

Eastrop Infant School

Eastrop, Highworth, Swindon SN6 7AP

Inspection dates	24–25 February 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher leads the school with passion and skill. Her high expectations to provide the best for all pupils are shared by governors, staff and pupils. As a result, outcomes have improved consistently since the last inspection and are now above average in all subjects.
- The school has improved considerably since the last inspection.
- Governors have a thorough understanding of school effectiveness. They know which areas are strong and where improvements can be made. They support and challenge leaders very well.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good and consequently pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- The school curriculum is broad and balanced and takes account of pupils' interests wherever possible. As a result, pupils are engaged in their learning and gain a deep understanding of the topics they are studying.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Strong links with a school in Gambia enable pupils at Eastrop to gain an understanding of different cultures.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is effective. Policies and procedures to keep pupils safe from harm are robust, checked by an experienced governor and followed closely by all.
- The provision in early years is good. The early years provides children with a very positive start to their school experience. Teachers and other staff respond to the needs of all pupils well. Children thoroughly enjoy their learning and the progress made by all is brisk.
- Pupils love coming to school and attend well. Their behaviour is good and positive attitudes to learning contribute well to their progress.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few boys in the early years and Key Stage 1 reach the highest standards compared with girls.
- Leaders do not always monitor teaching rigorously enough to identify and correct teachers' areas for development.
- A small amount of teaching does not take full account of what pupils already know. This means some pupils are not always challenged and some become restless.
- Pupils' standards of spelling are not as high as the standards in punctuation and grammar.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching to accelerate the progress of all pupils so that it matches the high quality seen in the large majority of pupils throughout the school, by:
 - making sure boys in the early years and throughout the school are provided with work and encouragement which enables them to reach the highest standards
 - ensuring that the performance of all teachers is monitored more rigorously so that they clearly understand their areas for development
 - planning interesting activities that take full account of what pupils already know so that pupils are always challenged and their interest and enthusiasm for learning does not wane in lessons
 - making sure there is a raised expectation of accuracy in spelling so that this aspect of pupils' work matches the standards in punctuation and grammar.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness is accurate and rightly positive. The evaluation takes full account of the standards pupils reach at the end of the early years and Key Stage 1, which have been rising since the previous inspection and are now above average in all subjects.
- The headteacher is a passionate and ambitious leader who wants the very best for the pupils, the staff and the school. The drive for school improvement rests heavily on her shoulders, but is increasingly shared with other leaders in school. This is developing but not yet fully effective. The results of the staff and parent survey showed all staff and almost every parent believed leadership and management at this school is of high quality. Inspectors agree.
- The headteacher and governors have rightly identified that middle leadership requires some development and have engaged the services of an external consultant to provide bespoke guidance and evaluation. This consultant has provided the school with an accurate analysis of the school's strengths and areas for development. This is being used to inform and update the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness.
- The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment is good and no inadequate teaching is evident at this school. However, arrangements for checking on the quality of teaching are not always focused sharply enough on pupils' learning and progress. The feedback leaders give to teachers following observations does not make clear how they need to improve their teaching and pupils' learning.
- All leaders and teachers are fully able to track the attainment and progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils effectively because the school's current systems and procedures for assessment are robust and rigorously maintained.
- The leadership of special educational needs and disability is strong. This group of children are served very well because leaders make the best use of external agencies and experienced staff to assess and support their needs. In addition, this vulnerable group is also supported by effective assessment of their progress. One parent noted, 'the staff have bent over backwards to support my child and have gone above and beyond anything I might have expected. My child loves it here.'
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. There is carefully planned provision for all subject areas including science and information and communication technology. In addition, the school offers a range of extra-curricular activities which are very popular and widely attended. During the inspection, one inspector observed a very well-attended ukulele club where pupils thoroughly enjoyed strumming their instruments and singing 'Derek the Dragon' and 'Ringo the Flamingo.'
- The school promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well through a wide range of visitors and their supported school in Gambia. Leaders make the very best use of their own community to develop pupils' understanding and awareness of diversity, respect, tolerance and other fundamental British values.
- Pupil premium funding is spent wisely and disadvantaged pupils achieve well from their individual starting points.
- The physical education and sports funding has been used effectively to increase participation rates and teachers' skills in sporting activities. However, the impact of this spending is not published in sufficient detail on the website.
- The headteacher and administrative staff continue to work assiduously to increase pupils' attendance and reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent. This has been successful and the reasons for any absence are checked and, where necessary, families with difficulties are supported. Very few pupils are late for school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance is highly effective. Governors have a very clear understanding of the progress that pupils make from their starting points.
 - They have ambition and an unwavering desire for pupils to receive the very best education and leave the school ready and willing to tackle the challenges that lie ahead. They have high expectations of, and aspirations for, the children who attend the school.
 - Governors have taken full account of all advice given by an external consultant and challenge senior leaders with rigour about the attainment and progress of pupils in the early years and Key Stage 1. This helps them to secure an external view of the school, making sure they keep abreast of where

