

Queen Eleanor Primary Academy

Queen Eleanor Road, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN4 8NN

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2017

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, conscientiously supported by the deputy headteacher, leads the school well. He has an accurate view of the school's strengths and a clear view of the areas for improvement. Standards are rising across the school.
- The vast majority of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. For some pupils progress is rapid. Pupils' progress in reading, however, is not as rapid as it is in writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher meticulously checks on the quality of teaching and learning. This has led to improvements in the quality of teaching, which is now typically good.
- Teachers plan interesting learning activities. They match the activities they set to pupils' needs. Teachers use skilled questioning to check pupils' understanding.
- Teaching assistants provide high-quality support for pupils. They work well as part of the teaching team and play an important role in accelerating pupils' progress.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic about, and committed to, their respective roles. They make a valuable contribution to improving the school's effectiveness.
- Pupils are fluent in the use of their mathematical skills. Teachers do not, however, provide enough opportunities for pupils to solve problems and to explain their learning.
- All staff help pupils to keep safe. Pupils behave well. They are considerate towards adults and to each other. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Children in the early years make good progress. Adults provide a caring and engaging learning environment. Children work happily and cooperatively together.
- Most pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress. However, procedures to measure which actions best help pupils to catch up are not thorough enough.
- Pupils benefit from a broad and interesting curriculum. However, leaders do not yet check on pupils' progress well enough in the subjects other than English and mathematics.
- The members of the academy trust know the school well. They provide valuable support for school leaders and challenge them appropriately.
- Parents value the school's work. They are particularly pleased with leaders' and staff's communication with them.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the good leadership and management by ensuring that senior leaders:
 - develop and implement a process for checking on pupils' progress in all of the subjects they study
 - check more thoroughly on how effective the different types of support provided to ensure the good progress of the pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are.
- Improve the quality of teaching further by ensuring that teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to:
 - solve problems and apply their reasoning skills in mathematics
 - accelerate their progress in reading.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The relatively new headteacher has created a shared vision and set high expectations for the school. His committed and sensitive approach has gained him the respect of staff and parents. Staff work well together and say they feel valued and well supported. The whole-school team has a strong work ethic. They are determined to improve the quality of teaching and further accelerate pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and areas to improve. Bespoke staff development programmes help to eliminate any weaknesses identified. Pupils typically make good progress throughout the school.
- The headteacher has a sound understanding of the quality of teaching. Procedures for checking the performance of teachers are thorough. The headteacher knows where the strengths are and where improvements are still needed. Leaders use this information well to plan targeted training for staff. School leaders support newly qualified teachers well.
- Subject leaders have a good understanding of their respective roles. They make a large contribution to the development of the school's curriculum. Subject leaders are aware of the strengths and areas for improvement in their subjects. These enthusiastic and committed leaders have introduced some good practice. Subject leaders check teachers' effectiveness. They are confident in the actions they take to help staff refine their teaching approaches.
- Teachers' targets for improvement are demanding. Leaders and governors only award increases in pay if teachers reach these challenging targets. Leaders recognise, however, that some aspects of teaching should be more consistent.
- Systems to check pupils' progress and attainment are thorough. They enable leaders to look at pupils' progress from their different starting points. Leaders are aware that pupils' progress in reading has not been as rapid as progress in writing and mathematics. They also know that the number of pupils who attain at greater depth should be higher. The school's systems help leaders and teachers to identify pupils who fall behind. The vast majority of these pupils are provided with support to catch up and achieve their best.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding well to accelerate disadvantaged pupils' progress and improve their personal development. Leaders check the support they provide for the positive difference it makes on pupils' learning. They adapt the provision to make sure that disadvantaged pupils continue to make good progress.
- The school's curriculum is rich and varied. Leaders have introduced a different approach to teaching subjects other than English and mathematics to provide greater coverage. Leaders have some evidence to show how well pupils achieve in different subjects. However, they do not check pupils' progress well enough to know if they need to provide pupils with any extra support or further challenge.
- Homework and a programme of extra activities add to the school's curriculum. The curriculum also promotes well pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's key values provide a base for this development and are revisited each

week. This contributes to pupils' good understanding of tolerance and respect, and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

- Leaders' work to engage parents in their children's learning is strong. They provide many opportunities for parents to attend the school. In particular, family-learning sessions are well attended. Almost all parents, who responded to the online survey (Parent View), expressed positive views about the school.
- Leaders use the funding from the physical education and sport premium to good effect. Staff and pupils have an increased knowledge of physical education and sport. Pupils enjoy a high-quality programme of sporting activities.
- Leaders support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. However, a few pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not make good progress. Leaders do not measure the effectiveness of their actions well enough to ensure that all interventions are having a positive effect on pupils' learning.
- The academy trust has monitored some important improvements identified at the last inspection, in particular the improved effectiveness of teaching assistants and subject leaders. In addition, leaders have developed the school's marking and feedback policy. Pupils know how to use this system to help them improve. However, while pupils are challenged more in their learning, the number of pupils reaching higher levels has not matched that seen nationally. Some inconsistencies also remain in the quality of teaching.

