

Ecclesbourne Primary School

Attlee Close, Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR7 7FA

Inspection dates 11–12 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	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.

- School leaders have been very successful in improving the quality of teaching across the school. As a result, pupils make consistently good and sometimes faster progress, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to plan lessons that motivate all groups of pupils, enabling them to learn very well. Teachers are enthusiastic and enjoy excellent relationships with the pupils who respond by working hard and behaving well.
- Middle leaders make a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching. They value the training they receive and the opportunities to take responsibility for key areas of the school's work.
- The school's procedures for keeping pupils safe and secure are outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They dress smartly, are well mannered and proud of their school.
- The focus that the school places on developing pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development and well-being ensures that the school is a harmonious community.
- The school shows a high level of care for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, enabling them to get the most out of all the school has to offer.
- The directors of the Pegasus Academy Trust provide strong strategic leadership in areas such as finance, recruitment and teacher appraisal.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in writing is not as fast as in reading and mathematics because, when pupils write in subjects other than English, there is not enough focus on improving their writing skills.
- The academy council is not as effective as the directors of the trust because its members do not have a detailed enough understanding of the school's work to help it to challenge the school to improve to outstanding.
- In Nursery and Reception, children do not learn as well outside as they do inside the classroom. Adults do not plan activities as effectively and there is also less adult engagement with children to challenge and deepen their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 26 lessons, of which six were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons. They also looked at pupils' books and observed other aspects of the school's work including the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Academy Trust, two members of the academy council, including the Chair, and teachers and school leaders. Pupils took inspectors on a tour of the school. The inspectors also listened to pupils read and spoke with them about their reading.
- Inspectors took account of the 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to parents and carers who visited the 'Museum Day'. Inspectors also spoke to parents and carers at the school gate. Inspectors reviewed 29 questionnaire responses from staff.
- A number of documents were looked at, including the school's own information relating to pupils' achievement, the school's self-evaluation summary and plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance and checks on teaching and documents relating to safeguarding. The inspectors also visited the school's website.

Inspection team

Martin Marsh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maura Docherty

Additional Inspector

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Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school.
- The school is part of The Pegasus Academy Trust comprising of three schools: Ecclesbourne Primary School, Whitehorse Infants School and Whitehorse Junior School. Two executive headteachers oversee all three schools. In addition, Ecclesbourne has a designated head of school. All three schools work closely together. Both executive headteachers are local leaders in education and provide support for school improvement to other local schools.
- The school's governance functions at two levels. The first is the board of directors of the Pegasus Academy Trust, which oversees the work of all three schools. The second is the academy council, which is responsible for Ecclesbourne School.
- The school provides 'wrap around care', running both a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- Almost half of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding which supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children or children of service families.) This is well above average. In this school, nearly all the eligible pupils are those entitled to free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The vast majority of pupils belong to ethnic groups other than White British. A large proportion of these pupils speak English as an additional language. About a half of the pupils are from Black African, Black Caribbean and other Black backgrounds.
- A small group of Year 6 pupils spend every morning at Whitehorse Junior School to boost their progress in English and mathematics.
- 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 teaching and raise achievement so that a greater proportion of pupils make rapid progress by:
 - making sure that when pupils are writing in other subjects they are given the same guidance in developing their writing skills as they are in literacy lessons
 - improving the learning for children in Nursery and Reception by ensuring that opportunities to learn outside the classroom match those inside.
- Strengthen the skills of members of the academy council so they have a more detailed understanding of the school's work so as to be able to provide better challenge to school leaders.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils arrive at the school with levels of development which are well below what would be typical for their age, particularly in aspects of communication and language and in literacy. They make good progress throughout the school, so that by the time they leave in Year 6 they attain standards in English and mathematics that are broadly in line with national averages.
- Well planned lessons help pupils learn their letters and the sounds they make (phonics) quickly. By the end of Year 1, a higher proportion of pupils than nationally achieve the expected standard on the phonics screening check. One Reception parent said, 'I can't believe how quickly my son is learning to read.' These early skills in reading are built on well, so that by the time pupils leave the school they are confident readers and enjoy books. Progress in mathematics overall is good, and often faster than this especially at Key Stage 2.
- Progress for the most able pupils is similar to other pupils because teachers plan challenging activities which really make them think and deepen their learning. One boy was able to explain to inspectors about Pythagoras' Theorem, which he had learnt as part of the topic they were studying about the Ancient Greeks. The topic work approach is giving able pupils and others opportunities to research using a range of printed and electronic texts which is developing their reading skills very effectively.
- Progress in writing is slower than in reading and mathematics. This is because the good emphasis that is placed on developing pupils' writing skills in literacy lessons is not always present when pupils are working in other subjects. A recently introduced system is helping teachers to give clear and easily understandable guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. This is beginning to improve their progress.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium typically have considerably lower starting points than their peers. They make similar progress to other pupils, and sometimes better, especially in English. Nevertheless, in the 2013 end of Year 6 tests, they were still five terms behind their peers in mathematics and two terms behind in reading and writing.
- Government funding is used well to provide high quality support, either on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. A learning mentor provides good support for children and families whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Funding also supports attendance at the excellent breakfast and after-school clubs, which have a strong focus on helping pupils to learn as well as giving them something to eat at the beginning and end of the day. Evidence from the 2013 Key Stage 1 assessments shows that these measures have had a very positive impact and eligible pupils attained higher than other pupils.
- The strong focus the school puts on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills enables all pupils to learn well, particularly those whose first language is not English or who come from Black African, Black Caribbean and other Black backgrounds. In Nursery and Reception, the well planned use of stories is enthusing children and developing English language skills very effectively.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. They receive good interventions from well trained additional adults, and in lessons work is planned that is suitable for their levels of ability. The school is successful in providing equal opportunities for learning for all.
- The nine pupils who attend Whitehorse Junior School every morning are making good progress, because they are with pupils with similar levels of attainment and work is well matched to their abilities.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good across the school, with an increasing proportion of even stronger teaching. Excellent subject knowledge enables teachers to plan lessons which motivate pupils

