

# Elsworth CofE VA Primary School

Broad End, Elsworth, Cambridge, CB23 4JD

## Inspection dates

3–4 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well and reach standards that are above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils enjoy school very much because their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well promoted.
- Teaching is good, with examples of outstanding practice. Planned activities are interesting, and stimulate pupils' keen desire to learn.
- Pupils' exemplary behaviour helps them to concentrate well, work cooperatively and make at least good progress in lessons.
- The headteacher has a deep understanding of how young children learn best. This is successfully translated into a practical, broad range of subjects and experiences.
- The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, is a very effective leader who has improved teaching through regular monitoring. She has forged an enthusiastic and happy team of adults, wholly committed to pupils' progress and well-being.
- Governors while effectively holding the school to account for its performance, provide thoughtful support to the school in fulfilling its aims of 'Loving, Trusting, Sharing'.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Marking is not always linked precisely to what pupils are learning. Comments do not link consistently to National Curriculum targets, limiting pupils' understanding of what they need to do to move their learning on.
- Pupils' presentation and handwriting skills are variable and written work is not recorded as accurately as it could be.
- Not all school leaders are fully involved in school-wide tracking of pupils' progress to help ensure that all do as well as they possibly can.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. Brief visits were made to small group sessions.
- The inspector attended a whole-school assembly and harvest festival in church.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence including: the school's improvement and raising attainment plans; self-evaluation information; the school's data for tracking pupils' progress; pupils' work in books; minutes of governing body meetings; the headteacher's reports to the governing body; classroom displays; policies and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documentation.
- The inspector had meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the school council, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors.
- The inspector heard pupils read.
- The inspector took into account the 64 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in reaching the final judgements on the school. She considered four letters submitted by parents and discussions she held with two parents. She also considered 13 comments from staff who responded to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

June Woolhouse, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is currently organised into five mixed-age classes; two in Key Stage 1, and three in Key Stage 2.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- An average proportion of pupils join or leave the school partway through their primary education.
- A below-average proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for other groups.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A pre-school class for nursery-age children is located on the school site and is run by other providers. This is subject to a separate inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - extending to all school leaders the responsibility of tracking and evaluating pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics
  - ensuring that teachers' written marking indicates what pupils must do next to improve their work and linking comments to National Curriculum level descriptions.
- Improve the presentation of pupils' written work by:
  - establishing and maintaining a whole-school policy for handwriting and correct letter and numeral formation
  - teaching pupils the difference between writing that is their first attempt and a final copy which shows their corrected spelling, punctuation, grammar and an understanding of high-quality presentation.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards in English and mathematics are above average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils make consistently good progress and achieve well.
- The majority of Reception children achieve a good level of development and some exceed this by the time they enter Year 1. They enjoy well-planned activities in all areas of learning and have sufficient opportunities to explore and investigate them independently.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are identified quickly and are supported well, either individually or in small groups, by effective teaching assistants. By the end of Year 6, these pupils have made as much progress as their classmates
- In 2012, none of the pupils in Year 6 were eligible for pupil premium funding. The very small number of eligible pupils in other year groups benefit from good support and do just as well as their classmates.
- Pupils learn phonics (the sounds letters make) in a systematic way. They quickly learn to apply their knowledge to build words successfully. This skill enables them to work out words and sentences readily in their reading books. Pupils achieve well in the phonics check carried out at the end of Year 1.
- Pupils read fluently. This is helped by daily practice that the school recommends to all parents. Pupils read with confidence, as was heard in a wonderful Harvest Service celebration. They read their own prayers with confidence and feeling to the rest of the congregation of pupils, parents and friends of the school.
- Pupils' good and often exemplary attitudes to their work support their good progress very effectively. They are confident enough to alert the teacher when they do not understand, and particularly enjoy tasks that engage them in discussion or research.
- In lessons, typically, most pupils do well, including the more able and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. A few pupils are not achieving as well; mostly those who have joined the school later and have not yet had enough time to catch up with their peers. Some pupils do not present their work neatly, or have fluent handwriting. This is because they do not have enough experience of drafting, and correct formation of letters and numerals is not given enough emphasis in teaching.
- While the more able are sufficiently challenged and reach higher levels in English and mathematics than most pupils nationally, as yet, none has reached the highest level tested.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has a consistently good impact on pupils' learning and progress, driven by the high expectations of the headteacher. Well-chosen training has contributed to better teaching and higher standards in writing.
- The most effective teaching, which has an outstanding impact on pupils' learning, is the result of

good planning and an accurate assessment of what pupils need to learn next to make good progress. In these lessons, pupils know what they are going to learn at the start of lessons and have time to review what has been learned previously. Resources are immediately available and pupils' excellent attitudes to learning mean that they organise themselves quickly and get down to work without over-direction.