Governance of the school

- The academy trust has recently reviewed and amended its governance structure. This has improved the effectiveness of the local governing body. A 'rapid improvement board' now provides the school with a group of skilled, knowledgeable and experienced individuals. Members of the trust present a clear vision for the school. They have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and areas to improve. Regular checks and reviews provide detailed information about leaders' effectiveness.
- The academy trust provides the new headteacher with strong and targeted support. Trustees provide a good balance of support and challenge to help school leaders achieve the school's priorities. They ensure that the pupil premium funding and the physical education and sport funding are used well. However, the effectiveness of leaders' actions to improve the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is not monitored thoroughly enough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders' checks to ensure the suitability of staff and volunteers are thorough. Staff are well trained and understand the school's safeguarding policies. For example, they understand how to deal with disclosures and report any concerns they may have. The designated teacher for child protection and safeguarding works well with parents and external agencies. This helps to make sure that pupils receive support when needed and that they are kept safe. Leaders maintain detailed and accurate confidential records.

- The school's curriculum helps pupils develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. Groups of pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they feel safe in the school. Staff are accessible for pupils who may wish to raise a concern. Parents, through the online survey and the school's own surveys, agree that their children are safe. Parents spoken with during the inspection also shared this view.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Since the school was last inspected, the quality of teaching has improved. Teaching is now typically good. Observations of learning, scrutiny of pupils' books and the school's assessment information confirm this. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and pupils are eager to show what they can do.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan interesting learning activities. The vast majority of pupils engage in the tasks teachers set with enthusiasm. Teachers use assessments to plan activities that are well matched to pupils' needs. This provides pupils with opportunities to make rapid progress. For example, in key stage 2 mathematics the teacher provided pupils with tasks set on different levels to help them learn about improper fractions. Occasionally, some teaching does not provide pupils with harder work quickly enough.
- Teachers provide clear explanations and demonstrations of new ideas and vocabulary. Pupils use subject terminology with confidence. Teachers use questioning well to reinforce learning and clarify misconceptions. Often, they use questions to challenge pupils in their thinking and ask them for more detailed explanations.
- Teaching assistants work in harmony with the teaching staff to the benefit of pupils. They provide high-quality support for pupils. Teaching assistants use skilled questioning and provide extra resources to guide pupils in their learning. Many good examples of this were observed during the inspection.
- In writing, teachers use effective strategies to help pupils understand and develop good-quality writing skills. Pupils write with enthusiasm and imagination. For example, pupils in English used detailed 'checkpoints' well to develop their use of harder grammatical skills. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to write at length in their different subjects. Most pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. Leaders are working effectively with teachers to identify and address instances where pupils' presentation is still not good enough.
- Phonics teaching provides pupils with the skills they need to become competent readers. Most of the pupils inspectors listened to reading did so with fluency and understanding. However, this was not true for some of the pupils. Pupils' progress in reading has not accelerated at the same pace as pupils' progress in writing and mathematics. Leaders have reviewed the teaching of reading. There is now a more focused approach on practising the different reading skills.
- Teachers plan mathematics lessons that are well organised and build on pupils' prior learning. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their knowledge and solve problems. At times, pupils are encouraged to explain and prove the accuracy

of their answers. However, they do not regularly use reasoning to explain what they have done and why.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school has a warm, nurturing and friendly atmosphere. Pupils are confident and communicative. They are respectful, courteous and work cooperatively in lessons.
- The vast majority of pupils said they feel safe in school. Leaders ensure that pupils' physical and emotional well-being are catered for well. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe, healthy and fit. Allocated curriculum time for online learning helps pupils understand issues associated with the use of technology. Parents appreciate the care their children receive.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and development are good. The school's values are embedded into daily routines. Leaders use assemblies well to reinforce these values. Pupils engage in charity work and learn about different faiths. They also take part in a young citizen of the year programme.
- Bullying and racism are rare. School records confirm this. Pupils say some bullying and racism does occur. However, most pupils said that staff deal with it when it does happen.
- Leaders provide a wide range of extra activities in which pupils can engage. For example, pupils participate in young enterprise, poetry competitions and music recording sessions. They also visit museums and take part in residential trips, such as to Ypres and the Menin Gate. However, half of the pupils who responded to Ofsted's pupils' survey indicated that they did not engage in the extra activities very often.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and around school. Leaders have paid particular attention to engaging pupils at playtime and lunchtime. Pupils have many opportunities to play different games and they are well supervised. Pupils enjoy their learning and most work conscientiously. They readily offer help if their classmates are stuck.
- The number of pupils given a fixed-term exclusion has reduced. The school's behaviour recording system shows a reduction in the number of incidents of poor behaviour. In discussions with inspectors, most pupils were of the view that behaviour is good. The large majority of pupils respond swiftly to instructions from adults. At times, however, a few pupils become distracted and do not pay full attention to their learning. Most parents agreed that behaviour is good.
- Pupils' attendance has improved but was still below average at the end of the last academic year. Leaders are taking effective action to continue the improving trend. The school's information indicates a further increase for pupils' attendance in the