and devise activities which are appropriate to the abilities of the different groups of pupils, ensuring they all make at least good progress.

- An outstanding mathematics lesson in a lower ability Year 6 class enabled all pupils to make rapid progress in solving problems involving time. The level of challenge in the problems was just right for the abilities of the pupils, the modelling of the approaches were extremely clear, regular checks were made on learning by the teacher to ensure that errors and misconceptions were addressed and excellent use was made of additional adults when pupils were working.
- All lessons have a very clear focus on what pupils are going to learn as distinct from what they are going to do. This results in pupils knowing what skills they are developing and having a clear idea as to whether they have been successful or not. Marking is good and is always linked closely to the learning that is expected in the lesson. Pupils know how well they are doing and many have a very clear idea of what they need to do to improve. Pupils typically respond to teachers' marking with a comment of their own or by completing an additional task or problem.
- Additional adults provide good support in lessons. In a Year 2 class they worked very well with the teacher to ensure that pupils were continuously thinking about the skills they were developing in their writing. This resulted in the pupils refocusing their efforts and making good progress in learning how to use a range of different adjectives to describe different objects.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. Pupils listen carefully to explanations and are usually keen to answer questions. When they work on their own, pupils know that their teachers have high expectations and they present their work well and try to do their best.
- The school's environment is very conducive to good learning. There are plenty of imaginative displays of pupils' work and helpful prompts to assist pupils in lessons, including words which will help make their writing more interesting. Classrooms have good book areas which encourage pupils to read and there is an excellent library.
- Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception because of well planned activities and good engagement between adults and children within the classroom which deepens their learning. Opportunities to learn in the outside area are less well planned and adults do not engage with children as well, so the good outside resource is not contributing to learning as much as it could.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school helps children to settle into Nursery and Reception well, setting high expectations and introducing clear routines. This helps them to acquire the right attitudes to learning which help them as they move through the school.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the schools is good because adults manage it very well and are consistent in how any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with. Pupils can explain the systems that are used to reward good behaviour and what constitutes unacceptable behaviour.
- Pupils are well mannered and polite and spoke enthusiastically to inspectors about their work. They also enjoyed showing their parents their work on 'Museum Day'. They are proud of their school and look smart in their school uniform. All pupils who were spoken to during the inspection said they liked coming to school and were happy. Almost all parents and carers agreed.
- During the 'Museum Day', older pupils enjoyed showing parents to different classes in the school. They willingly take on responsibilities and look after each other well, particularly when someone is upset or needs a friend. Pupils aspire to be house captains who organise, among other things, schools discos and talent shows.
- The school has a number of pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour. It works very hard to ensure that these pupils are included fully in the life of the school, that their behaviour improves, that they learn well and that the learning of others is not affected. The school shows a high standard of care to all children, particularly those from families whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- Pupils understand about different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, and know how to

