

# Ely St John's Community Primary School

St John's Road, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 3BW

**Inspection dates** 10–11 February 2015

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Good leadership and management have helped the school to improve since the previous inspection. With good support from staff, the headteacher has brought good improvements to both the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils achieve well and attainment has been rising for the past three years. By the end of Year 6, it is now significantly above average in reading, spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Good teaching enables pupils to acquire new skills quickly. Teachers ensure that pupils work hard and develop a love of learning.
- Children make good progress in the early year's provision. They are given calm and sensitive support that leads to children developing good attitudes to their learning and helps them to acquire new skills quickly.
- Across the school, pupils' progress is carefully monitored and their needs quickly identified. This enables additional support to be provided so that, for example, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same good progress as other pupils.
- Pupils behave well. They are very enthusiastic about school and their work. They feel extremely safe and show excellent consideration for the needs of others in their behaviour at break times.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and the various clubs and visits available to them because teachers make learning fun.
- The governing body provides high quality support and challenge to school leaders. Governors have high expectations and are a key factor in the school's success.
- Parents have a very high level of satisfaction with the school. They support it well by raising funds and helping their children with work at home.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly strong. Key values such as respect, citizenship and responsibility are modelled well by staff and are reflected in all aspects of the school's work.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough support is given to the very small number of disadvantaged pupils of high ability who are in the early years and Key Stage 1, to ensure they always reach their full potential.
- In a few cases, work is not demanding enough for the most able pupils when they are ready to move on to something more difficult.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 22 lessons, eight of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff, a representative from the local authority and members of the governing body.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 116 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also analysed the school's own surveys of parental views and talked to parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, heard pupils read and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, and the school development plan. Records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding information, and health and safety documentation were also scrutinised.
- The inspectors analysed 38 questionnaire responses from staff.

## Inspection team

Mike Capper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
James Richards	Additional Inspector
Joanna Lakey	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized primary school.
- Pupils mainly come from White British backgrounds but a significant proportion come from other ethnic backgrounds, including Polish, Portuguese and Indian families. A small proportion speak English as an additional language.
- Children in early year's provision are taught full-time in two Reception classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- A much lower than average proportion of pupils is supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided to give extra support to disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children looked after by the local authority.
- 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?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by ensuring that teachers always provide sufficiently challenging work that moves the learning of the most able pupils forward quickly.
- Provide more support for the very small number of disadvantaged pupils in the early years setting and in Key Stage 1, who have high levels of ability, so that they always fulfil their potential.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The school is ably led by the headteacher. She is supported well by her senior leadership team. They have established a culture of high expectations that lead consistently to good standards in teaching, pupils' achievement and behaviour. Leaders work relentlessly to promote equality of opportunity, foster good relationships and tackle discrimination.
- Leaders evaluate the school's performance accurately and this means that the most important priorities are identified and tackled quickly. This has led to good improvement since the last inspection, including in the quality of teaching. The local authority has supported the school well over this time.
- The management of teaching is good. There are regular checks on the quality of teachers' work. Leaders offer clear guidance on how teachers can improve, and provide good support and training to allow this to happen. Middle leaders, such as those in charge of subjects and in the early years, play a good part in supporting teachers and driving improvement in their areas of responsibility. They are knowledgeable about their subjects and areas and have a good understanding of what needs to improve.
- Over the last two years, leaders have improved the use of the additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. The funding is used effectively, for example by enabling access to activities outside lessons and providing extra help where needed. This is ensuring that most pupils flourish both socially and academically. However, in the past, too little support has been given to the very small number of disadvantaged pupils who also have high ability in the early years setting and in Key Stage 1. Leaders have already made a start to tackling this by introducing additional support in mathematics for the most able pupils in Year 2.
- The school has planned very carefully and effectively for the implementation of the new National Curriculum, including developing very thorough systems for measuring pupils' progress against new expectations.
- Pupils enjoy the learning activities they are given because they are motivating, exciting and fun. The work set in lessons and the additional activities and clubs the school hosts help promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are considerate, courteous, and respectful and relate extremely well to adults and to other pupils. They are particularly good at making visitors feel welcome. They show good understanding of different religions, and cultures and look to be good members of the school and the wider community. Consequently, they are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Art and music are very strongly promoted. The success of the school orchestra is testimony to the hard work put in by teachers and pupils.
- Sport, physical development and pupils' well-being are supported well. The school sports fund has been used successfully to extend the skills of teachers and to give pupils opportunities to try new sports and to take part in competitions. Spending is monitored carefully and leaders can show that more pupils are taking part in physical activity than in the past.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Leaders, including governors, carry out regular checks to secure the safety of pupils at all times.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The very strong governing body provides highly effective support and challenge to other leaders. They have very thorough systems to validate the headteacher's evaluations of the school's work. They make excellent use of data to check that all pupils are doing well enough. Consequently, governors are very aware of how well the school is performing in comparison with others. Governors know where teaching is strong and how it is being improved. They have worked closely with the headteacher to introduce new arrangements for managing the performance of teachers. These are well considered, ensuring that only good teaching is rewarded financially, and focus strongly on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. Governors monitor closely the use of additional government funding to ensure that it is used

