

Earith Primary School

School Road, Earith, Huntingdon, PE28 3QB

Inspection dates

27–28 March 2014

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

- Too few pupils make good progress in mathematics because teachers do not correct mistakes and misunderstandings quickly enough.
- Pupils do not present their work neatly and logically in mathematics and consequently become confused and make mistakes. Pupil's number skills, such as their knowledge of times tables, are not sufficiently well-developed.
- Writing in English lessons is improving but pupils are not encouraged to practise their writing skills to a high standard in other subjects.
- Teachers' marking is not precise enough to help pupils to improve their work.
- Pupils' writing and mathematics are not assessed regularly so that lessons can be planned according to pupils' starting points.
- As middle leaders are new to the school, they have not yet used performance information or reviewed the quality of teaching in their subjects to bring about improvements.
- Pupils sometimes give up too easily when they are given challenging work. They then chat to their friends and do not listen carefully to or seek help from the teacher.
- Attendance although improving so far this year, is below the national average.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make good progress in science.
- The school gives good support to parents, helping them to play an important part in their children's learning.
- Pupils in Reception, Years 1 and 2 make good progress.
- The headteacher and governing body are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have good plans to bring about rapid improvement in teaching and achievement.
- Children behave well at lunch times, enjoy school and feel safe.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in 10 lessons during the inspection. Five of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. A range of pupils' work in exercise books was scrutinised.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and talked to pupils about their views of the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, English and science subject leaders, the Special Educational Needs leader and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader.
- The inspector scrutinised minutes of governors' meetings, school improvement plans, the school self-evaluation document, school performance information and a behaviour and incident log.
- Meetings were also held with the Chair of Governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector talked to parents who were dropping their children off at school about their opinions of the school and took into account the 23 responses to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View.
- The returns from a staff questionnaire concerning their views of the school were also reviewed.

Inspection team

Robin Taverner, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Earith Primary School is a smaller than average primary school.
- Most pupils are from white British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils looked after by the local authority and pupils from service families, is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities and who are supported by school action is below the national average. The proportion of those supported at school action plus or with a statement is above the national average.
- The school meets the government floor standards which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-age group classes, Reception to Year 2, Years 2 and 3, Years 4 and 5 and Years 5 and 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that all pupils make good progress in lessons by:
 - assessing pupils regularly in mathematics and writing so that lessons can be planned accurately from pupils' starting points
 - improving marking so that pupils know what they have done well and what they should do to improve their work
 - regularly checking pupils' understanding of what the tasks they are given require them to do so that any misunderstandings can be rectified
 - helping pupils to present their mathematics work neatly and logically so that they do not make unnecessary mistakes
 - insisting pupils produce high quality and neatly presented work when writing in other subjects and giving them frequent opportunities to do so
 - improving pupils' basic number skills, including times tables, so that they can make rapid mental calculations.
- Improve behaviour in lessons by:
 - applying the school behaviour policy consistently in all classrooms
 - insisting pupils concentrate and work hard in all lessons by teaching them what to do if they are finding the task challenging
- Improve the leadership of the school by:
 - training middle leaders to use their knowledge of performance information and the quality of teaching in their subjects so that they can lead the necessary improvements effectively
 - implementing additional ways of rewarding good attendance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In 2013, no pupils made better than expected progress in mathematics and the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was well below the national average. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 in mathematics has recently been tested by the school and the latest predictions show that results are likely to be below the national average when these pupils leave. There will again be too few pupils making rapid progress.
- Pupils' mental arithmetic skills require improvement. In particular, pupils in Key Stage 2 have a poor knowledge of times tables. For example, in one lesson, the pupils were asked to solve problems using their times table skills but needed to use times table grids rather than their own knowledge. Pupils enter the school with skills lower than that expected for their age. They make good progress throughout the Reception year and Key Stage 1 and, by the end of Year 2, reach standards which are above average.
- Performance information generated by the school suggests that there will be improvements in attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 this year in reading and writing. Displays of children's writing and examples of writing in exercise books suggests that writing attainment and the proportion making at least expected progress are on track to be closer to the national average this year.
- There were too few pupils leaving Year 6 last year who were eligible for the pupil premium to make a reliable judgement of their attainment. However, recently, the progress of pupils eligible for this funding has improved across the school due to the good support and extra lessons they are now receiving. They are quickly catching up with the standards reached by their classmates in both English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in the small groups and extra lessons that are provided for them.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress with their phonics (the sounds letters make) and in 2013 the proportion of Year 1 pupils who achieved the required standard in the national screening check was close to the national average.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because assessment is not used well in the school to check pupils' knowledge skills and understanding. Teachers do not assess work in writing and mathematics regularly to see what standards the pupils are achieving and to use this information to help pupils to improve.
- In lessons, some pupils do not understand the tasks they are set. Teachers are often slow to detect this and this slows the progress these pupils can make. Pupils do not always seek help when they are stuck but are happy to sit back and wait for help to arrive.
- All books are marked regularly but the teachers' comments do not show clearly what the pupils have done well and what they need to do to improve. Pupils are not encouraged to use the advice teachers give them to improve their work.
- In mathematics, pupils are not taught how to present their work neatly and logically so that they

avoid mistakes when solving number problems or setting out calculations.

