

Elvington Church of England Voluntary controlled Primary School

Dauby Lane, Elvington, York, North Yorkshire, YO41 4HP

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Clear direction and strong leadership by the headteacher have sustained many positive aspects of the school's work since the last inspection. This ensures that high standards are reached by a growing proportion of pupils by the end of Year 6.
- Provision for children in the early years is outstanding. As a result, they make a flying start to their learning and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching overall is good and some is outstanding. Pupils achieve well from their individual starting points and this results in their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics being above average by the end of Year 6. Their progress in writing, while improving strongly, is not as rapid, so fewer pupils attain at the higher levels.
- All aspects of safety and care are given high priority. Care arrangements are outstanding. Pupils are extremely happy at school and feel safe there. Their behaviour is exemplary. They value learning highly and so achieve well.
- Leaders and governors make good use of appraisal systems and training to maintain good teaching and improve teaching and achievement further. The headteacher's monitoring of teaching and learning is highly effective.
- The governing body has improved the ways it holds the school to account. The governors are now very effective partners in supporting and challenging the school.
- The exciting curriculum, that includes an extensive range of visits, provides pupils with invaluable opportunities to extend their learning and supports their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Relationships throughout the school are excellent and parents are fulsome in their praise of what the school provides for them and their children. They particularly value the school's friendly and supportive environment where their children thrive.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to support higher levels of attainment, especially in writing. The most-able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.
- Teachers' marking is not always detailed enough in all subjects to provide the guidance pupils need to improve their work further.
- Subject leaders are not yet doing enough to check that teaching is always of the highest quality in their areas of responsibility and that all pupils make the best progress they can.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching throughout the school, including two shared observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector scrutinised pupils' workbooks and listened to them read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors, the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. The inspector also had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, current data on pupils' progress, and planning and monitoring documentation. Financial management was reviewed, including the spending of funding for disadvantaged pupils and primary school sport funding. Records relating to behaviour and attendance, as well as documents relating to safeguarding were also taken into consideration.
- The inspector reviewed 36 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The views of the 14 parents the inspector spoke with during the inspection and those who contacted the inspector in writing or by telephone were also considered.
- The inspector also took account of the 16 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaires and talked to staff during the inspection about their views of the school.

