

# Etchells Primary School

East Avenue, Heald Green, Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 3DL

**Inspection dates** 25–26 September 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Achievement is not yet good. Pupils' progress from their starting points is uneven as they move through the school, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good. The needs of groups of pupils of differing ability are not always sufficiently taken into account. As a consequence, there are occasions when pupils find tasks too easy or too difficult.
- Pupils are not always given sufficient opportunity to solve problems and some rely too heavily on direct help from adults.
- Pupils do not always receive precise enough guidance about how to improve their work, particularly in writing and spelling.
- Assessment information is not accurate, so the school's own evaluation of its work is too generous.
- Subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in checking and bringing about improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. Good practice in school is not, therefore, spread rapidly enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the well-targeted, focused support they receive.
- The headteacher provides clear direction. In the short time she has been in post, she has correctly identified priorities for improvement and acted swiftly to address weaknesses.
- Attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 has improved and gaps in performance of different groups are closing. The rate of progress pupils make in reading as they move through the school has increased.
- Governors provide a good level of support and challenge. They are fully involved in the day-to-day life of the school, in school self-evaluation and in improvement planning.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning. They say they feel safe and are confident that the school deals effectively with any instances of poor behaviour.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons and made short visits to other activities led by teachers and trained assistants. These included three joint lesson observations with the headteacher.
- Two groups of pupils met with inspectors. Discussions were also held with staff, including senior and middle leaders. Meetings were conducted with the Chair and members of the Governing Body and with a representative from the local authority. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work with the headteacher.
- Inspectors took account of 47 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), letters from parents and 16 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors read a range of documents. These included information on the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance, school improvement plans, pupils' current progress, policies and records on safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Judith Tolley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Steven Ellis	Additional Inspector
Peter Martin	Additional Inspector
Maureen Coleman	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Etchells is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion speaking English as an additional language is higher than that found nationally.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs supported by school action is higher than average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average but varies from year to year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has a number of awards including Healthy School Status.
- The school has a resourced unit which caters for a small number of pupils with specific educational needs.
- Since the last report, there have been significant changes in staff. The headteacher has been in post since January 2014. The school has worked closely with a Teaching School, National Leader in Education and Specialist Leader in Education since January 2014.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better and ensure that pupils make consistently good progress in English and mathematics as they move through the school, by:
  - ensuring teachers plan activities that take full account of pupils' varying levels of ability and always provide the right amount of challenge and support
  - increasing the opportunities pupils have to solve problems, particularly in mathematics
  - making sure pupils are always given precise guidance about how to improve their work and that teachers check their response.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management on achievement by:
  - ensuring information about pupils' attainment is accurate so that their progress can be evaluated and teachers can be held effectively to account
  - increasing the involvement of subject leaders, especially in English and mathematics, in working alongside teachers to improve teaching and learning in their subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- The senior leadership team does not have an accurate view of the school's performance because some teacher assessments, particularly in Key Stage 1, are too optimistic.
- The quality of teaching is reviewed frequently. Although the outcomes are used to secure appropriate training to benefit teachers' professional development and to consider any advancement in pay, the information gathered is not used effectively enough to drive improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and spread best practice across the school.
- Nonetheless, the headteacher, strongly supported by the senior leadership team, has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to secure further improvement. In the short time she has been in post, and despite a period of considerable change, the headteacher has been successful in maintaining stability and in improving achievement in English and mathematics as well as attendance rates since the last inspection. The school, therefore, has the capacity to improve further.
- Subject leaders are not as effective as they might be in checking and improving teaching and learning in their subject areas, so improvement in these aspects is too slow.
- The school is committed to providing pupils with equal opportunity and works well in partnership with parents. For instance, it gives opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning through open days in the early years and workshops to help with literacy and mathematics.
- The school works closely with outside agencies and families whose children do not attend regularly enough. As a result, over the last year, persistent absence has decreased significantly and attendance and punctuality have improved. The pupil premium funding is used to good effect to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, gaps in the performance of disadvantaged pupils have closed. Similarly, the primary school sport funding is used to good effect to improve the quality of teaching in physical education across the school. This has led to increased participation rates in extra-curricular and sports activities across the school.
- While the curriculum adequately provides for pupils to learn all required subjects and prepares them effectively for citizenship in modern Britain, not enough time is given to enable pupils to write or apply their mathematical skills across all subjects. Pupils have too little chance to apply their basic skills of mathematics to solve problems, especially in Key Stage 1.
- The curriculum is enriched by a variety of activities, such as themed days, as well as a range of clubs and sporting activities, visits and visitors. Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching for physical education.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust and meet government requirements.
- The local authority has provided effective support, particularly in the training of governors. It has also provided support in improving provision in English and mathematics.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - There have been significant changes in the governing body since the last inspection. Governors have undertaken extensive training and are able to hold the school to account. They have been careful to recruit members to provide a good range of expertise. They have a good understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further. They make sure that pupils and staff are safe by securing effective safeguarding arrangements. Governors understand how the pupil premium funding and the primary school sport funding are spent and their impact. Governors are fully involved in the day-to-day life of the school, in monitoring the performance of the headteacher and setting her relevant targets. They are also aware of the performance of teaching staff and how that relates to pay. Finances are carefully managed and the budget closely controlled. The governing body plays an active role in school self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. It provides strong support, and has done so throughout a period of considerable change. Governors regularly challenge the school to improve further.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good. The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils' behaviour is usually exemplary and their attention only wavers when they are not given the correct level of challenge in lessons. The care they take with the presentation of their work also varies according to the expectations of teachers; when expectations are high, they respond with well-presented work, take care with spelling, punctuation and their handwriting but this is not always the case.
- Pupils feel safe and they value the good relationships they have with their teachers and with each other.

