

Ellwood Primary School

Bromley Road, Ellwood, Coleford, GL167LY

Inspection dates

28 February–1 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Ellwood is a very welcoming and friendly community school which values and treats all pupils equally. Pupils help each other to learn and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- The headteacher has an accurate understanding of school improvement and has worked tirelessly to resolve the weaknesses identified at the last inspection, especially in developing the quality of teaching. This is now typically good.
- Children settle quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress.
- Pupils across the school make good progress from their below-expected starting points and by Year 6 their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is average.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and they behave well. They feel safe at school and have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves and each other safe.
- Since the previous inspection governors have become much better informed, and have improved their skills. They now have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and a clear vision for the future.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding because checking from leaders has not been rigorous enough or sharply focused on pupils' progress.
- The least able pupils are not always challenged or provided with enough opportunities to explore or develop ideas for themselves.
- Marking does not give pupils enough chance to know how to improve their work and 'learning ladders' are not used consistently across the school to support pupils in setting and reviewing their own targets.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and break times.
- The inspector heard children read and looked at work in pupils' books.
- The inspector held meetings with school senior leaders and members of the governing body, as well as a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector reviewed documentation, including that relating to the tracking of pupils' progress and achievement, attendance records, planning and monitoring, pupils' safety and behaviour, and the school's self-evaluation.
- The views of parents were taken into account through the scrutiny of 27 responses to the online Parent View survey.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at the questionnaires completed by 10 staff members.

Inspection team

Kerry Rochester, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ellwood is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage from a range of different settings.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a single Reception class. There are four other classes: one for Year 1, one for Years 2 and 3, one for Years 3 and 4 and one for Years 5 and Year 6.
- The very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is below average. The school currently has no children looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The on-site nursery is not managed by the governing body and was not included in this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - marking pupils' work in such a way that it identifies what pupils need to do next in order to improve
 - making sure that 'learning ladders' are used consistently across the school to help pupils set and review their own targets
 - increase the level of challenge for less able pupils and give them more opportunities to investigate and develop new ideas for themselves.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - checking up more often on the quality of teaching
 - making sure that lesson observations focus sharply on the learning and progress made by the pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enter the Reception class with skill levels lower than those expected for their age, especially in reading, writing and calculating. They make good progress and reach the expected levels in all areas of learning by the time they move into Year 1.
- In the most recent Year 6 national tests, the proportion of pupils achieving and exceeding expected levels was average, and the progress made from their individual starting points in English and mathematics was good.
- Current school information also shows that pupil progress across other year groups is now securely good in reading, writing and mathematics and, as a result, attainment is beginning to rise. This is an improving picture since the previous inspection.
- The school was disappointed in the outcomes of last year's Year 1 reading check. Leaders reviewed the way they teach phonics (the sounds that letters make) and implemented a new systematic approach across the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. As a result, younger pupils are developing accuracy in sounding out letters and confidently work out words they do not know. The fluency with which older pupils read, together with their impressive choice and range of books, reflects the strong emphasis the school places on encouraging pupils to read widely and often.
- The school has identified that boys have not been doing as well as girls and is taking decisive action to bring about the necessary improvements. Boys are now making similar progress to girls.
- The average points scores for those pupils who received free school meals, at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2012, demonstrates they were two years behind non-free school meals pupils in English and mathematics. However, the current picture in school indicates that all groups of pupils who benefit from pupil premium funding, including the small number of service children, achieve well in response to effective additional adult support, intervention and the school's rigorous checks on their progress. Consequently, the average points scores they make now, in English and mathematics, exceed the average points progress of other pupils, causing a narrowing of the achievement gap.
- Pupils who have special educational needs also make good progress. These strengths demonstrate the school's good commitment to tackling discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the best lessons, teachers have good subject knowledge and are adept at matching their level of questioning to extend pupils' thinking skills. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 mathematics lesson, pupils were skilfully asked by the class teacher to justify their answers. The probing questioning of the teacher meant the pupils deepened their understanding and made good progress.
- Teachers set clear learning objectives which are routinely shared with pupils, and teaching is suitably adjusted so that the pace of learning is maintained.
- Teachers' marking is mostly good and work is marked regularly. However, it does not always provide written feedback to pupils which shows clearly enough how to improve their work.
- 'Learning ladders' are not consistently used across the school to support pupils' skills in setting and reviewing their own targets. Therefore, pupils do not always know when they are ready for a new target or what their new target might be.
- Occasionally, the less able pupils are not given enough challenge, as they are not provided with opportunities to explore resources or new concepts for themselves. As a result, their learning