performance and practice is strong and where improvements can be made.

- Governors are regular visitors to the school and share their wide spectrum of skills to support and challenge leaders. They celebrate the strengths of the school and know where the areas for improvement are. They have helped to oversee improvements in the vast majority of areas.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the effective and accurate systems and procedures for assessing, tracking, analysing and evaluating the achievement of pupils.
- Governors have supported the headteacher effectively since the previous inspection and have clear plans to ensure there is leadership capacity in the school when the current headteacher retires.
- Governors have an in-depth knowledge of performance management procedures and make sure that teachers' pay reflects their performance. They receive external support when setting performance targets for the headteacher; performance targets are aligned to areas of improvement in the school.

■ The arrangements for safeguarding are effective

- All staff are well trained to notice any signs that pupils might be at risk. Concerns are shared with leaders who swiftly investigate them and follow up actions with rigour. Policies and procedures to keep pupils safe are reviewed regularly and are shared with staff and volunteers. All staff and volunteers are subject to rigorous checks before they are allowed to work with pupils. Risk assessments are completed regularly and are checked by senior leaders. Every parent questioned agreed that their child feels safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching over time in the early years and Key Stage 1 is good and, as a result, the standards pupils reach in reading, writing and mathematics have improved since the last inspection and are above average in all subjects.
- A major reason for the successful teaching is the extremely positive relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils themselves. This results in pupils being eager to excel and receive praise for working hard and for behaving well. This is the norm at Eastrop.
- Teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disability is particularly effective and leads to accelerated progress because their teaching plans and 'precision teaching' contain really specific targets. These plans are regularly reviewed and amended as necessary. Support staff for pupils with disability and those with special educational needs are well trained and well informed of the key learning in each lesson so they can provide timely and effective support.
- The level of general teaching assistant support is generous but its quality is a little variable. Additional adults, including a significant number of volunteers, are mostly used to good effect during all parts of lessons. However, there are some occasions when teaching assistants do not challenge the right pupils at the right time with the right level of work.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the standard in the Year 1 phonics check has continued to improve because leaders have adapted the organisation to ensure that pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 can access phonics teaching that is more closely aligned to their needs and abilities. As a result of this planning, teachers are maximising pupils' knowledge and skills in reading.
- Teachers are carefully matching books to pupils' reading ability and, with effective staff and volunteer support, pupils are regularly heard to read books at the right level for their abilities. Pupils capably use their knowledge of phonics and picture clues to read common but tricky words and have clear strategies for reading unknown words.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics is good. They provide a good range of resources and carefully explain and model work so pupils are clear about what they need to do. Pupils make the most progress in the classes of teachers who ask open-ended questions which require deep thought. Teaching in mathematics deepens pupils' understanding and there are many opportunities for pupils to apply their skills through reasoning and problem solving. However, on a few occasions pupils repeat work which they have already mastered.
- In a small number of lessons, especially in writing, teachers do not have high enough expectations of their most-able pupils. Planning is not as precise as it should be. The teachers plan tasks for pupils to complete, but sometimes do not explicitly plan what they are expected to learn. As a result, they do not plan sufficiently challenging work from the outset of the lesson. Occasionally pupils are expected to

complete too much simple work before being given their more challenging activities. On a small number of occasions, teachers are not moving pupils on quickly enough.

