

Elm Park Primary School

Southend Road, Elm Park, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 5UA

Inspection dates

15–16 September 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

- Leadership and management are effective. Leaders and governors are improving the school and are having a good impact on teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- They have high expectations for members of staff and the pupils, and have developed a supportive and challenging culture.
- Leaders understand what needs to be done to make the school outstanding and are prepared to go the extra mile to achieve their aims.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted diligently, preparing pupils thoroughly for life in modern Britain.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are effective. Teachers are successful in sharing their good subject knowledge with the pupils.
- Good relationships between the staff and pupils support learning and behaviour well.
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Pupils are proud of their school. They take their responsibilities seriously and behave well at all times.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about how to stay safe and feel safe at school.
- They enjoy school and keep active in sports lessons, at playtimes and in after-school clubs.
- Pupils' outcomes are good. Pupils make good progress from their different starting points and do especially well in reading.
- Children get off to a good start in the effective early years provision, especially in learning how to write.
- The school prepares pupils well for the next stage of education and later life. There is a strong focus on 'growing good people'.
- Teachers do not always make sure that pupils are working at the right level in mathematics or fully understand their calculations.
- Learning in topic work is not checked rigorously enough to ensure that the most able pupils always tackle work that reflects their depth of knowledge and understanding.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching is consistently supporting pupils in their understanding of calculating numbers and enabling them to work at the right level for their abilities.
- Increase the rigour in checking up on how well pupils are doing in topic work, so that work is always challenging the most able pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and senior leaders have established a clear and effective culture for learning. Pupils, parents, members of staff and governors are all pulling in the same direction and have a shared and ambitious vision for the school. Leaders demonstrate their effectiveness in the accuracy of their self-evaluation and in the improvement in pupils' outcomes since the previous inspection.
- Members of staff are highly motivated and fully involved in identifying what they need to do next to improve further. Performance management is organised effectively and is firmly based on improving provision and the progress of all pupils. Staff training is aligned with school improvement planning and has helped to lift teaching so that it is now good.
- Middle leaders have developed their roles effectively since the previous inspection. They are fully involved in checking up on how well teachers and their pupils are doing in each subject and year group. They play a key role in bringing about any necessary changes.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. There is strong provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, they have good opportunities to become leaders and to support others in their learning. They are given ample time to reflect on British and school values such as respect and the importance of striving to achieve. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 understood that when answering various questions, they can disagree with the views of other pupils but must respect their ideas.
- The extra funding for disadvantaged pupils is used well. Additional staffing is used to support pupils within class when differences in learning have been identified. Consequently, these pupils, including the most able, are making good progress over time.
- The physical education and sport premium is used well to provide staff training and time for leaders to support and train colleagues. It is having a positive impact on the pupils' health, fitness and level of skill.
- Leaders have good relationships with the parents. Parents are especially positive about leadership and the way the pupils are kept safe. Parents typically make positive comments such as, 'The school has the care factor' and, 'Staff are very understanding.'
- The curriculum is thoroughly planned and shared with parents. There are good opportunities for pupils to gain a breadth of knowledge and understanding in lessons and within the broader curriculum of clubs, visitors and visits. The curriculum has a positive impact on the pupils' learning, including in literacy, mathematics and computing.
- Leaders are working on a new system for checking up on how well pupils are doing in their topic work. They have identified correctly that the most able pupils do not always demonstrate their depth of knowledge and understanding well enough in their topic work.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective.
 - Governors are knowledgeable and provide the right level of support and challenge for the other leaders at the school.
 - They are sharply focused on checking up on teaching and pupils' learning and have high expectations.
 - Governors have helped to ensure that the school has improved since the previous inspection.
 - The methods used for assessing learning are fully understood and scrutinised by governors.
 - Governors attend frequent training to maintain expertise in all aspects of their work.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that all adults working in school are suitable and have received the right training to support them in looking after the pupils. Members of staff are clear about their responsibilities in keeping the pupils safe. High expectations for good behaviour support the safe culture at the school. Pupils are especially well informed about how to stay safe when working on the internet. The school council helps to identify health and safety risks at school. Parents are given good opportunities to attend training on health and safety matters.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers share their good subject knowledge with the pupils and make good use of wall displays to provide key information to support learning. They frequently include 'WAGOLLS' ('what a good one looks like') to clarify their expectations.
- Members of staff form good relationships with the pupils and consequently, they manage behaviour positively and use praise successfully to encourage pupils to try hard and to concentrate.
- Since the previous inspection, teachers' marking has developed well. The school's marking policy is followed by all staff. Pupils pay attention to the advice they have been given, and as a result, their work improves.
- Teachers frequently check up on the pupils' learning and maintain clear assessment records that show what pupils know, can do and understand. Individual learning records help teachers to identify pupils who may be at risk of doing less well than they should. These pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, then become a key focus for the teachers within lessons. For example, in literacy in Year 6, a teacher worked with a small group to reinforce the correct grammar needed for editing stories. Teachers ensure that the work provided secures rapid progress in writing for all groups of pupils over time.