slows.

- Teaching assistants are used creatively to support groups or individuals. This was evident in a literacy lesson in Year 1 when the teaching assistant worked on her own with a pupil at the start of the lesson and then moved to help other pupils who needed guidance throughout the lesson. She made a major contribution to their progress by seeing these pupils gained important skills, knowledge and understanding by the end of the lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils report that bullying is rare. Pupils know about the different kinds of bullying and how this is different from 'falling out' with each other.
- Pupils said they feel very safe at school because of the excellent care shown by staff and each other. They have a good understanding of what they can do to keep themselves safe, for example not giving out personal details over the internet and that some internet sites may not be safe to use.
- Parents are fully confident that their child is safe and well looked after in school.
- Pupils are always extremely polite to visitors and other adults. They enjoy learning, want to do well, and work hard for their teachers.
- Pupils relate well to each other and have lots of opportunities to take on responsibility, for example, as buddies. Pupils are often seen supporting each other around school and in the playground.
- They become confident young people because they are supported well and have good opportunities to reflect about the world around them.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly average and is improving. The proportion of persistent absences is decreasing because the school is rigorous in checking on why pupils are away from the school and in working with families to improve attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- The school has improved since the previous inspection. The headteacher has rigorously tackled areas of concern and provides clear direction for staff. She has used the management of teachers' performance well to identify and develop new leaders in key areas of responsibility. Staff work well as a team and together accurately identify what the school needs to do to improve further, giving them the capacity for sustained improvement.
- The introduction of challenging targets and more rigorous systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress helps senior leaders to judge the impact of improvements more accurately and to hold teachers more fully to account.
- There are clear expectations for the minimum progress pupils should make each year and this is now being pursued more effectively, through pupil-progress meetings, with staff so that any possible underachievement is quickly identified and tackled.
- Subjects and topics are enhanced by a wide variety of visits and visitors to enrich pupils' learning experiences. A strong emphasis is placed on developing pupils' basic skills. As a result, pupils have good skills when collaborating or working away from teachers and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The positive, inclusive atmosphere in the school means that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are developed well.
- The headteacher and senior leaders check the quality of teaching. However, this has not been sharp enough to promote outstanding teaching or to eliminate those occasions when learning is not sufficiently challenged, especially for the less able.
- This is because lesson observations are not regular enough in order to provide teachers with a

rigorous focus on developing their teaching beyond good, and too often lesson observations focus on teaching skills rather than the learning and progress taking place.

- Parents fully support the school. At the time of the inspection, all parents who responded to Parent View said they would recommend the school to other families.
- All statutory arrangements for safeguarding are met because the leaders put a high priority on seeing that staff skills are up to date and that everyone is vigilant about health and safety.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this good school. The school has benefited from the consistent support and advice received since the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are fully involved as part of the leadership team. They have skilfully developed a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are not afraid to ask important and challenging questions. They evaluate the school's performance regularly in terms of pupil progress and teaching and learning and they conduct governor visits to find out first-hand for themselves how things are going. They are kept well informed about the management of teachers' performance and salary progression and they are fully involved in judgements concerning staff promotion so they know what is done to reward good teachers and to tackle underperformance. They have checked that pupil premium funding has resulted in eligible pupils making good progress.

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	115552
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	405587

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	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Hawkins
Headteacher	Vicki Cole
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 May 2011
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