- Teachers mark work conscientiously and in accordance with the school's marking policy. Their assessments of what the pupils can do are reliable. However, teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils' spelling. While punctuation and grammar are corrected routinely and standards rise, spelling is rarely corrected and is not as good.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good and is rooted in its emphasis on the school's aims. The school community successfully meets its vision for learning to be exciting and for pupils to be enquiring, always doing their best, and becoming superstars of the future. It was evident that teachers are indeed caring and helpful and rules do keep everyone safe. There are many opportunities to make new friends and everyone is polite and respectful.
- Pupils are confident, self-assured and all are highly valued. Any differences are celebrated, for example when pupils from different cultures or religions share their celebrations and festivals. Planned events help to develop pupils' understanding and appreciation of the world further, such as the work relating to a communication with the astronaut Tim Peake and forthcoming royal celebrations.
- Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning and this contributes well to their good academic progress. They know they will be rewarded for hard work and for good behaviour. They enjoy seeing their work displayed around school sharing their success.
- Pupils enjoy receiving regular information from their link school in Gambia. The school completes fundraising and sponsorship for this school, and through regular updates and assemblies, pupils learn how life can be different in other parts of the world.
- Pupils know about democracy through elections for the school council, and in the early years children vote for their favourite stories.
- Parents who responded to the online survey were overwhelmingly positive about how safe and happy their children are in school. A similar very high proportion said their children were looked after well. Pupils spoken to confirmed this.
- Pupils reported that bullying is very rare. They are aware of the different forms bullying can take. All are confident of reporting if an incident occurred and know who to report it to. Almost all parents who expressed a view thought that bullying was dealt with well.
- Leaders make sure that they meet all statutory responsibilities for safeguarding, including appropriate training and checks on staff, volunteers and visitors.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In lessons most pupils are resilient and cooperative; they have good attitudes to learning and do not drift off-task, even if an activity is undemanding or has been going on for too long. They listen well to instructions and collaborate in small groups or pairs effectively. However, a very small proportion can be a little boisterous or over-compliant when given easy or too difficult tasks in lessons. They do not always take enough responsibility for their own learning by seeking more challenging work.
- Pupils take pride in their appearance and their work which they generally present neatly, taking care with the quality of their handwriting.
- They work well with each other in lessons. Pupils of different backgrounds and faiths have good relationships in the classroom and around the school.
- Attendance has continued to improve and is above the national average for primary schools. Similarly, the rate of persistent absence has fallen and compares favourably with the national rate.
- Almost all parents who responded to the survey, and every parent spoken to during the inspection, thought that the school does a good job in making sure pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils reported that there were a very few pupils in school whose behaviour is not good all the time, but inspectors did not see any poor behaviour during the time in school. On the rare occasions when pupils fall out, staff support pupils in speaking to each other to understand why they might have upset each other and help them to resolve their differences. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Outcomes for pupils are good. They enter the school with skills that are typical for their age and make good progress in all subjects by the time they leave. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- The outcomes for pupils by the time they leave the early years have improved consistently over the last three years. In 2015, the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding a good level of development was above the national average. In the Year 1 phonics check, the proportion of pupils passing the check was also above the national average. In the same vein, by the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been significantly above average and rising for the last five years. The proportion of more-able pupils, in all subjects, is above the national average.
- School records show that current pupils are achieving well. This positive picture is confirmed in the learning witnessed in classrooms and also the strong progress seen in pupils' books. In mathematics, in particular, progress is strong. Targets for all pupils are aspirational and realistic. If achieved they will realise a continued upward trend in all classes, and in phonics.
- Most groups of pupils in school, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve consistently well. Pupils with disability and those with special educational needs make good and sometimes exceptional progress from their different starting points. Pupils are very well supported to achieve well and their needs are well met by staff.
- Pupils who need to catch up are identified early and have been targeted for additional one-to-one reading support and have made rapid gains in their learning.
- However, leaders are aware that their work to improve outcomes for boys is not yet complete. The gap between the outcomes of boys and girls is larger than those seen nationally at the higher levels of attainment.
- The gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally continues to close. Pupils who are disadvantaged often outperform other pupils within the school and nationally.