- Teaching moves along at a brisk pace. The more able are not kept waiting and those who need extra support receive it rapidly, either from the teacher or well-deployed teaching assistants. Pupils much enjoy discussing their work, as in a lively session when pupils were learning to write in the style of a famous author. They gained greater insight into writing by rehearsing their ideas.
- Reception children have a stimulating range of tasks and activities to choose from which are set out indoors and outside. The emphasis on first-hand experience, through well-chosen practical tasks, leads to sustained concentration, enquiry and good independent attitudes.
- Relationships amongst adults and pupils are very strong, and this has a significant impact on pupils' social, moral and cultural development. Pupils show in their excellent attitudes and behaviour that they feel included, very safe and confident about their learning.
- Teachers deploy their teaching assistants effectively and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, as well as those who are more able, benefit from the opportunities to work directly with an adult or in small groups. Those pupils needing to catch up or who are new to school make particularly good progress in these sessions.
- Teachers mark work regularly and there are examples of excellent practice. At present, not all comments are sufficiently detailed or link accurately to what pupils are learning to enable them to improve their work, correct errors or know what they will be learning next. Longer term learning targets linked to National Curriculum levels are not consistently available to all pupils.
- Handwriting, with correct formation of letter and numerals, is not taught systematically in each year group. Errors of spelling punctuation and grammar are not always identified in marking, and there is too little attention to these inaccuracies to ensure that pupils' written work is error free or that pupils develop writing fluency.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils behave exceptionally well in class, around school and on the playground. They enjoy learning and work very well independently, in groups or by themselves. They particularly enjoy discussing their learning with each other. Overall, their positive attitudes contribute very well to their good progress.
- Pupils collaborate together extremely well, showing sensitivity and tolerance in discussions or when they share resources. This was the case, for example, in a mathematics lesson when they took turns in discovering the frequency of heads or tails when tossing ten coins and then recording their results. They tested each other's understanding by devising questions about their own findings.
- Pupils, the vast majority of parents and all staff comment very positively about the levels of considerate and thoughtful behaviour shown by most pupils. Expectations are very high for this quality of behaviour and the pupils are often commended for their conduct when they go out of school on visits or residential activities.

- Pupils understand the types of bullying children of their age might meet. They are confident what to do if it occurred. Adults manage pupils' behaviour consistently well in a climate of trust and confidence. The school holds an anti-bullying week each year as part of its personal and social education programme.
- Pupils enjoy school very much and feel very safe there. They understand how to be safe when using computers, and in and outside school in a range of situations.
- Attendance is good for the vast majority of pupils but the overall attendance figures have been depressed because of the erratic attendance of a very small number. The school provides very good support for the pupils with persistent absence so that those who have missed a lot of school are able to settle back in and to catch up.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher, ably supported by governors and staff, has established a clear direction for the school. She and the deputy headteacher have high expectations for both pupils and staff, and have built up an effective team.
- Teaching has improved over time because it is carefully monitored on a regular basis. This has led to the consolidation of the good achievement noted at the time of the previous inspection. Where improvements in teaching are necessary, they are included in each teacher's annual targets. Appropriate training follows to address areas for development.
- The headteacher's checks on pupils' progress are accurate. Detailed and thorough tracking information is shared with staff regularly. Pupils not making good progress receive extra support from well-trained teaching assistants. As yet, not all school leaders are involved in the analysis of this information and in taking action to deal with any general weakness identified.
- The emphasis on speaking, listening, reading and writing contributes significantly to the good progress pupils make across all curriculum subjects. Pupils are good communicators and well prepared for the next stage of their education. However, there is a lack of consistency in checking that pupils form their letters and numerals correctly, and this leads to some untidy presentation and handwriting for some pupils.
- The subjects and themes taught engage pupils' interest and desire to learn. Subjects link together well and give pupils good opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills. The outside area is used to stimulate pupils' imaginations, develop independent thinking and foster respect for all living things. Each class takes turns to care for the school's egg-laying chickens and learn about business practice at the same time when they sell the eggs. Extra-curricular activities, such as sport, educational trips and residential visits, contribute significantly to pupils' outstanding attitudes to learning and their personal and social development.
- Planning is in place for how the additional funding provided for sports development is to be spent, with a sharp focus on how it will benefit pupils. Some is already being spent on buying in specialist coaching at the local village college to develop netball skills. Class teachers are improving their own teaching skills in physical education by observing these sessions and discussing effective practice.
- The local authority considers the school to be good, appropriately offering advice as and when requested.

- The school's excellent website is just one example of the school's strong partnership with parents.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors undergo appropriate training and have a good understanding of their strategic roles.
- Governors hold the headteacher and staff to account for the academic performance of pupils and are equally involved in checking their well-being and personal development. They understand what the published data is saying about standards. They receive good, accurate information from the headteacher on a regular basis and know the areas in which the school must improve.
- Together with the headteacher and staff, governors promote the school's aims effectively. They are vigilant about safeguarding procedures, which all meet the current standards.
- Governors manage the headteacher's performance well and oversee the process in respect of all other staff working in school. Pay increases are contingent on good performance and targets being met. Governors monitor the school's financial resources and check the efficient deployment of staffing and materials. This includes the potential use of pupil premium funds, extra money assigned to school sporting activities and funds for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Governors are regular visitors and give of their time willingly to help out in school events and activities. They are very much part of the school team and village life in general.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110830
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	425357

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	132
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Clair Harrison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Theresa Thornton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 November 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01954 267272
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