

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



28 November 2017

Mrs Justine McMinn
Headteacher
E P Collier Primary School
Ross Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 8DZ

Dear Mrs McMinn

Short inspection of E P Collier Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 November 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in November 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are highly ambitious to provide the best for your pupils. Through careful evaluation, you are very aware of the strengths of the school and have an insightful understanding of the identified areas for continued improvement. The governing body is highly confident in, and supportive of, your leadership. Parents are supportive of the school, with one saying, 'The headteacher is friendly, approachable and compassionate.' Governors have a clear grasp of pertinent areas for further development, and challenge and support the senior leadership team well. You are well supported by the local authority who provide additional training for staff, including in the evaluation of teaching and learning.

Pupils learn in a calm and highly supportive environment. They behave very well and are polite and courteous. The school is well maintained and the displays in the classrooms enrich the learning environment. Pupils are happy in school and say that all staff help them to learn well. One pupil said, 'It's a brilliant school. Teachers are fantastic. They really help you.' Pupils of all ages play well together and are supportive of each other. Year 6 pupils act as good role models to younger children. Pupils told me that they can always find an adult to talk to if they are worried about something. The pupils move around the building in a very orderly manner and are well aware that the school leaders have high expectations. Pupils are appreciative of their well-resourced school, including the library area.

You have successfully addressed the areas previously identified for improvement.

For example, most pupils now make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. You wisely ensure that the staff receive a wide range of professional training, to develop further their teaching skills, including in reading, writing and phonics. Teachers encourage positive attitudes to learning and help pupils to develop skills to learn well.

Improvements to the quality of teaching have been successful. The 2017 provisional key stage 2 results show that the proportion of pupils in Year 6 reaching the expected level in all of reading, writing and mathematics greatly improved compared to the school's 2016 results. Mathematics teaching is a strength of the school, with clear and high expectations from staff, and a strong emphasis on deepening pupils' understanding. You identified that some pupils are capable of making faster progress in writing. Since the last inspection, pupils have had good opportunities to develop their awareness and understanding of the quality of their own writing, and this has contributed well to their improving progress.

The school's systems to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress ensure that staff are well aware of the right next steps to take in teaching and learning so that rates of progress can be improved. Current disadvantaged pupils are making good progress due to the well-considered support that they receive. Attendance is improving. However, the school recognises that there is still some work to do to ensure that pupils' achievement is not hampered by poor attendance.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at E P Collier. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements, including those relating to recruitment, are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders act swiftly when necessary and liaise well with external agencies. Pre-employment checks to ensure the suitability of staff are firmly in place. Statutory requirements are fully met.

Governors are knowledgeable about safeguarding and ensure that this aspect of the school's work is given high priority and meets current requirements. They visit the school regularly to monitor and evaluate safeguarding. Pupils feel safe in school and are well supported by the adults around them. They are aware of the potential dangers when using the internet. Parents also agree that their children are safe at school.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look in particular at the following aspects of the school's work:
 - the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements
 - how effectively leaders ensure that the teaching of phonics in key stage 1 enables all pupils to make good progress
 - the progress made by children in the early years

- how effectively the school promotes good attendance for all pupils
- pupils' achievement in mathematics at key stage 2.
- Provisional performance information for 2017 indicates that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in key stage 1 phonics remains just below the national average. However, school figures have improved compared with 2016. Leaders have accurately evaluated outcomes and made improvements to the teaching of phonics. These include changing the way that phonics is taught in class and providing greater individual support for those pupils who need to catch up. Leaders provide useful training opportunities for parents to work alongside their children, including hosting parents' workshops. Consequently, a higher proportion of pupils compared to last year, currently in Year 1, are on track to reach the expected standard this year.
- The early years leader provides effective leadership, leading wise changes that have had a positive impact on children's progress. The indoor and outdoor environments are well organised, with stimulating learning opportunities. Activities to engage children are targeted well to challenge them to make good progress. Children work productively by themselves and cooperate well with each other, especially when taking turns and sharing equipment. Pupils make good progress, but leaders are rightly aware that the most able children can achieve more.
- You have rightly prioritised improving attendance this year. Leaders accurately monitor and check the attendance of groups very carefully. The governing body checks rates of absence on a regular basis to evaluate the school's systems on improving attendance. The importance of school attendance is communicated through school letters, assemblies and through awarding certificates to pupils. Attendance is improving. However, some pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities do not attend regularly enough.
- Leaders have implemented changes to the teaching of mathematics and this has led to improved outcomes for pupils in key stage two. Teachers make sure that pupils have regular mathematical challenges. As a result, pupils' basic number skills are secure and pupils' understanding of how to solve mathematical problems is developing well. Staff ask effective, open-ended questions to allow pupils to explain their reasoning. In lessons, pupils work with great enthusiasm and perseverance and achieve well.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in phonics is consistently high across key stage 1
- teachers have the highest expectations so that pupils in the early years make consistently good progress, especially the most able, from their starting points
- rates of attendance, in particular those for pupils from vulnerable groups, match or exceed national averages for primary schools.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Reading. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Darren Aisthorpe
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the subject leaders for English and mathematics, three governors, a group of pupils and a representative from Reading Council. I spoke with nine parents on the playground, and considered responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including 42 written comments. I also considered the 26 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and 37 responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire. Together with you, I observed teaching and learning across the school, including reviewing the work in pupils' mathematics and English books. I observed pupils at breaktime and spoke with them informally. I also considered a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding, governance and pupils' progress.