current year. Leaders are also working effectively with parents to reduce the already small proportion of pupils who are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- From their starting points, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is good. Pupils are well equipped for their next stage of education.
- High-quality phonics teaching ensures that a high proportion of pupils achieve well in the end of Year 1 national phonics screening checks.
- Pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has improved in key stage 1. Their progress is now good. In 2017, the most able pupils attained particularly well in reading and writing. The school's current assessment records indicate that this trend of improvement is likely to continue for current pupils in key stage 1.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. In 2016, the progress pupils made in writing and mathematics was above average. The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard was also above the national average in both 2016 and 2017.
- In key stage 2, pupils' attainment in reading has improved. Their progress in reading, although good, is not as fast as in writing and mathematics. Reading progress has been static for the last two years. However, the school's current assessment records indicate that pupils' progress in reading is now accelerating.
- New leaders have acknowledged that, despite previous actions taken, some pupils have not made rapid enough progress to achieve a greater depth in their learning. This is now improving. More middle-attaining pupils and the most able pupils are now achieving higher standards.
- Leaders provide pupils who speak English as an additional language with effective support. This group of pupils make rapid progress in mathematics. In writing, their progress is similar to other pupils, but their progress in reading has been less rapid. Current pupils who speak English as an additional language are making better progress in their reading than in previous years.
- Throughout key stage 1 and key stage 2, disadvantaged pupils make good progress. At times their progress is more rapid than other pupils, but occasionally it is less rapid. The progress made by pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities varies too much. Some pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make fast progress but for others it is less rapid. Leaders do not check closely enough the support they provide these pupils with to ensure that more of these pupils make faster progress.
- Pupils' attainment in science at the end of key stage 1 was below the national average in 2017. At the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment in science is average. Leaders do not check well enough pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. Leaders have yet to adopt a system to check pupils' progress in the full range of subjects.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader provides strong and determined leadership. She has improved the early years provision since her appointment. The early years leader understands the learning needs of young children. She leads an effective team of adults who share her passion to see young children thrive.
- Children start the Reception Year with skills below those typical for their age. They make good progress. The number of children who reach age-related expectations has increased. Children now enter Year 1 well prepared for their next stage of education.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding is effective. Relationships between adults and children are good. Children behave well and enjoy their learning. They play well together, share resources and take part enthusiastically in the activities adults provide.
- Parents are positive about the early years provision. Leaders make good use of technology to communicate with parents. This is especially helpful when parents speak English as an additional language. Leaders make effective use of other agencies and partnerships to provide children with any extra support they may need.
- Teaching in the early years is consistently good. Adults use questioning well to move children's learning on. For example, the teacher identified a boy's curiosity in magnetism. She used questions effectively to motivate and extend his understanding.
- Adults carefully consider individuals when designing activities to ensure that they meet the children's needs. Assessment systems have become more accurate. To improve assessment further, leaders have recognised that they need to check the accuracy of their assessments with those of other early years settings.
- Leaders place a great emphasis on children's reading, writing and mathematics skills development. In phonics sessions children accurately blend sounds to read words. Adults move the most able children on quickly. Leaders encourage children to write and practise their number skills in many of the play-based activities they provide.
- Adults support well children who speak English as an additional language. Leaders provide a language-rich environment from which this group of children benefit. Disadvantaged children's progress is more varied in the early years. Disadvantaged children make good progress in many of the learning goals. A few, however, make less rapid progress, especially in reading and writing. Leaders are working effectively to improve this.
- The indoor learning environment is stimulating and the outdoor learning complements it. The curriculum provides a range of opportunities for children to develop relationships, make choices and be creative. For example, children sustained and talked about their play together when using modelling clay. Sometimes, however, opportunities to achieve some of the learning goals are not maximised.

School details

Unique reference number	139650
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10031162

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mark Mumby
Headteacher	Daniel Smith
Telephone number	01604 761 200
Website	www.queeneleanoracademy.org.uk
Email address	daniel.smith@queeneleanoracademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 June 2015

Information about this school

- Queen Eleanor is an average-sized primary school. The school is an academy, sponsored by Creative Education Trust. The deputy headteacher was appointed as the headteacher in September 2016. A new deputy headteacher joined the school at the same time.
- Pupils who attend Queen Eleanor Primary come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Just under half of the pupils are White British. Approximately half the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of SEN or an education, health and care plan is also average.

- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club for its pupils.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 15 lessons. Some of this learning was observed jointly with the headteacher. Discussions took place with school staff and members of the trust.
- The inspectors met with two groups of pupils. They considered 87 pupils' responses to Ofsted's online survey and talked with pupils informally. They also listened to pupils reading. Inspectors observed assembly, playtime and the school's breakfast club.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a broad range of evidence, including the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, planning and monitoring documentation, the work in pupils' books, records relating to attendance and behaviour and the school's information on pupils' current attainment and progress in reading, writing, mathematics and a range of other subjects.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised. Inspectors reviewed the school's website to confirm whether it met the requirements on the publication of specified information.
- Inspectors took into account responses from 19 parents and 17 staff to Ofsted's online surveys. Inspectors also reviewed the school's own parental surveys and spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Vondra Mays, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gerry Crofts	Ofsted Inspector
Moira Dales	Ofsted Inspector

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