- Pupils are not given frequent opportunities to write at length or practise their mathematics skills in a range of subjects. Pupils' work shows that teachers do not expect pupils to maintain high standards in their writing in other subjects, such as history and geography.
- Teaching in science is good. Pupils enjoy science and make good progress in lessons. Teachers assess pupils' progress and attainment in science carefully.
- Teaching in Years 2 and 3 is also good. Pupils make good progress with learning the rules for spelling, for example words ending 'ed', in well-planned phonics and spelling sessions. The same group of children later enjoyed a P.E. lesson where outstanding teaching helped pupils with their physical education skills but also encouraged team skills and resilience.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because some pupils give up easily when they find the work challenging. When this happens, they lose concentration and then talk to their friends rather than seeking help with their work.
- Attendance was below average in 2013. Although attendance has improved this year, it remains below average. The school works hard to improve attendance but does not use regular weekly rewards sufficiently.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are well cared for by school staff. Pupils say they enjoy school and always feel safe. They know that, should they experience a problem, the adults in the school will sort it out for them. Pupils know how to keep safe and are very aware of the dangers of using the internet. Pupils say that there is no bullying in the school. All parents spoken to during the inspection and the vast majority who responded to Parent View agree that their children are safe in the school.
- Pupils behave well at lunch times. They show good manners when eating their lunch in the school hall. There are plenty of activities available for pupils outside at lunch time and this encourages good behaviour and plenty of physical exercise.
- Exclusions from the school (periods of time when pupils are not allowed in school due to poor behaviour) have reduced and there have been no exclusions since January.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders at all levels do not make good use of reliable performance information and middle leaders do not check the quality of teaching in lessons in order to plan for improvements in the school.
- Currently, there is no subject leader for mathematics. However, a new subject leader has been appointed and will start at the school in the summer term. Two recently appointed middle leaders are beginning to improve the quality of teaching in their subjects. For example, one leader has trained teachers in how to deliver good reading lessons for groups of pupils. However, this is yet to have significant impact in raising standards and rates of progress in their subjects due to the short time they have worked in the school.

- The headteacher has been in post for just over a year and has begun to improve the quality of teaching and deal with underperformance. However, there is still more to do in this regard before all teaching is at least good. Part of the headteacher's strategy to bring about improvement in the school is to form links with a local outstanding school. This arrangement is very new and is yet to have a significant impact.
- The headteacher, with the governors, has produced an accurate school self-evaluation document which shows that the school knows its strengths and weaknesses. The most recent improvement plan sets out clearly what the school needs to do to raise attainment and improve progress and includes tight time scales in which to make the necessary changes.
- The school works well with parents. Regular homework is provided with clear guidance as to how parents can help their children complete their homework tasks. The school employs a very effective teaching assistant who supports pupils who are in danger of exclusion or whose attendance is poor. The teaching assistant runs a homework club for those who are unable to complete their homework or whose parents are unable to provide the necessary support for their children. Through the work of this teaching assistant the school has been able to form good relationships with families who are sometimes reluctant to engage with the school.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities leader works well with the teaching assistants to make sure that pupils are provided with the same opportunities as other pupils in the school.
- The school meets all safeguarding requirements.
- Spiritual and cultural education are good. The school welcomes a local church group who work with pupils to help them understand bible stories. The school also welcomes representatives from other religions, some of whom are parents of pupils at the school, to come and talk to the pupils. Social education is improving as shown by the calm way pupils play well together outside at lunchtimes.
- Primary school sports funding has been used to help the school join the Huntingdon Sports Partnership. This is providing pupils with an increasing range of sporting opportunities such as Brazilian football, athletics and gymnastics coaching.
- The Local Authority provides good challenge and support for the school. A recent review of the school carried out by the local authority advisor was very clear and accurate in its judgements about what the school needs to do to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses very well. They challenge the headteacher to carry out the necessary improvements and also support the headteacher in making occasional difficult decisions about staffing matters. The Chair of Governors has a high profile in the school and is well known to the parents. He often greets parents as they bring their children to school in the morning
 - Governors fulfil their statutory duties. They know about the quality of teaching in the school and have supported the headteacher in recruiting good teachers recently. They have also boosted the leadership team by appointing an assistant headteacher and leader of mathematics, who is due to start at the school in the summer term
 - Governors bring a variety of skills to the governing body including expertise in finance, recruitment and information technology. Governors attend school leadership meetings so that they can understand the problem and challenge the school faces.

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	110737
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	431243

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

Type of school	Select
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	116
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Wardell
Headteacher	Kieran Quigley
Date of previous school inspection	Tuesday, February 10, 2009
Telephone number	01487 841868
Fax number	01487 841686
Email address	office@earith.cambs.sch.uk

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