

Eythorne Elvington Community Primary School

Aldelaide Road, Eythorne, Dover, CT15 4AN

Inspection dates 20–21 June 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching has not been good enough, over time, to help enough pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to speak at length and develop a deeper understanding of the ideas they are learning.
- Too many pupils have not yet developed the skills of independent learning so that they can find out things for themselves and work faster when they feel they are able to.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunity to be involved in showing what they already know or can work out. At times, the lack of challenge in lessons slows progress.
- Recently appointed leaders of subjects across the school have not developed the skills to be able to judge how well pupils are learning in their subjects. As a result, they are not yet able to play a full part in helping the school to act quickly and effectively to accelerate pupils' progress.
- There is not a clear enough understanding across the school about the key features of good and outstanding teaching and learning.

The school has the following strengths

- More pupils than previously are beginning to make good progress because the quality of teaching is improving. The standards that pupils reach in reading, writing and mathematics are also rising.
- Progress made by children in the Reception class is good. This is due to accurate assessments and teaching that balances the guidance that children need with the opportunities they need to explore their own interests.
- Behaviour and safety are good in the school. Pupils are courteous to others, follow the example set by school staff and have no concerns about bullying or disruptive behaviour.
- The executive headteacher and head of school have worked effectively since the joining of their two schools in the federation to develop positive pupil attitudes to learning and improve the quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, including five joint observations with senior leaders and observations of pupils receiving additional support. In addition, the inspector examined pupils' work in their books and listened to pupils read.
- The inspection was carried out at the same time as an inspection at the federated school, Sibertswold Church of England Primary School. The two lead inspectors met jointly with members of the governing body, including the Chair, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector held meetings with school staff and groups of pupils. He also listened to pupils read, met informally with parents and carers at the beginning of the school day and observed behaviour at break time.
- The inspector took account of the school's own parental survey, additional discussions held with parents and carers at the beginning of the school day and 10 staff questionnaires. There were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to be considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including policies and improvement plans, staff development, pupils' achievement, teaching, the curriculum, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Mehar Brar, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Eythorne Elvington Community Primary School is a much smaller than average school.
- In January 2012, it entered into a federation with Sibertswold Church of England Primary School. The headteacher is executive headteacher of both schools and there is a single governing body overseeing the work of both schools. There have been a significant number of staffing changes in this school since the last inspection.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding provided for children looked after by the local authority, pupils eligible for free school meals and children of service families) is well above average.
- The vast majority of pupils in the school are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much lower than average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is well above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is also well above average.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils join and leave this school at times other than the start of the year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more pupils make good or better progress by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to speak at length, so that by explaining what they are learning, they deepen their understanding
 - giving pupils opportunities to develop their skills of independent learning so that they can find out things for themselves and develop their learning at a rate of which they are capable
 - providing opportunities for pupils to be more actively involved in showing and using what they know already, particularly at the start of lessons, so that teachers can build more challenging tasks and so help move learning forward more quickly.
- Increase the impact of leadership on how well pupils learn by:
 - developing the skills of the recently appointed leaders of different subjects so that they can accurately judge how well pupils are learning in their areas, and contribute to the school's actions to accelerate pupils' progress
 - ensuring a clear understanding across the school of the key features of good and better teaching and its impact on learning, so that teachers can plan and deliver lessons that help pupils learn faster.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because, although rates of pupils' progress are improving, they are not yet good throughout the school. Pupils' progress has not been good enough over time. The improving achievement is the result of the benefits of the federated work with the main partner school. This partnership has brought in additional leadership expertise, enabled staff collaboration and provided training for teachers.
- Children usually enter the Reception class with attainment that is well below the expectations for their age, particularly in communication skills and social skills. By the end of Reception, although their attainment is still below national expectations, most pupils have made good progress. Steady and improving progress continues through Years 1 to 6, where standards in reading, writing and mathematics are rising. However, progress is variable and not enough pupils exceed the expected rates of progress when compared to schools nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have their needs identified early and are provided with effective support. Shared work with the federated school has enabled all teachers and support staff to receive training and ongoing guidance about how to help these pupils make better progress. Teachers and support staff work well together to meet these pupils' needs through support in class and small-group teaching. As a result, these pupils now make similar progress to others in the school.
- Pupils who receive support funded by the pupil premium do not attain as well as other pupils in the school, but the gap is closing. In English, they are two terms behind other pupils, and in mathematics, they are one term behind. Their improving progress is, as for other pupils, the result of more detailed assessments by the school and a focused and collective effort, led by the executive headteacher and head of school, to take action promptly where there are pupils at risk of falling behind.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to other pupils in the school. There is no difference in the progress made by boys and girls. Pupils who join this school at times other than the start of the autumn term settle quickly and make variable, but overall similar, progress to other pupils.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to speak at length to share and develop their ideas, and therefore accelerate learning. Pupils are sometimes not given enough opportunity to find out things for themselves and decide how they want to develop their work.
- The school is committed to providing every pupil with an equal opportunity to achieve at the highest level possible. The rates of pupils' progress and the standards they are reaching in English and mathematics are now beginning to improve for all pupils.
- The school's focus on writing has led to impressive improvements in the progress pupils make, but this progress is still slightly below that seen in reading and mathematics. Pupils enjoy reading, and read at home as well as school. They are improving their ability to join together the sounds that letters make, and to read with emotion and expression.
- In mathematics, pupils are improving their ability to carry out mathematical calculations and understand what graphs and charts show them. Pupils are able to produce longer pieces of writing to show what they are learning, such as stories, diaries and play scripts.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- In spite of recent improvements, the overall quality of teaching requires improvement. School staff, and parents and carers, believe that the quality of teaching is good; however, inspection evidence shows that it has not been good enough over time to ensure good progress by pupils throughout the school.
- There are positive relationships between teachers and pupils, and pupils themselves. Teachers have established effective classroom routines, and give clear guidance to pupils about what they

are expected to learn. As a result, pupils start work quickly and lessons proceed at pace.