Inspection team

Rajinder Harrison, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most children start at the school in the Reception class.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils deemed disadvantaged and supported through the pupil premium is also below average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or those children in the care of the local authority).
- A number of subject leaders are new to their roles in the last year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that all of it is consistently good and much more of it is outstanding by ensuring that:
 - all pupils have the level of challenge in their work that matches their capability appropriately, particularly the most able.
 - pupils apply their basic literacy skills accurately in their writing, not just in English lessons, but also in writing in other subjects
 - marking consistently provides pupils with the best guidance possible to help them improve their work further.
- Strengthen the role of subject leaders by ensuring that they check on the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility more closely so that all pupils make the best possible progress throughout.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides good leadership, fosters effective teamwork among staff and governors and ensures that everyone is clear about the high aspirations the school has for its pupils. Strongly supported by the governors, she has not held back from making difficult decisions and taking determined action to improve the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils' achievement is improving rapidly across the school.
- The headteacher's monitoring of teaching is highly effective. The systems for managing staff performance and addressing weaknesses in teaching are rigorous. Staff have good opportunities to receive support and training to improve their skills so that more pupils attain at the higher levels in all subjects.
- Some subject leaders are relatively new in their roles and are not yet sufficiently involved in checking that teaching in their areas of responsibility is always of a high standard to help all pupils make the best progress possible.
- The leadership of early years is outstanding and, as result, children make a flying start to their education. The leader sets exceptionally high expectations for the quality of teaching and all staff in the early years work together closely to help children make the best progress possible in everything that is planned for them.
- To support parents, the school provides workshops, for example, on how to help their children with their reading at home. Parents value this guidance and involvement and are highly positive about what the school does to support children and their families, not just in the early years, but throughout the school.
- The school's checks on how well it does are largely accurate and the development plan correctly identifies the priorities the school needs to work on to raise achievement further, for example in writing. The actions taken since the previous inspection to improve provision in mathematics and assessment have been successful. The school has good capacity to improve further quickly.
- Standards in mathematics have risen rapidly, with an increasing number of pupils attaining at the higher Level 5 each year. Regular reviews of pupils' progress enable staff to identify early any pupils at risk of not making the good progress expected so that support for them is allocated promptly. This is a strong testament to the school's caring approaches to supporting its pupils and confirms its commitment to ensuring that every pupil is given an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The school has detailed training planned with partner schools to support teachers now that National Curriculum levels are no longer used. The school is to use a published scheme to enhance the good assessment practice already in place and teachers have made a good start with the new arrangements.
- The curriculum is well planned and engaging. It provides pupils with rich opportunities to learn in lessons and outside school. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the many visitors that strengthen, for example, their awareness of how to stay safe and how to care for the environment. Pupils benefit from many sporting activities, including gymnastics and athletics, to increase their physical and social skills. Teachers plan topics that promote effective learning across subjects and place high emphasis on the teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
- The school's Christian ethos emphatically underpins pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as preparing them fully for life in modern Britain. Staff are extremely kind and caring and pupils learn from the good example they set. Pupils have an excellent understanding of why they must show respect for and tolerance of those who are of different faiths, social backgrounds or have different needs. This fosters very strong relationships and positive attitudes. As one pupil said, 'it does not matter who you are or what you believe, you are at liberty to be what you want to be. We are all special'.
- Safeguarding procedures, including child protection training, meet all current requirements. Leaders are very aware of the challenges families sometimes face and so work effectively with appropriate agencies to safeguard pupils and their families if any concerns are raised.
- The primary school additional sport funding to promote pupils' greater participation in sport is used well to train teachers so that they are more confident to teach a greater range of sports. By working with sports coaches and staff from other schools, pupils have benefitted from increased confidence and enjoyment of new sports and more opportunities to participate in local interschool competitions.
- The budget for supporting disadvantaged pupils is used effectively to increase staffing levels and target appropriate support where required. There is no gap in the achievement of these pupils in relation to their classmates and sometimes they make faster progress than others.
- The local authority has minimal contact with the school. It provides effective training for staff and, whenever asked by the school, an appropriate level of support as requested. As the school is recognised by the authority as a good school, the level of support it offers is 'light touch'.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is an effective partner in leading the school. Governors have undertaken relevant training and now have a good understanding of school data. They provide regular challenge to leaders based on this data and check that any improvements have a positive impact on raising attainment.
- Governors meet with key leaders regularly to monitor action plans to ensure that all teaching is good and check that staff have the support they need to improve the school's performance further. They support the headteacher and key leaders to ensure that pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. They are fully involved in managing the performance of the headteacher and know what actions are taken to manage the performance of other staff. They ensure that pay and promotion are used appropriately to reward teachers who meet the targets for pupil progress that they have agreed with the headteacher.
- Governors ensure that finances are spent effectively to benefit pupils. They know how sport funding and pupil premium funding are spent and are aware of this spending on pupils' progress.
- They ensure that current safeguarding requirements are met fully.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school is a calm and orderly place where the focus on learning and achievement is high. The management of behaviour is consistent and pupils know what is expected of them during lessons and around the school generally. Pupils, staff and parents speak highly of the typically high standards of behaviour and strong relationships in the school.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and support their continued good and rapidly improving achievement. They are highly motivated to learn and particularly love tackling challenging tasks that make them think about their work. As one pupil said, 'You come to school to learn. School is really important so you should always do your best. It's okay if you get it wrong. Teachers always help you if you get stuck.'
- Relationships, including in the early years, are excellent. Pupils get on extremely well and are particularly good at working together, willingly helping each other when adult support is not immediately available. They are very polite and courteous. These high quality relationships and mutual respect provide very strong support to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school. Many say that this is the 'best school ever' and that they love being here because they feel teachers and other staff really care about them.
- Attendance, which is above average, continues to improve year on year because pupils and their parents value learning. One parent said that his child cannot wait to get to school because 'every day is brilliant!'

