

Estcots Primary School

Bourg-de-Peage Avenue, Lewes Road, East Grinstead, RH19 3TY

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- This is an improving school. Following the previous inspection there was a dip in progress. However, attainment and progress of current pupils are accelerating and results in Year 6 tests have increased to above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good. In most classes, teachers provide lessons that capture the imagination of all groups of pupils.
- Improvements in the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) are having a positive impact on pupils' progress and standards in reading and writing.
- Behaviour is good. Throughout the school, pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to staff. In most classes, pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. All pupils feel safe in the school.
- Children in the early years provision make good progress and a higher proportion than found nationally reach a good level of development. They are very well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Pupils enjoy an interesting curriculum. There is a good range of trips and sporting activities that enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils are well cared for. Those who have emotional difficulties are well supported by dedicated staff.
- Parents are very complimentary about the school. They like the fact that staff are available to discuss any concern or worry.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors provide good leadership. They are ambitious in their vision to continue to improve the school. Middle leaders are very effective.
- Governors are very knowledgeable and have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teaching is not typically outstanding because teachers do not always have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Teachers do not rigorously check that pupils in Years 5 and 6 are always fully attentive and working on the task set.
- Pupils do not always have the skills to enable them to solve real-life mathematical problems.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 22 lessons and part-lessons. Many were observed jointly with senior leaders. In addition, the inspectors listened to pupils reading in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils and school staff. There was a discussion with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors. A telephone call was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 134 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Other sources of parental views that were considered included a letter and discussions with parents at the end of the day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and analysed a large range of documents and policies, including the school's own information on pupils' current progress and documents checking the quality of teaching and learning. They also examined records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The views of staff were analysed through the 30 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Bowes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

Roger Blackburn

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Estcots Primary School is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding is much lower than the national average. Pupil premium money is additional funding provided by the government for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs on the school roll is lower than the national average.
- The early years provision consists of two full-time Reception classes.
- In 2014, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher and most middle leaders have joined the school in the last two years.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers always have the highest expectations of all groups of pupils to enable higher standards by the end of Year 6 by:
 - rigorously checking that pupils in Years 5 and 6 are always fully attentive and on task throughout the whole lesson.
- Ensure that in mathematics pupils develop the skills to enable them to solve real-life problems.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the arrival of the headteacher and other leaders two years ago, there have been rapid improvements. Leaders have tackled weaknesses in teaching and slow progress in some classes. They have created a climate where behaviour is typically good and pupils are taught effectively by skilled and well-trained teachers.
- Leaders have a clear vision for continued improvements and are very accurate in understanding the school's strengths and areas still in need of further development. They successfully tackled the slip in standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Leaders have ensured that the progress of every pupil in the school is regularly checked. They make sure that any who are identified as not making the progress that they should quickly receive additional support. Published data show that progress for previous Year 6 pupils in 2013 and 2014 was not strong. However, current school data and evidence in books indicate that many pupils are now making more than expected progress in every year group. The improved rates of progress reflect the success of the school in promoting equality of opportunity.
- Middle leaders are effective. Those with responsibilities for two year groups or subjects regularly visit lessons and check pupils' progress in books. They are dedicated to, and effective in, improving pupils' learning and progress.
- The school spends the pupil premium effectively making use of the funding to provide well targeted support. Governors receive a highly detailed report that indicates the impact on achievement for each pupil as a result of the additional support provided.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is used well to extend pupils' opportunities for sport and physical development. The school is part of a school sports partnership that organises competitions and events, for example in rugby, hockey, cricket and cross-country. The school has been very successful in tennis and has reached the semi-finals of a local tournament. Links with the nearby secondary school have also ensured that pupils have the opportunity to perform their dance skills. The impact has been to improve pupils' well-being because all pupils now take part in more physical activity.
- The school works successfully within the network of local schools. There have been useful opportunities for staff to share their skills and improve their own practice.
- The local authority quickly recognised that progress was an issue and has carefully monitored the school for the last couple of years. It has provided effective support to develop teachers' subject skills, particularly in mathematics. The local authority has also ensured that the school has a robust monitoring system to check that all pupils make good progress. A local authority representative has just checked the writing results in Key Stage 2 and was in full agreement with the school's assessments.
- Teachers provide an interesting range of subjects. Pupils' spiritual development is well promoted through assemblies and visits to places of worship, including the local church. All pupils are given a clear understanding of right from wrong and learn about the rule of law. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about how they have a responsibility to protect the environment. They achieve this through the eco-warriors group and 'forest school' (an educational activity based on the natural world) Pupils have been active in protesting about the deforestation of the rainforest and have written to the President of the United States, The Queen and the Prime Minister to express their concerns. They have been delighted with the replies they have received.
- British values are well promoted through the curriculum. Pupils collect money to support a school in Tanzania; recently they have helped to purchase a rain water collector. Social development is well promoted and groups of older pupils, such as peer mentors and young interpreters, make sure that all feel welcomed and valued. The 'buddy books' written by the Year 6 pupils to their buddies in the Reception class are full of sound advice such as, 'Enjoy every second of the day!' There are numerous opportunities for pupils to develop their cultural awareness through music, French, art, dance and drama. The school also ensures that pupils start to think about their future careers. It holds special events where parents come in to talk about their jobs and the qualifications needed to do them.
- The school plans carefully to ensure that all have a respect for those from different faiths and cultures. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils understand the concept of democracy and vote for members of the school council. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school fosters good relationships. Parents are highly supportive of the school and report that they are delighted with how leaders keep them informed about their children's well-being and progress. Pupils enjoy school and older pupils stressed how much it had improved since the arrival of the headteacher. As one said, 'We are lucky to have our headteacher; she looks out for us and is very kind.'

