

# Eldene Primary School

Colingsmead, Swindon, SN3 3TQ

## Inspection dates

5–6 December 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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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.

- There has been significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well from low starting points.
- Pupils' progress is regularly tracked by teachers, ensuring that interventions are timely and effective.
- Teaching is consistently good, with some that is outstanding. Teachers are now meeting the needs of all pupils and helping them to make more rapid progress.
- A significant number of pupils have complex learning needs and this affects their levels of attainment. However, all of these pupils make good progress because of strong provision.
- Pupils are well behaved and unfailingly polite. Adults in the school are excellent role models and there is a high degree of mutual respect among adults and pupils. This supports pupils' learning very well.
- Pupils' attendance is improving year on year. Pupils are keen to come to school and enjoy all aspects of school life. They feel very safe and well cared for.
- The strong and well-established leadership of the two-headteacher partnership has built an effective and well-prepared school team.
- Governors are very active and supportive of the school and are not afraid to ask challenging questions to help it to improve further.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' attainment in writing is not as good as it is in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils do not always have enough opportunity to talk before writing or to practise the construction of sentences.
- Awkward pencil grips and wrongly formed letters prevent pupils from developing a fluent handwriting style.
- The existing outstanding teaching practice is not yet shared sufficiently across the school.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 20 lessons and observed 16 teachers, two of whom were the headteachers. They also observed two trainee teachers, talked to pupils about their work and heard pupils from Years 2, 3, and 6 read.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including systems for checking progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures, the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement, records of monitoring the quality of teaching and the minutes of the governing body meetings.
- The inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of subjects and ages.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff and groups of pupils. Individual pupils were spoken to in lessons and around the school. A telephone conversation took place with a school adviser from the local authority.
- Questionnaires from 32 members of staff were analysed. The inspectors took account of the views expressed in 19 online responses from Parent View and comments from a large number of parents during informal meetings on the playground before school on both days of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Anna Sketchley, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Rob Isaacs	Additional inspector
Cliff Mainey	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Eldene is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are taught in single-age classes. At the time of the inspection there was one mixed-age class in Years 3 and 4.
- The school has special resource provision for eight pupils aged 7 to 11 who have complex learning needs. Places are awarded to pupils across the local area by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed services, is above average.
- The proportion of children joining the school mid-year or mid-key stage is higher than normal.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups, including those who are in the very early stages of learning English, is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club.

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

- Improve pupils' achievement in writing by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to talk through their ideas before writing to enrich their vocabulary
  - ensure that pupils have a better understanding of proper sentence construction and more opportunities to practise writing sentences
  - re-establish the school's handwriting guidance to improve the fluency of pupils' handwriting.
- Improve teaching further by sharing examples of outstanding practice more widely.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Although all groups of pupils make good progress, their aggregated levels of attainment are affected by their low starting points and the very complex needs of a significant number of children when they join the Reception class. This was particularly true of Year 2 in 2013 when aggregated attainment dipped considerably because of an unusually high percentage of very complex special needs in that year group. Pupils' levels of attainment seen in the present Year 2 during the inspection, on the other hand, were close to the national average.
- Standards in Year 6 were particularly affected in 2013 by the inclusion in national results of five junior-age pupils from the special resource provision. Again, standards in Year 6 during the inspection were close to the national average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. This represents good progress from pupils' low starting points.
- Achievement data are also affected by the school's high mobility factor. The school has a growing reputation for helping children with special educational needs to make good progress and a substantial number of children have joined the school over the last year.
- Interventions put into place for pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, such as speech and language support for younger pupils, small-group teaching to target writing and mathematics skills, and behaviour and social support, are effectively enhancing the provision. When looking at the progress of individual pupils eligible for this funding in each year group, it is good and their average point score is similar to that of all other pupils nationally.
- Pupils in the special resource provision and pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes make good progress because they are very well supported both by teachers and highly skilled teaching assistants who adopt a purposeful and positive approach to learning.
- In the Reception class all groups of children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. They enjoy a calm environment where parents are warmly welcomed and involved in their children's learning and development. Many start the day by helping their children learn to write their names.
- Recent professional development in the teaching of letters and sounds for teachers and teaching assistants has resulted in pupils making more rapid progress in literacy. The results of the phonics screening check show that pupils are now achieving at least average levels by the end of Year 1. This represents very good progress from their starting points. During the inspection, less able Year 1 pupils were fully engaged as they used mirrors to check that they were making the correct shape with their mouths when making the sound 'th' and enjoyed being 'detectives' using small magnifying glasses to spot the sound in sentences.
- There is a strong emphasis on learning to read and although a significant number of pupils find reading difficult, they try very hard and take it very seriously. Specialist extra support for reading is helping these pupils to make good progress. They successfully use the strategies they have been taught to read unfamiliar words. By Year 6, standards in reading are close to the national average and most pupils read fluently with expression and can discuss authors and books they have enjoyed.
- Standards in writing have improved, although they are not as good as in reading and mathematics. The school knows this and plans are in place to enrich pupils' vocabulary and to help them to write proper sentences and develop more fluent handwriting.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics has improved steadily over the last three years because of intensive professional development for teachers. More-able pupils in Year 5 quickly calculated  $6 \times 123$  and  $269 \times 3$  and some more-able pupils in Year 6 ably worked out the area of a variety of different shapes.