Early years provision

is good

- Children make good progress in the early years. The majority of pupils start school with skills that are broadly typical for their age. By the end of early years, the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development continues to rise, and in 2015 the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was above the national average. A very significant proportion of girls exceeded the early learning goals but the proportion of boys was below the national average. However, by the time they leave Reception all children are well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- The school is very aware of the need to close the gap between the outcomes for disadvantaged children and other pupils. They do this very successfully because teachers check on children's progress regularly and provide extra support where needed. Very few children receive pupil premium funding.
- Teaching in the early years is effective. Assessments are accurate and enable an informed view of what pupils need to do next from their starting points. The records of progress are focused and linked effectively to the stages in child development.
- Teachers use the classrooms and outdoor area to provide a wide range of purposeful tasks which develop the whole child, including basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics and their physical and emotional development. Children work with interest and show impressive perseverance at such a young age, because planned activities are regularly based around children's interests.
- Behaviour is good and children respond rapidly to all requests from staff. The reaction to the sound of a 'rain stick' is immediate and children stop what they are doing and listen silently for their instructions.
- In both classes there is a 'language rich' environment where children have countless opportunities to complete role play and share their thoughts and learning. For example, in the current role play area, the children were delighted to sell the inspector an airline ticket to Disneyland. When discussing the 'booking', they were keen to check the day of the week, the number of passengers and what would be done there. However, not all teaching assistants are confident and secure in extending children's vocabulary and this is holding back some of the most-able pupils.
- Children's phonics skills develop rapidly as they learn to sound out words. Teachers encourage a joy of reading by providing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. Children explain why they enjoy the books and describe their favourite character. One child wrote that she liked her book because it had the word 'pooped' in it.
- The teaching of writing is good. The skilful use of humour and well-chosen resources to motivate children

are regular features of teaching here. For example, during the inspection the teacher wore a headband with a finger to remind children to use finger spaces in their writing and constantly reminded them of the need to use capital letters and full stops. The most-able children are already writing sentences and make very good attempts in their spelling of unusual words. One wrote, 'Venis dusnt have roads. It has wortur' as she described the gondolas in Venice. Another described a snowmobile as having 'catpilu tracx' (caterpillar tracks). However, the best writing seen was all from girls, while boys' writing was not as well developed overall.

- Teachers use effective, open-ended questions with children. This develops children's thinking and reasoning abilities and helps them to extend their language and number skills. The teachers provide many activities for children to develop their counting and addition skills and make these more meaningful by linking to their current 'Transport' topic. For example, children were successfully adding the number of passengers on a variety of modes of transport such as bikes, cars and trains.
- This is a safe environment and staff consider all risks when providing the exciting range of activities. For example, children were asked to wrap up warmly when going outside and instructed not to look at the sun. Children have been planting a variety of plants, bulbs and seeds. The staff member made it clear that plants need water, soil and sunlight to grow, and also noted that it would be fine to eat the strawberries and carrots, but not good to eat the daffodils.
- The leadership of the early years is effective and all staff work closely together. The outstanding support of children with disability and those with special educational need is a very positive feature of the early years provision. Leaders value the strong links with parents, who think very highly of the Reception class teaching.

School details

Unique reference number	137365
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10002416

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Weise
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Marshall
Telephone number	01793 763772
Website	www.eastropinfantschool.org.uk
Email address	head@eastrop-inf.swindon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 November 2013

Information about this school

- With 165 pupils on roll, Eastrop Infant School is a smaller than average primary school. The school converted to become an academy in 2011.
- Children in the early years are taught in two Reception classes. There are also two classes each for pupils from Year 1 and Year 2.
- The proportion of pupils with disability and those who have special educational needs is below average and the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need or an education, health and care plan is broadly average.
- Most pupils are White British. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.)
- Since the previous inspection there have been several changes to the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons or part lessons in all classes and in a range of subjects. A proportion of the lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and assessed the school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour around school, in the playground and during lunchtime. They also attended a school assembly with a member of the local clergy and observed a lunchtime ukulele club.
- Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and in the learning journals of children in the early years. Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and the senior leadership team, and the school improvement partner, and spoke to teachers. They also met with representatives of the governing body.
- A group of six pupils discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with the lead inspector and another inspector listened to a group of Year 2 readers. Inspectors also spoke informally with pupils over the inspection days.
- The inspection team considered 73 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey and also spoke with a number of parents who were delivering and collecting pupils from school.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including information on pupils' outcomes, minutes from governors' meetings, school reviews undertaken by external consultants, the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plan. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Steve Bywater, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Fox

Ofsted Inspector

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