- Statutory requirements regarding safeguarding are good. The school and governors do all they can to ensure the safety and protection of pupils.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body supports the school well. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the areas left to improve. They have a good awareness of the data and how the school is doing when compared with all schools nationally.
- Many governors visit the school regularly and as a result are well aware that pupils' progress has improved as the quality of teaching has improved. Governors carefully monitor the arrangements for managing teachers' performance to ensure that pay rises for staff are closely linked to the progress that pupils are making within a teacher's class. Governors are aware of the procedures to follow should they need to address any teacher's underperformance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils move around the school sensibly and play together happily in the playground. In the school hall during lunchtime pupils are polite and well mannered.
- In most classes behaviour is good and pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively to the teacher and quickly complete set tasks. Most pupils reported that they felt behaviour in their lessons was good. However, in Years 5 and 6 inspectors observed that a few pupils were fully engaged throughout the whole lesson which affected their progress.
- Pupils are proud of their school; they like the residential trips and the other experiences that the school provides. They were keen to express how much they enjoyed the sleepover in school and visit to the observatory which is based in the local secondary school.
- Records show that behaviour over time is good and that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour.
- The breakfast club enables pupils to have a nourishing start to the day and makes sure that they are ready to start their learning.
- Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and they have a good awareness where their food comes from. At present they are growing beans and strawberries.
- The school's attendance figures show pupils continue to attend well and that last year attendance was among the top 20% of all schools.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Staff have been trained well to check on pupils' safety. There are effective checks to ensure that those who are employed to work at the school comply with all the necessary requirements.
- Pupils feel safe. On Parent View, nearly every parent reported that their child feels safe at the school. Pupils know they need to tell an adult if someone they do not know sends them a text. They have been taught well about the possible dangers of the internet by the local police.
- Pupils report that there is no bullying. This is also evident in the school's records over time. Pupils have been trained well about the different types of bullying, such as cyber bullying and bullying associated with race. The school's peer mentors, who are a group of older pupils, act as an additional point of contact for any concerned pupil to approach should they have any worries.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has rapidly improved. This has had a significant impact on improving pupils' rates of progress. The school now has effective systems for managing teachers' performance which have ensured that all staff are aware of how their success will be measured. All teachers support this fresh approach. They all are proud of how they have contributed towards the rise in standards. Teaching is not outstanding because in Years 5 and 6 teachers still do not have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve, and ensure that they are fully attentive.
- Interesting activities and tasks are a feature of many lessons. For example, pupils in Year 4 enjoyed undertaking an archaeological dig to discover artefacts from the previous school that had been on the site.