They enjoy coming to school and come well prepared to lessons.

- Most pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning and are keen to do well. When given the chance, they work together sensibly and organise themselves well. When they find tasks too difficult, most persevere and try their best to complete the work set.
- Pupils who may have challenging behaviour are supported very effectively to make good choices and, as a result, they are able to learn effectively and make good progress alongside their classmates. Incidences of poor behaviour are very rare.
- Pupils have a good understanding and awareness of different types of bullying. Both pupils and parents are confident that any poor behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and speak enthusiastically about opportunities to take part in sports and other extra-curricular activities. They thoroughly enjoy using the equipment in the playground and use it sensibly with good regard to safety.
- They play an active role in decision making through the school council, organising fundraising activities and taking responsibility, for instance, as playground 'squaddies,' helping others in the playground or helping the younger pupils with their reading.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching is too variable across the school and leads to uneven progress. Although there is evidence of outstanding practice, the impact of teaching over time is not consistently good, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Too often pupils' progress is slowed because planning does not always take sufficient account of their varying levels of ability. When this is the case, pupils lose time either waiting for the teacher to help them because the task is too difficult or waiting for others to catch up because it is too easy.
- During the inspection, Year 5 pupils made outstanding progress in working out how to add decimals, because activities captured their interest, their progress was checked regularly and the level of challenge increased accordingly. However, this is not yet consistent practice across the school.
- When pupils are given the opportunity to think for themselves and solve problems, they do so with confidence and enthusiasm; but, too often, they rely too heavily on help from adults or are not given the chance to explain their working or their thinking to others.
- Pupils' work is usually marked regularly and there are instances of best practice within the school. However, marking does not always give pupils the precise guidance they need to improve their writing. In some classes, marking does not always pick up errors in spelling so pupils continue to make the same mistakes. At times, pupils have difficulty reading comments from the teacher because their skills in reading are not always taken sufficiently into account. Opportunities are also missed to reinforce pupils' targets for writing in subjects other than English.
- Pupils with special educational needs are given good one-to-one support in lessons as well as extra help with English and mathematics, which enables them to participate fully in activities and make good progress overall.
- The impact of teaching on students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is variable. Where pupils are given the opportunity to work together to solve problems or explore their ideas, they do so sensibly, reflect on and respect one another's views but they are not always given the chance to do this.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Not enough pupils make good progress from Reception through to Year 4. The progress pupils make is uneven as they move through the school, particularly in writing.
- Pupils begin Year 1 with skills that are broadly typical for their age. By the end of Year 2, attainment in writing is below average; in reading and mathematics, it is broadly average. Pupils' progress in developing their writing skills is too slow in the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 and 4, they make expected progress but not enough make good progress.
- As a result of significant improvement in pupils' progress during Years 5 and 6, standards in English and mathematics are better than at the time of the previous inspection. In reading and mathematics, they are above average and, in writing, broadly average. Pupils make up for lost ground by the end of Year 6 but there is too much reliance placed upon this and too few pupils achieve the higher levels in English and mathematics.
- In Years 1 to 4, pupils' writing is poor in terms of its accuracy and its presentation. They write for a

variety of purposes and audiences but are not always given the guidance they need to improve its quality; their progress, therefore, is too slow. When they do receive effective guidance in Years 5 and 6, they act on this advice and their writing improves considerably, many maintaining a lively dialogue about their work with their teachers.

- The most able pupils make the progress expected from their starting points by the end of Year 6 but few make good progress or achieve the highest levels in English and mathematics.
- Pupils with English as an additional language make the same expected progress as their classmates as a result of the support they receive.
- Overall, by the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills. The youngest are able to apply their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) successfully to read simple sentences. By the end of Year 6, most read a variety of texts with fluency and understanding. They are able to talk in detail about what they have read, empathise with characters in stories and make inferences.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those in the resourced unit are consistently making more than the progress expected of them as a result of the extra help they are given.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils in the 2013 national assessments overall in reading, writing and mathematics was more than a year behind that of non-disadvantaged pupils in the school and nationally. Their attainment was weakest in writing, which was more than two years behind that of their peers. Currently the extra support that the school is providing is closing the gaps between their performance and that of their peers.

### **The early years provision**

### **requires improvement**

- Children make good progress and achieve well in the Nursery but their progress slows in the Reception classes, especially in writing. Many children start in the early years provision with skills that are below those typical for their age and some with little or no English. They enter Year 1 with skills that are broadly typical for their age but only half of the children achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception year.
- The leadership and management of the provision require improvement. Although staff monitor individual progress closely on a daily basis, they do not track children's progress in order to use this information effectively to plan next steps for children's learning, particularly in play activities.
- Because of well-established routines and very effective procedures for making sure their transition from home or pre-school settings is a smooth one, children settle in very rapidly and behave well.
- Children clearly enjoy the activities planned for them, take turns and learn and play well together. Because of the emphasis placed upon speaking and listening, pupils with English as an additional language quickly acquire a working knowledge of English.
- Adult-led activities are well planned. Activities designed to encourage children to take the initiative are also planned well to sustain children's interest. Children are extensively given the chance to explore and investigate, which they do with enthusiasm, but opportunities to extend their learning swiftly through these activities are sometimes missed. For instance, although some children have difficulty recognising letters and the sounds they make, opportunities for them to practise identifying letters and relating them to objects are missed in the activities children choose.

## 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>	106045
<b>Local authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	452005

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	410
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rahilah Nazir
<b>Headteacher</b>	Cathy Beddows
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 April 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 437 1792
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