

# Elton CofE Primary School

Main Street, Elton, Matlock, DE4 2BW

**Inspection dates** 6–7 May 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

- Parents are confident that the school maintains a strong family feel and provides a happy and caring environment where their children thrive.
- The headteacher provides good leadership. He carries many responsibilities enthusiastically and effectively.
- Teachers and support staff work well together in their determination to ensure that the school keeps moving forwards.
- The staff work effectively with other local schools, including through staff training and to provide a wide range of activities for the pupils.
- From their different starting points, pupils make good progress. Pupils of all abilities achieve well overall in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils read regularly in school and often do better in this subject than others nationally.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They get on happily together and behave well.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and their friends safe. They are particularly aware of the issues of cyber-bullying.
- The quality of teaching is good. The high ratio of staff to pupils ensures that they all receive a lot of additional support. This raises their self-esteem and increases the rate of progress made.
- The headteacher recognises where teaching is successful and where in ensuring that improvements are made. This has a positive impact on achievement.
- The work and support provided for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs meet their individual requirements particularly well.
- The governing body has improved its overall effectiveness through attending training to develop their roles, so they can support and challenge the school.
- There are currently no children in the Reception group. However, school records and discussion with parents and staff indicate that provision for children in the early years is effective.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not do as well in writing as in other subjects. Handwriting, spelling and punctuation are not strong enough. Few pupils regularly produce writing at length and in depth.
- Pupils do not always use what they know to solve mathematical problems confidently.
- The level of challenge for some most able pupils is not always high enough.
- The monitoring of some aspects of the work of school by staff and governors is neither regular nor rigorous enough. They do not always identify and pursue weaker aspects quickly.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in parts of five lessons, and saw a range of other school activities. Some of the lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. The inspector also looked in detail at the work in pupils' books and heard several pupils read.
- The inspector held planned and informal discussions with pupils throughout the inspection.
- There were discussions with the headteacher, including in his additional roles as the early years leader and special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector spoke to members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- There were 11 responses to the parent questionnaire (Parent View), which the inspector considered. The inspector spoke to several parents during the course of the inspection. She also took account of eight responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector scrutinised a number of documents, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress. She also took account of documents and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- There are no children currently in the early years group. When there are pupils in Reception, they attend on a full-time basis.
- All pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by additional funding (the pupil premium) is above the national average. This includes pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. There are currently no pupils looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above the national average.
- Pupils work in either of the two mixed-aged classes. When there are Reception children in school, they work alongside pupils in Key Stage 1.
- Due to the small number of pupils in the school, it is not appropriate to comment on the standards attained in order to not identify individuals.

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

- Accelerate the rate of pupils' progress by:
  - ensuring that pupils spell and punctuate their writing accurately, develop neat handwriting, and secure the skills to write at greater length and depth
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to solve mathematical problems
  - checking that tasks contain a good level of challenge for all, and particularly the most able pupils.
- Improve the monitoring of the work of the school by ensuring that staff, and where appropriate the governing body, regularly and rigorously monitor areas for which they hold responsibility in order to identify where further improvements can be made.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides a good steer to school improvement in all areas. Staff have created a culture in the school where good behaviour and progress are expected of everyone. A particular strength lies in the effective support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- There is a suitable focus on continuing to improve teaching and learning. Joint lesson observations with the headteacher show an accurate understanding of what makes teaching effective and what needs to improve.
- The school plays an active part in cluster activities with other local schools. This provides staff with the opportunity to visit other settings to observe good practice and to attend joint training activities. The school also warmly welcomes teaching practice students, as was observed during the inspection. This includes models of how good planning supports effective teaching.
- Staff work together well. Those in support roles are highly valued members of the team and work very effectively to help individuals and groups of pupils.
- School leaders ensure that staff make regular checks of the progress of all pupils. The school is trialling new assessment procedures and has an accurate grasp of the progress made by all pupils.
- The school reviews the subjects taught in the light of national guidance to provide a relevant range of activities. The curriculum successfully focuses upon on reading, writing and mathematics. This helps pupils prepare well for the next stage of their education.
- Staff actively promote the development of British values. There is a good focus on understanding values, including democracy. For example, pupils are involved in deciding how a recent bequest to the school is spent. Older pupils question others and visitors about what type of reading materials they would like or would recommend. This information feeds into a democratic decision making process. There is effective work in other areas, with leaders rightly identifying the need to focus more on what is distinctive about British values.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This includes in assemblies, for example, when pupils focused on the word 'peace' and identified what this meant to them and people in other cultures. Pupils develop spiritual awareness when joining in prayers and singing along to high quality piano accompaniment.
- Links with parents are very effective. All of the parents spoken to, and those who responded to the inspection questionnaire, were unanimous in their praise of how well staff know and care for their children. Parents speak with warmth about how they feel staff value their children as individuals. Records and discussions show that the school works tirelessly to support pupils and their families through sometimes difficult periods of their lives.
- The headteacher provides enthusiastic and effective leadership. He carries an unusually high level of responsibilities including as special educational needs coordinator and leader for early years alongside other roles. A four-day-a-week teaching commitment currently limits the time available for the headteacher to regularly and rigorously review what the school provides. There are also few opportunities for other full-time teaching staff to develop an effective role in monitoring activities.
- Much of the current monitoring of teaching and learning is done through discussion. Leaders carry out some observations in the classroom to ensure that they meet the requirements for the management of performance. There are also occasional opportunities to review the work in pupils' books, including with other schools in joint activities. However, monitoring activities are not as regular or rigorous as they could be. This has therefore not always addressed questions whether, for example, there is an over-reliance on textbooks for older pupils.