**The quality of teaching****is good**

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils in both their work and behaviour. Pupils respond very well and this supports their good progress.
- Interesting and stimulating activities at the beginning of lessons generate high levels of engagement from pupils. Pupils say that 'lessons are fun'. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils thoroughly enjoyed learning the skills involved in writing instructions as they planned to dress their teachers as snowmen.
- Lessons are well planned and organised, often according to ability and sometimes across year groups, so that pupils of different abilities and learning needs receive challenging tasks that are helping them to make the best possible progress.
- Good-quality resources are always ready for use and pupils have clear routines so no time is wasted. Lessons have a good pace, making best use of the time available.
- Teachers skilfully question pupils to check their understanding, often asking them to explain their answers, especially in mathematics. This, coupled with thorough marking that indicates to pupils what they can do to improve their work, enables teachers to assess pupils' progress correctly and helps pupils to know what they need to do next.
- Pupils respond very well to the school's 'DIY' system of marking, where they are given dedicated time to reflect on mistakes and correct and improve their previous work.
- A very small minority of marking was not consistent with the school's policy so pupils were not clear about what they could do to improve.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils****are good**

- Pupils are exceptionally polite and the vast majority are well behaved and respectful towards adults and each other. They listen very carefully in lessons and walk very sensibly and quietly around the building. They play well together on the playground and enjoy being peer mediators, helping to resolve any problems.
- Exclusions are rare and challenging behaviour is exceptionally well managed so that it does not disrupt the learning or safety of other pupils. Instances of bullying are the exception and pupils say they feel very safe in school. Comments from adults in the school and conversations with parents and pupils fully support this view.
- The school is a very calm place to be and pupils are very clear about to whom they should go if they are troubled. They know that adults will listen to them and help them to resolve their difficulties.
- Pupils know how to keep safe, for example by not speaking to strangers. The school has an e-safety team which involves all pupils in internet safety so that everyone is very aware of the precautions they should take when using the internet.
- The school has rigorous procedures for dealing with absence, and attendance has improved. It is now similar to that of most other schools. However, further improvement is constrained by some parents who take their children away on holiday during term time.
- Being a member of the school council and other responsibilities around the school provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their personal and social skills.

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

- The two full-time headteachers form a very strong partnership. Their teaching commitment and responsibility for different age groups in the school enable them to monitor its work closely and regularly. As a result they have a very accurate picture of what needs to be done to improve pupils' achievement and the school's priorities are supported by comprehensive action plans that include continuing to improve teachers' skills.

- A senior leadership team made up of the two headteachers, the senior leader responsible for special educational needs and the school's business manager is effective in managing the school, while a determination to improve teaching and learning has created a clear vision which has been communicated very effectively to the whole school community.
- The performance of all teachers and teaching assistants is rigorously monitored and subsequent professional development has been instrumental in improving the quality of teaching. Good practice is not yet shared widely enough, however, and the school realises that examples of outstanding teaching could be used more to improve teachers' skills.
- Successful initiatives, such as the system for tracking pupils' progress introduced since the last inspection, the improved teaching of letters and sounds and mathematics and pupils' subsequent rise in achievement in these areas, demonstrate that the school has the capacity to continue to improve.
- The creative curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills as they write reports, for example, about the Great Fire of London. Pupils' skills in art are particularly arresting.
- Pupils spoke of the many memorable visits and visitors they experience that enrich their learning. Through the many clubs offered by the school, pupils can enjoy sports, gardening, dance, Latin and computers. Strong local school partnerships and new sports funding are being used well to provide specialist training for teachers, dance related to curriculum topics and additional after-school clubs. As a result, participation in activities is rising, as is pupils' understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- Equal opportunities for different groups of pupils are promoted very well and the school does not tolerate any form of discrimination. The governing body and school staff ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously and that all requirements are met.
- The local authority offers the school a good level of support.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are very supportive of the school, and are well organised and very knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses in relation to other schools. They monitor the work of the school carefully. For example, they recently held a day of curriculum review for governors and the school's leaders. In addition, governors understand pupil progress information, how well teachers are performing and the priorities in the school development plan. Governors have attended significant training and the skills they have developed and their knowledge of the school enable them to ask challenging questions about, for example, the use and impact of the pupil premium. Rigorous objectives have been set for the headteachers with the help of an external consultant and governors have received information about teachers' performance and pay progression. They carry out their statutory duties diligently and effectively.

## 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>	132229
<b>Local authority</b>	Swindon
<b>Inspection number</b>	427323
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	320
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Boshier
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Joslin Heather Kellett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2–3 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01793 525908
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