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say that they feel safe and well looked after at school, remarking, for example, that the locked gates are a great idea because, 'children can't get out once in school, but more importantly, that people who shouldn't be there can't get in'.
- Potential risks, for example for school trips, are assessed carefully and regular visits from the emergency services help pupils understand how to keep themselves safe outside school. Pupils are clear about whom they would go to if they were unhappy or worried about anything.
- Pupils know how to keep safe. For example they know the dangers posed by social network sites and cyber-bullying and to report such threats immediately to their parents or teachers. Pupils say that there is no bullying at school, 'because we are like one big family here and we should always be kind to everyone'. They say that even incidents of name-calling are rare, 'that is not how we should behave'.
- The school's safeguarding systems are very strong. Attendance is checked on carefully and parents know to inform the school early if their child is going to be absent. The school is especially vigilant in checking that pupils with special educational needs or those who are disadvantaged are identified early and excellent care arrangements ensure that these children and their families receive the support they need quickly. Links with outside professional bodies that support children and their families are extremely effective.

The quality of teaching**is good**

- Teaching is mostly good. It is not yet outstanding, because occasionally the level of challenge is not high enough, particularly for the most able, to help all pupils achieve the levels of attainment they are capable of.
- Typically the lessons teachers plan hold pupils' interest well and pupils are expected to work hard to do their best. Teachers use skilful questioning to deepen and check pupils' understanding and to address misconceptions so that pupils settle to tasks confidently when working on their own.
- Children in the early years have access to very exciting and challenging activities in all areas of learning and because they often work alongside older Year 1 pupils, they quickly acquire a love of learning and want to 'catch up' with their older classmates.
- Teachers are skilled at promoting the teaching of reading. Children learn their letters and the sounds they make (phonics) very effectively in the early years and good practice is maintained through both key stages. Pupils say they enjoy reading, especially reading aloud and that the guided reading activities teachers plan are particularly popular among older pupils who like talking about their reading.
- The teaching of mathematics is consistently good, with pupils responding particularly enthusiastically to the mental mathematics activities that require them to apply rapid recall skill to calculate answers quickly. Elements of competition encourage pupils to try hard to improve their performance from day to day.
- Pupils' writing skills are taught well, but progress is not so rapid because, if not reminded sufficiently, pupils do not apply the basic skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation consistently in other subjects. These lapses result in pupils not always attaining the higher levels in writing that they are capable of. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 had much to say about their research on polar bears and penguins, but in their excitement to include alliteration and similes, many forgot to apply capital letters and full stops accurately or to check their spelling by sounding out words using their phonic skills.
- Disadvantaged pupils benefit from extra individual support in addition to good teaching every day and because this help is carefully matched to their needs, they make good progress from their starting points. The same is true for pupils who have special educational needs because teachers and teaching assistants work closely to plan the right level of work to help them make good progress well.
- Tracking pupils' progress is thorough, which helps teachers plan activities that generally provide good levels of challenge. When this occasionally fails to happen, pupils persevere but the pace of learning is not always fast enough, because pupils sometimes repeat work they have done previously before they move on to harder work.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but the quality of feedback to pupils is often considerably more detailed in literacy than in other subjects. As a result, pupils do not always have sufficient guidance as to how to improve all their work further.