to good effect to support eligible pupils. They are aware of the need to improve provision for the most able disadvantaged pupils in the early years' provision and Key Stage 1 so that they, too, benefit fully. Governors have good systems for ensuring that the school promotes British values and they, along with all members of staff, are excellent role models in the way that they promote values such as tolerance and respect.

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

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school and feel that behaviour is typically good. The vast majority of parents and staff agree. Inspectors found that pupils behave well and support each other when learning and at play. This is also confirmed in school records, which show that incidents of misbehaviour are rare.
- Pupils clearly enjoy their work and coming to school. This is confirmed by rates of attendance that are well above average. These positive attitudes have a good impact on pupils' learning.
- Pupils are clear about the importance of good behaviour and conduct themselves well when moving around school. Their behaviour at lunchtimes and playtimes is good. They play together happily and take very good care of each other. Playground routines are very clearly established and are adhered to diligently by pupils.
- In lessons, pupils are keen to learn and they share ideas happily. They take care to present their work neatly and are respectful of the needs of others. They work hard most of the time, but just occasionally a small number of pupils lose concentration when working.
- Pupils readily take responsibility for specific aspects of school life. They regard the school council as a good way of getting their ideas heard and are very confident that staff will respond positively to their suggestions. School councillors take their responsibilities very seriously and carry them out very sensibly.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Nearly all of the parents who responded to Parent View said that their children feel very safe at school. Pupils say there is no bullying or name-calling and that if any pupil is unhappy, the reason is very quickly identified and the problem resolved. They appreciate the way the school has helped them recognise the many forms that bullying can take.
- There are very strong systems to promote pupils' awareness of e-safety. Pupils talk confidently about how they can use the school's own secure social network site to learn about the potential pitfalls of using the internet. This means that pupils know what is meant by cyber-bullying and how to respond if they should ever encounter it.
- As pupils get older, they become increasingly skilled at identifying dangers for themselves and taking steps to avoid them. At playtimes, pupils are very aware that their behaviour can affect others and they moderate it accordingly. For example, some football players talked about how they stayed in only one part of the playground because they wanted to avoid hurting younger pupils.

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

- Teaching ensures that pupils achieve well. Pupils develop positive attitudes towards their learning because their relationships with their teachers are exceptionally strong. Teachers ensure that pupils understand what they are learning and can work without fear of failure. As one pupil commented, 'The teachers really

care.'