stay safe on the internet. They know that it is wrong to use derogatory language and so racist and homophobic incidents are very rare. If a problem were to occur they are confident they would be able to talk about it and it would be dealt with quickly. This shows the school is successful in fostering good relationships and tackling discrimination.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils told inspectors they felt safe in school and the vast majority of parents agreed. Child protection procedures are exemplary and rigorous systems and procedures are in place to ensure the school site is secure.
- Attendance is average and pupils are typically punctual for school.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because in lessons, where teaching is less strong, pupils sometimes lose concentration and no longer focus well on their learning.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders have been relentless in improving the quality of teaching in school. Regular checks are made on teaching and nothing less than good is acceptable. Excellent support is put in place for all teachers who fall short of this expectation. Appraisal systems are rigorous and teachers know what they need to do to improve their teaching. The academy trust is prepared to make difficult decisions when a teacher is not successful in meeting these expectations. The trust also has high expectations at the recruitment stage, preferring to wait for the right candidate to apply before making appointments. Teachers new to the profession benefit greatly from the support they receive and are quickly able to teach consistently good lessons.
- The head of school is highly respected as a teacher and has been a major driver, along with the two executive headteachers, in improving teaching in the school. Together, they have built a middle leadership team that is highly supportive of what the school is doing. Middle leaders have been trained well and so are very capable of improving their areas with little support. Leaders from the three schools in the trust work very closely together. For example, the English subject leader, who is a moderator for writing for the local authority, works across the schools to ensure that writing assessments are accurate.
- The school has worked hard to improve relationships with parents and carers. As a result, a greater proportion are attending school events and taking more interest in their children's learning. A very small proportion of parents and carers had concerns about how some issues concerning their children have been dealt with. The inspectors looked into the systems and procedures the school has and found that matters are dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner. Senior leaders are at the school gate most days and are very willing to listen to concerns and deal with any difficulties parents might have.
- The school's curriculum motivates pupils well and also ensures that their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good, which contributes to their personal well-being and good behaviour. This ensures that pupils leave the school as well rounded young people, well prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils also understand how being active is good for their health and the school is using the government's additional sports funding to provide more resources and provide a greater range of choice in sport. It is also being used to train teachers to teach better physical education lessons.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Board of Directors of the Academy Trust carries out its responsibilities diligently and ensures that financial management systems are robust, systems that reward teachers for good performance are rigorous and government funding, for example for those pupils eligible for free school meals, is apportioned fairly and is having an impact on pupils' learning. The members provide strong strategic leadership which enables the head of school to concentrate on improving standards of teaching and raising attainment. The trust also gives good support to the school in meeting safeguarding responsibilities, including those in relation to recruitment and ensuring the school's systems for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
 - The academy council is supportive of school leaders and correctly understands that the school is improving, that teaching is now good. Members are aware of how the school is doing

relative to others. They understand the importance of training and subscribe to Croydon local authority's governor training packages. Although the academy council receives good information from the head of school, it does not evaluate it in enough detail. As a result, the council is not in a position to challenge school leaders in a way which would help move the school's overall effectiveness to outstanding.

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	136566
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	431627

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	445
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Hill (Chair of the Board of Directors of Pegasus Academy Trust), Kevin Smith (Chair of the Ecclesbourne Academy Council)
Headteacher	Lynne Sampson and Jolyon Roberts (Executive Headteachers), Paul Robins (Head of School)
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 September 2012
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