- Improved phonics teaching has ensured that pupils quickly begin to develop their reading and writing skills. Throughout the school there is a drive to ensure that pupils read regularly. The school benefits from the support of grandparents and other volunteers who make sure that all pupils have the chance to read. As a result, pupils' reading and comprehension skills are rapidly improving.
- In writing, pupils are given ample opportunities to develop their skills in all subjects of the curriculum. For example, in geography Year 6 pupils had written interesting accounts of the different stages of a river. Teachers encourage those who are most able in Year 6 to plan and write their own books.
- In mathematics, there have been considerable improvements in the quality of teaching. However, teachers still do not ensure that all pupils are provided with sufficient opportunities to practise the skills to enable them to solve real-life mathematical problems.
- When questioned, pupils said how much they liked the exciting displays around the school and grounds. They enjoy the various activities associated with outdoor activities such as 'forest school'. Other pupils were very keen to show inspectors the set they had created of 'Narnia through the wardrobe'. Exciting displays fire pupils' imaginations and provide a good stimulus for writing.

The achievement of pupils **is good**

- The school's published data are not as strong as the attainment and progress of current pupils, which are now good.
- There has been a positive trend of improvements and in most year groups last year many pupils made better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Data for current pupils show progress is strong in both Key Stage 1 and 2.
- In 2014, at the end of Year 6, pupils attained in line with the national average in reading and writing. However, they attained significantly below the national average in mathematics. There have been considerable improvements in reading, writing and mathematics this year. Current unpublished data, some of which has been checked by the local authority, show that in 2015 standards have risen and a very high proportion of pupils now achieve or exceed the expected Level 4 in every subject.
- Those who are most able do well. At the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2, there has been a rapid improvement. Approximately half of the pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in reading and writing. In reading, nearly a fifth of the pupils achieved the highest Level 6. In mathematics in 2014, a significantly lower proportion than found nationally achieved Level 5. However, unpublished data for 2015 show that pupils now attain more in line with the 2014 national average both in Level 5 and Level 6. This improvement is due to the impact of the school's close monitoring and effective actions to improve achievement. Some of the most-able pupils also attend the local secondary school to receive additional tuition in mathematics. This has also had a positive impact on their attainment. However, there are still too few opportunities for pupils to practise mathematical skills in real life situations.
- There were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2014 to report their attainment without them being identified. However, the progress of disadvantaged pupils from their different starting points indicates that often these pupils make better progress than other pupils in the school. For example, in reading and writing they make better progress in Years 4 and 6. In mathematics, disadvantaged pupils make better progress in all year groups. As a result, any small gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school are closing rapidly.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because skilled learning support assistants meet the needs of these pupils well and help them make the same good progress as their peers.

The early years provision **is good**

- When children first join the early years, their knowledge and skills are typical for their age. They make good progress and a higher proportion than found nationally reach a good level of development. Leaders ensure that those children who reach a good level of development early are then encouraged to try some of the work typically found in Year 1. As a result, many pupils are very well prepared for their learning once they enter Year 1.
- Children benefit from good teaching, which provides exciting activities. For example, children liked exploring which materials were waterproof.
- The leadership and management of the early years are good. Leaders track children's progress very closely. 'Learning journals' are carefully and regularly completed and work is planned that matches

children's needs and interests. Children really enjoyed visiting a local farm and finding out about the life cycle of a chick.

- Parents are pleased with their children's progress in the early years. They like the 'book of the week' scheme that they say encourages reading. Parents say they have ample opportunities to discuss any concerns or worries with teachers at the end of the day. Parents reported that their children all feel safe. Behaviour seen by inspectors in the early years is good. Children are encouraged to take turns and to use resources with care.

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	125945
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	449774

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	418
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julia Peaty
Headteacher	Rachel Brock
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2010
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