- The good teaching of literacy, reading and mathematics ensures pupils make good progress. Phonics (letters and the sounds they make) are taught particularly well. Some pupils find this aspect of their learning hard, and additional support is provided for them. As a result they achieve well by the end of Year 2, and develop into good readers and writers by the time that they leave the school in Year 6.
- Teachers plan carefully so that activities are exciting and imaginative and help pupils develop good attitudes to their learning. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and behave well. Consequently, there is a purposeful atmosphere in lessons with pupils almost always striving to do their very best.
- Attractive displays in classrooms and around school celebrate pupils' successes and reflect the well-planned activities that teachers provide.
- Teachers make good use of probing questions to check pupils' understanding of what they are learning. However, they do not always ensure work moves the learning of the most able pupils on quickly enough, including in the early years and Key Stage 1, once it is clear that they have already mastered a concept and are ready for the next steps.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well to support pupils, and generally work effectively with disabled pupils or those with special educational needs. They are well-informed, helping pupils sensitively to improve their skills and knowledge. As with teaching generally, particularly when supporting disadvantaged pupils, they sometimes miss opportunities to further challenge the most able pupils they are working with.
- Teachers ensure that pupils with English as an additional language improve their speaking skills quickly by checking regularly that they understand what is being taught.
- Nearly all parents feel that teaching is at least good. Teachers make good use of homework to extend work and it is enjoyed by pupils.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most pupils achieve well and make good progress. Their attainment has been rising across the school and is now significantly above average in reading and key aspects of writing when pupils reach the end of Year 6. Results in national testing in 2014 were the highest the school has seen for several years, reflecting the positive effect of leaders' drive to raise attainment.
- By Year 6, pupils are enthusiastic readers. They read confidently and for many different purposes, for example, carrying out detailed research when learning about topics such as Ancient Egypt. Younger pupils have a good knowledge of phonics. They successfully use these skills to sound out new words. In the Year 1 national phonics checks, the proportion of pupils meeting or exceeding the expected level was above average in 2014.
- Pupils use their good writing skills well to support their learning in different subjects. They also write well-structured stories in English lessons, making good use of complex punctuation and grammar. Spelling is accurate and improves quickly as pupils get older.
- In mathematics, pupils make good progress. They calculate accurately, using different strategies confidently. They are able to carry out increasingly complex investigations as they get older, identifying patterns in numbers and solving number problems that involve the use of different skills.
- Most disadvantaged pupils who are supported through additional government funding make good or better progress as they move through the school. There were too few pupils leaving Year 6 in 2014 to comment on their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2013, the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others in the school and nationally in reading, writing and mathematics was around two terms, and these gaps are closing steadily over time. At times, however, the

progress of disadvantaged pupils who have high ability, both in the early years and in Key Stage 1, is not as rapid as it could be.

- The most able pupils achieve well most of the time but there is scope for them to achieve even more. An increased proportion reached the higher Levels 5 or 6 by the end of Year 6 in 2014, especially in the spelling, grammar and punctuation tests. Nearly three-quarters were working two years ahead of the level expected for their age. However, in lessons, there are occasions when their learning does not move on quickly enough.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Any signs that a pupil may be struggling are quickly recognised by staff, and the school uses a wide range of effective strategies to help them catch up.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, including those from Polish, Portuguese or Indian families or other backgrounds, achieve well. They soon become confident speakers of English and attain at least as well as the others in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

### The early years provision

is good

- Parents are very pleased with the start given to their children in the early years provision. Children make good progress across all areas of learning so that by the end of the Reception year their attainment is slightly above average. They are prepared well for the education they will receive in Year 1.
- Good teaching helps children to achieve well. The warm and welcoming relationships and consistently applied routines that are evident throughout the setting help children to settle quickly. Children behave well because they become absorbed in activities that motivate them to want to learn. Whether they are playing indoors or outdoors, they behave sensibly and in ways that ensure they are safe. Children from different backgrounds work and play together happily and provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Children are given calm and sensitive support that takes good account of what they already know. Activities are well matched to their interests and adults make good use of visits to extend children's understanding and maintain their enthusiasm. After a visit from the fire-service, for example, children developed a range of skills by writing and talking about what they had seen. The well-resourced outdoor area was a hive of activity as children, in the role of firemen, explored mathematical concepts, such as volume and length, and discussed how to stay safe.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs are given good support that helps them to acquire new skills quickly. The most able children are generally well provided for, although occasionally they do not receive enough adult support in developing their ideas so that their skills improve even more quickly.
- Teachers give good support to children who are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. They frequently check children's understanding of new vocabulary and, in their own use of language, consistently model good spoken English.
- Provision is well led and managed. Since the last inspection, the leader has made good improvements in several aspects of the setting's work, including in the use of the outdoor area. There is a good understanding of each child's next steps for development because data on children's progress is comprehensive and used to inform adults' planning well.

## 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>	110773
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	448415

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>	476
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	James Thomson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Bassett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8–9 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01353 612780
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