- The school carefully carries out checks to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children. Leaders check that staff training for safeguarding is up to date, and that policies and procedures are reviewed. Procedures to keep pupils safe are known to, and followed by, everyone. Arrangements meet statutory requirements.
- The school uses pupil premium funding well to support the academic progress and personal development of disadvantaged pupils. The work of teaching assistants is of consistently high quality; it provides help and support for individuals and small groups of pupils. Leaders monitor the impact of this well. The school has also invested in resources and supports participation at residential activities. This illustrates the school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all and in countering discrimination of any kind.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding is used effectively to support a range of relevant activities. The school works as part of a local sports partnership. This includes training for staff and opportunities for pupils to join in shared activities and occasional competitions with other schools.
- The local authority provides effective support for the school, which it identifies as providing a good all-round quality of education. A strength of the work with the local authority is the opportunity for staff to work with other schools to identify good practice in a range of areas.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is effective. Since the previous inspection, a largely new group of governors has been elected. They have undertaken training on how to extend their role and to be in a better position to act in a critical capacity. They are developing a programme of focused visits to extend their first-hand knowledge of the curriculum, achievement and other aspects of school life. They have an understanding of what the data tell them about pupils' progress, coupled with an awareness of the challenge of very small cohorts. They are informed about the quality of teaching and the links between performance management procedures and teachers' pay awards. They understand the links between data, rewarding good teaching and tackling under-performance.
  - Governors are aware that some of the checks made of the work of the school have not been as regular or rigorous as they needed to be. When questions are raised about safeguarding matters, they take immediate action. Procedures now meet current requirements for safeguarding everyone.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave consistently well in and around the school. They like being part of what they describe as 'a big family'. They usually listen carefully to others and take note of the advice given by the adults they work with. They cooperate well in the playground where they play happily together with no sign of conflict.
- All of the parents spoken to emphasise how pleased they are with the strong working relationships between children and staff. Records show how the school works with parents and a range of external agencies to look after children with additional needs and in times of family difficulty. Parents are fully confident that the staff have high but achievable expectations of pupils' behaviour, value their children and prepare them well for their future.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Most concentrate well in lessons and try to produce a reasonable amount of work, although this is not always neatly presented. Very occasionally, some do not push themselves to take part in discussions. This does not help them develop a wide and descriptive vocabulary to improve their writing.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and their classmates safe, including when playing in the hard-surface playground. Pupils have a good grasp of the work of the emergency services and who to speak to if they have any worries.

- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is. They readily explain what cyber bullying involves and clearly understand the benefits and dangers of social media. They also explain the other types of bullying that could occur. They recognise that the staff know them very well and feel confident that, should any incidents occur, they are dealt with very fairly.
- The attendance of pupils has improved in the last year and is in line with national averages.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good and promotes pupils' learning and personal development well. The learning observed in classrooms during the inspection confirmed the school's own evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching over time. Teaching is good in literacy and numeracy, as shown in the work in pupils' books and records of the progress made.
- A key strength in what the school provides is the high number of skilled staff working with the pupils. This ensures all, and especially disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are well looked after and supported. Staff create a positive environment where pupils thrive.
- When younger pupils learn through practical experiences, staff make sure that they make good progress in their understanding. For example, in a successful science activity, pupils investigated how sounds are made and how this makes some things vibrate. They carefully observed how rice bounced on a drum when it was banged, and the difference in the sound made when two spoons were struck together both in and out of water.
- Staff use questions well to check pupils' understanding and extend their thinking. For example, older pupils, taught by a student, made good progress in refining their thoughts about banning cars from towns and cities when asked to provide reasons for their opinions.
- Verbal feedback to pupils on what they have done well and what they need to do to improve is good across the school. For example, in a spelling and handwriting activity for the older pupils, staff encouraged pupils to check the meaning of some of the words they came across, such as 'civil'.
- Teaching assistants provide consistently effective support for pupils. This includes one-to-one or small group support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This enables pupils with high-level additional needs to enjoy being part of their school and local community.
- The teaching of reading is successful because staff provide regular opportunities for pupils to read on an individual basis with a trained adult. Teaching in mathematics is effective because of a strong focus on basic skills and how to carry out a range of calculations. The teaching of writing skills has strengths in the teaching of grammar and comprehension.
- Teachers plan activities with different levels of challenge to meet the need of the range of ages and abilities in each class. The planning of work for the younger pupils is good. The work in older pupils' books, however, rarely shows specifically what the pupils are to do or learn. This makes it difficult to accurately assess and monitor the progress some pupils make.
- Activities to support average and lower attaining pupils are usually well matched to their abilities and provide a good level of challenge for these pupils. However, the sample of work shows that the level of challenge could be even higher for the most able pupils. Older pupils' books indicate quite wide usage of textbooks, especially for English and mathematics activities. Some pupils say 'This is a bit boring' and does little to motivate them to try really hard.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- There are currently no children in the early years group. School records indicate that, over time, children's skills and experiences on entry have ranged from below to broadly typical for their age. The attainment of pupils who join the school at other times is similarly varied.