- Various resources, including tablet computers, are made available to support learning in lessons. For example, pupils can use tablet computers to find out more information on a topic by clicking on the bar codes shown on wall displays. Pupils who have been absent find these especially helpful in enabling them to catch up.
- The teaching of literacy, especially reading, is a particular strength. Phonics (the sounds that letters represent) is taught well so that pupils improve their reading and spelling quickly.
- Teachers explain clearly what pupils are to learn, often through the use of well-chosen demonstrations. For example, in a physical education lesson for Year 4, some pupils were chosen to show the rest of the class how to pass a ball successfully.
- Mathematics is taught well in most classes. Occasionally, teachers do not check that all pupils have understood the calculation strategy they have chosen for their number sums. In addition, they do not always adapt work soon enough when pupils find these calculations too easy.
- Expectations for the most able, including those who are disadvantaged, are high in most lessons. Occasionally, these pupils could be challenged to write in greater depth when completing topic work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are especially skilled in knowing how to stay safe and free from bullying. Pupils are chosen to be 'cyber mentors', who help others to understand the importance of keeping safe when using the internet.
- Pupils report that bullying is rare and is dealt with quickly and effectively by members of staff when it occurs.
- Pupils are confident and know what they need to do to become successful learners. They only lose concentration on the odd occasion when their work has been pitched at the wrong level.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to maintain good physical and emotional well-being through sporting activities and philosophy lessons.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, on the playground and around the school. Members of staff, parents and pupils all agree that behaviour over time is good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about taking responsibility for a wide range of tasks. For example, 'learning experts' and 'digital leaders' provide advice to other pupils because they are particularly skilled in a subject.

- Pupils are proud of their school and their achievements. They respect the views and beliefs of others and cooperate well with each other when working and playing. For example, Year 5 pupils were keen to help each other with their spelling.
- Levels of attendance have been below average in the past but are improving well. Attendance of a small number of pupils from hard-to-reach families remains weak, despite the school taking all reasonable steps to prevent unnecessary absences.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Attainment is broadly in line with the national picture, representing good progress from pupils' attainment on entry to the school. Pupils' rates of progress have been rising since the previous inspection.
- Pupils from various starting points now make good progress across the curriculum, including in English and mathematics. As a result, pupils are prepared well for the next stage of education and later life.
- Pupils do especially well in learning to read. In Year 1, pupils achieve well in the phonics screening check. Results in this check have been consistently higher than the national average for the last three years. Across the school, pupils use this phonics knowledge to help them to read unfamiliar words and to improve their spelling. Consequently, pupils enjoy reading, read frequently and are confident and fluent.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well in class. Their specific needs are identified early and work is modified so that they can progress quickly. The school provides strong support for a small number of pupils who have behavioural difficulties. These pupils receive additional, specialist help within school, equipping them to integrate well in their classes.
- The impact of pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils is positive. These pupils make good progress. Differences in attainment are evident initially in the younger children and those who are new to the school, but have largely diminished by the time these pupils leave Year 6.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do especially well in reading, writing and mathematics. Across the school, every one of these pupils has made at least the expected progress and the majority have exceeded this expectation. The most able are frequently expected to support other pupils in their learning by offering helpful advice. While they do well in topic work over time, there are occasions when they do not produce work of sufficient depth in their topic books.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics over time, but not all pupils are clear about how to carry out calculations accurately in their number work.

Early years provision

Good

- Children are prepared well for starting in Year 1. Teachers and other members of staff work closely with parents and external agencies to provide the right level of support for each child. For example, parents can become involved in their children's learning during 'stay and play' sessions, when they gain an insight into the early years curriculum.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified quickly so that they are given the right level of support to enable them to succeed. There are clear systems to ensure that these children continue to be supported when they move into Year 1.
- Despite the fact that the majority of children start school working below the levels expected for their age, they make good progress, and their attainment is broadly average by the time they join Year 1.
- Children make especially good progress in learning to write. Children have opportunities to write everywhere in the setting. For example, last term, children enjoyed writing letters to their superheroes and making superhero comics using speech bubbles.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged children is used well to enable them to make good progress. Where there are differences in their attainment, these are identified and additional support is provided. For example, last year most of these children needed additional help with their speaking and listening so this was the focus for activities for this group.
- Teachers have a good impact on the children's learning. They keep careful records to show how well children are doing, and plan future work based on the children's particular needs and interests.
- The behaviour of last year's Reception children who have just started in Year 1 is good. The children listen carefully and are keen to learn. They settle to work without fuss and are confident working in their new classes. They say that they feel safe and know how to stay safe.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of what works well and have clear plans to develop aspects of the curriculum that are slightly less effective than others. For example, this year they have identified correctly the need to provide greater opportunities for extending the knowledge and understanding of the most able and for promoting mathematics more strongly.

School details

Unique reference number	102272
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	10011917

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	351
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lorraine Earle
Headteacher	Victoria Morris
Telephone number	01708 451463
Website	www.elmparkprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@elmparkprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 July 2016

Information about this school

- Elm Park is larger than an average-sized primary school.
- There are two Reception Year classes in the early years provision.
- The large majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium grant is above average.
- The proportion of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons, five jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with leaders, other members of staff, a member of the local authority and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors held informal discussions with a number of parents, and scrutinised comments from 17 parents and 90 responses from Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents and checks on the quality of teaching. The inspectors also looked at the school's development plan and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding procedures.
- At the time of the inspection, the new Reception Year children had not yet started school. The judgement on the early years provision was based on a scrutiny of children's work from the previous year, discussions with leaders, observations of pupils in Year 1 and information about how well the children achieved.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rick Barnes	Ofsted Inspector
Bola Soneye-Thomas	Ofsted Inspector

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