The achievement of pupils**is good**

- As result of the actions taken by leaders to improve teaching and raise expectations of pupils, progress is accelerating quickly and an increasing number of pupils are now attaining at the higher levels, especially in reading and mathematics. Some pupils are making outstanding progress from their starting points. Overall standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are consistently above average.
- Children enter the early years with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. A significant number are further on in many areas of learning, especially in their communication skills. They make rapid progress so that at the end of their Reception year a high number of pupils achieve a good level of development and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Although the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonic screening in 2014 was just below average, over time pupils make at least good progress in reading. Standards in reading are consistently above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is because phonics are taught very effectively and pupils build on this strong start successfully. The love of reading is evident in the way pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they read and the guided activities that give them opportunities to talk about their reading and to extend their vocabulary. An increasing number of pupils are currently working at well above average levels in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is accelerated effectively through more consistent strategies across the school to develop pupils' number, calculation and problem-solving skills. The most-able pupils particularly, apply these skills confidently and accurately when solving problems. Consequently, a few Year 6 pupils are working towards the higher Level 6.
- Standards in writing, while above average generally, are not as high as in mathematics and reading

because fewer pupils attain at the higher Level 3 and Level 5 at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is largely because pupils do not always apply their basic writing skills accurately when writing at length in every subject.

- The most-able pupils are not always provided with the level of challenge they need to help them attain higher standards. While the number of pupils making better than expected progress is increasing rapidly across the school, attainment is not consistently high in all subjects yet.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs consistently achieve well because provision for them is good. Teachers and support staff challenge them well through the work they plan. Where appropriate, the school works with external specialists to help pupils make the best progress they can.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well from their starting points. Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding receive the specific support they need from the start of early years so that usually by the end of Year 2, the gap has closed entirely. The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils are better than the attainment of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Similarly, these pupils are in line with their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- From starting points in their knowledge and skills that are largely typical for their age, children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning. Their communication, literacy and numeracy skills are often stronger because the emphasis on teaching these is high. Children are prepared very well for Year 1.
- The highly effective early years leader and her staff work closely to make sure children have the best possible chances to achieve through the experiences planned for them. They ensure that children are cared for well and kept safe because safeguarding processes are very secure.
- The early years' environment is a busy, productive, safe and happy place where children develop their curiosity and creativity very effectively. They thrive in the well-ordered environment because they are safe and well supported. They settle quickly because arrangements to introduce them to school are outstanding. Highly effective partnerships with parents established well before children start school ensure that parents are well informed about and closely involved in their children's learning from the outset.
- Expectations of behaviour and effort are very high. Children relate well to others so that friendships are strong and the caring ethos that staff demonstrate is copied in the way children respect each other by taking turns to share toys and other equipment. Altercations are rare and if they happen, staff smooth them over promptly, explaining clearly that children must be kind and fair to others at all times.
- Children enjoy learning, and tackle new activities with excitement and wonder. For example, four children working by themselves were thrilled to sound out words and build sentences. Having watched the Year 1 pupils in their class doing this, they wanted to be as good and concentrated hard to get their work right.
- Teaching is outstanding because it is planned thoroughly to accommodate the different needs and abilities. Any child who needs additional help to settle and integrate confidently receives the support they need promptly. Parents praise the school's very caring approaches to help each child succeed.
- Purposeful conversations between children and staff help staff assess children's progress accurately and children are guided effectively towards further challenges to help them extend their knowledge and skills. The outdoor area is used particularly well for children to gain independence as they explore and discover more about the world around them by themselves through the activities on offer. As one child said, 'We come out even when it is snowing to watch snowflakes flutter down. It is like in the North Pole'.
- Careful assessments, including photographs of children at work and play show that all children make good gains. Where some find activities like reading and writing challenging, they receive individual help so that they make rapid progress and achieve successfully in all their learning.
- The leadership and management of the early years are of very high quality. The leader's considerable expertise is evident throughout the organisation and planning of provision. She has the highest expectations of herself, her staff and the children and their parents to work in partnership to ensure high outcomes for all children in the early years, irrespective of their starting points.

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	121531
Local authority	York
Inspection number	449760

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Watson
Headteacher	Jenny Rogers
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2010
Telephone number	01904 555280
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