- School records indicate that, from their very different starting points, pupils make good overall progress. Samples of pupils' recent work across the age range and the school's assessment information show that pupils of all abilities achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils read well across the school and make better progress in this area than in other subjects. Pupils' records show that those of all ages read on a regular and individual basis to an adult in school. This ensures that any difficulties they encounter are quickly identified and help is given. The school encourages all parents to support their children in reading at home, but with mixed success.
- Pupils have a good understanding of numbers and the operations they use to make calculations. They also have a secure understanding of shapes, space and measures. A lot of work has been done this year on basic calculations. This includes regular use by the older pupils of mathematical textbooks. While this helps provide work at different levels, the pupils' books indicate relatively few open-ended opportunities where pupils solve practical problems.
- Pupils generally write well but this has been a weaker area overall. Pupils' books show they do a lot of work on comprehension and grammar. Observation in the inspection shows they are confident in using dictionaries and other sources to check the meaning of words. Handwriting, punctuation and spelling skills are not consistently good enough and recent work shows relatively few opportunities to write imaginatively, at length and in depth.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good overall progress, and reach standards similar to their classmates and to pupils nationally. Additional funds are used effectively to employ experienced staff and to allow access to a range of out-of-school activities that help them to develop their confidence and enjoyment of school.
- The most able pupils make good overall progress. Some younger pupils do particularly well in reading because they have lots of opportunities to develop their skills by reading regularly to a trained adult. The sample of work shows that some older pupils are not always challenged to the highest appropriate level.
- The school gives good support to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, in both their personal development and their learning. This means they achieve well. The school identifies their additional needs at an early stage and provides good quality help for them. Work is well-matched to their individual needs. The success they are then able to achieve, even if in only small steps, boosts their self-confidence and progress.
- Pupils develop healthy life-styles through a range of physical education activities. Pupils across the school enjoy regular swimming lessons. Work with the local cluster of schools has extended the opportunities available for pupils to take part in a wider range of sports. This has helped to improve their health and fitness levels.

### The early years provision

is good

- School records and discussions indicate that children enter school with skills and experiences that vary widely from year-to-year. Discussions with parents indicate that children settle well and make good progress in all areas, and especially their personal and social development. All the evidence, including discussion with parents, indicates that pupils are safe, behave sensibly and grow in confidence, which prepares them well for Year 1.
- As there are currently no children in the early years group, it was not possible to make direct observations of their behaviour and attitudes to learning. However, discussion with parents and staff and samples of last year's work indicate that they develop a positive approach to finding things out. Parents note that children are often keen to learn to read like their older siblings or friends, and show good levels of interest in stories. Parents also identify that children develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe when playing outside in the small courtyard.
- Samples of children's work indicate that teaching and learning are good. The school keeps good records of the activities children take part in. Assessment is regular and appears accurate. Staff use the information to provide a good level of challenge matched to the children's ability. Leaders note that, with very small

groups, most able children sometimes work with older pupils while disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs work with others as appropriate.

- Leadership and management of the early years are good. The headteacher, as both leader and teacher of this group, brings enthusiasm to the role. Staff have the opportunity to visit local schools and work with others to ensure that curriculum planning continues to evolve. The outdoor area for the early years children is not attractive or stimulating, but there are clear plans to ensure this is refreshed for next year's intake.



## 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>	112815
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	461615

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>	Voluntary Controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	19
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Moseley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Hunter
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 March 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01629 650282
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