- Teaching is better in the Reception class than elsewhere in the school, and this is reflected in the good progress children make. Teachers make sure that children settle quickly, make friends, and have opportunities to learn through their interests. This personal development, as a foundation for learning, continues throughout the school up to Year 6, and is building increasingly confident learners.
- Teachers do not always give enough opportunities for pupils to work with independence. When teachers encourage pupils to find out things for themselves, they work with greater interest because they can choose how fast they want to work, decide which parts of their work they want to improve first and show their learning as they prefer. This is not a typical feature of teaching in the school and progress is therefore slowed in too many lessons.
- Pupils make slower progress than they are capable of because in some lessons teachers do not have a clear enough understanding of what pupils know and can do already. In one lesson observed during the inspection, for example, pupils could tell the time and were ready to move on to problem solving. Instead, they had to review earlier learning unnecessarily and delay the opportunity to extend their learning.
- In lessons other than English or mathematics, such as in information and communication technology, pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Teachers are giving greater opportunity for pupils to develop the skills needed to use computers to accelerate their learning, but these gaps are taking time to fill, particularly for older pupils.
- Teachers regularly ask questions of pupils to help them think about what they are learning, but they accept short answers from pupils rather than enable pupils to extend and deepen their understanding by discussing this more extensively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good in the school. Since starting work with the federated school, pupils have developed much more positive attitudes towards the school, each other and their learning. Parents and carers also now have more confidence in the school. They specifically commented on the improved communication and increased motivation of pupils since the school benefited from the raised expectations brought in by the executive headteacher.
- Pupils learn and play together happily in a school that they feel proud to attend. They show concern for other pupils and value the way that teachers work hard to make school a place where they want to learn and develop. Parents and carers recognise the good work of the school.
- Staff model courtesy and respect around the school. They show a strong commitment to the success of these pupils in their lives. Pupils, and parents and carers, recognise and value the efforts staff make, and the growing respect that is developing between them. As a result, there are very few incidents of disruptive behaviour.
- Bullying or name-calling, including prejudice-driven bullying of any type, is rare. Staff deal with any pupil concerns promptly and effectively, and this keeps disruption in lessons or in other parts of the school at very low levels.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe by learning about aspects such as road safety, internet safety and being careful when meeting strangers. The school carries out risk assessments as necessary when pupils visit places outside school.
- Almost all pupils want to learn well. They enjoy school, and value the opportunities that the school provides to learn, be it through lessons, or clubs and activities, and trips such as to the theatre, or local towns.
- Attendance of pupils is above average and reflects the improving partnership the school is developing with parents and carers. The family liaison officer works effectively with families to help pupils settle in school and learn well.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Being part of a federation with another school has enabled the executive headteacher and the head of school at Eythorne Elvington to work together to raise expectations about what pupils at this school can achieve, provide a clear system to assess and track pupils' progress, and intervene at the earliest signs of underachievement to support progress. Staff have benefited from a wider range of professional development by working with staff from the partner school. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving.
- Although the school is improving, recently appointed leaders of subject areas have not been in post long enough to judge the quality of teaching and help to improve it across the school. As a result, their impact has been limited to date. Senior leaders recognise this as one of their priorities in their school improvement plan. They also acknowledge that there needs to be a clearer understanding of the key features of good and outstanding teaching and learning amongst all leaders and staff, so that lessons are planned to accelerate pupils' progress.
- Pupils learn a broad range of subjects. Staff are now beginning to plan together to develop their ideas for stimulating pupils' interest and enthusiasm so that they are even more engaged in their learning.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning are taught through opportunities to join clubs that run in the school, work together in lessons and visit places of interest. The school also provides opportunities to help pupils learn about lifestyles and cultures across the world and the beauty and difficulties of life across our planet. Sometimes, this is about local issues, such as learning about homeless people in Dover.
- Parents and carers have more confidence in the leadership of the school than at the time of the previous inspection. They recognise that the efforts of school leaders and staff are improving the school. The school is now beginning to engage more parents and carers to become actively involved in supporting their children's learning.
- The local authority has supported the school in judging the quality of teaching, helping teachers make accurate assessments, and with opportunities to work with other schools nearby to share ideas further about how to improve teaching and increase rates of pupils' progress.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are committed and active members of the school community. They are knowledgeable about many of the strengths of the school, focusing mainly on behaviour and the quality of leadership, and increasingly on the improvements that the school needs to make in the quality of teaching to ensure that pupils make rapid progress. They know the school well through regular visits, meetings with governors of other schools, information received from national organisations supporting schools, and through the information provided by the executive headteacher. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Governors understand what the data about the school tells them about how well pupils are learning. They have used this data to confirm that the gaps between the achievement of pupils receiving extra support through the pupil premium and the achievement of other pupils in the school are closing. They also ensure that performance management and staff progression on the salary scales are linked to the impact of teaching on pupils' 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	118399
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	401749

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	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Webster
Headteacher	Liz Bird (Executive Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 October 2009
Telephone number	01304 830376
Fax number	01304 831784
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