enables governors to effectively challenge the school through appropriate questioning, especially regarding staffing issues and performance management.
 - The governors are very committed to the school. They have a high profile and attend most school and social events. They make good use of training opportunities, for example on use of assessment data.
 - The governing body ensures that all safeguarding requirements are fully met and the documentation is correctly completed and up-to-date.
 - The governing body makes good use of individual governors' expertise and experience to support the school. For example, financial expertise is used to create a successful structure for budgeting and managing the school's income.
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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	124579
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	402274

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Jeremy Mead
Headteacher	Mrs Cheryl Singleton
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2009
Telephone number	01728 746387
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