

Elangeni School

Woodside Avenue, Amersham, Buckinghamshire HP6 6EG

Inspection dates

8–9 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and her deputy have inspired a strong and cohesive team of staff. Their passion and commitment have maintained Elangeni School's exceptionally caring ethos and rich, stimulating curriculum during a period of significant staffing changes.
- Senior leaders work creatively to support and train new staff so that teaching standards across the school are good. Flexible timetabling allows experienced teachers to support new colleagues and ensure that all pupils experience high-quality learning across the full range of subjects.
- Elangeni has particular strengths in the arts, religious education, sports and French. Staff provide pupils with stimulating learning contexts and boost learning through trips, visits and the involvement of visiting experts. As one Year 3 pupil proudly said, 'There is always something to look forward to here.'
- Leaders are outward looking and have benefited from working with other local schools. This has helped to support improvements to assessment and provides a variety of curriculum enrichment opportunities.
- Staff ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the centre of everything they do. Consequently, pupils are very well prepared for their next steps in education and life in modern, diverse Britain.
- Elangeni School offers a very warm and inclusive family atmosphere. Pupils are polite and respectful of each other, and their behaviour is excellent. They are rightly proud of their school and value the friendships they make here.
- Attendance is consistently above the national average for primary schools.
- Outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are good. Pupils make progress in line with the national averages. Pupils' writing skills have significantly improved following a dip in previous years. However, fewer pupils achieve the higher standard by the end of key stage 2 in writing.
- More consistent use of teaching assistants in classrooms is needed to accelerate the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) still further.
- Most parents and carers value the work of the school and were keen to praise the support on offer. However, some parents expressed concerns about the progress their children have made and the quality of communication from the school.
- The governors are a keen and dedicated team. However, many are new to their roles and are not sufficiently informed about progress information to challenge leaders and hold staff to account.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - offering further training to members of the governing body who are new to their roles
 - continuing to improve assessment systems so that governors become better at holding leaders to account for the progress that all groups of pupils make from their starting points
 - ensuring that the school website, and all planning and policies are up to date and reflect the strong practice in school.
- Boost pupils' outcomes by ensuring that teachers more consistently:
 - make effective use of teaching support assistants in class
 - build on the success of interventions by adapting their teaching to accelerate the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND in English and mathematics
 - raise the level of challenge so that more pupils achieve the higher standard by the end of Year 6 than in the past, particularly in writing.
- Enhance and refine communication with parents so that a greater proportion understand how the high-quality support and rich curriculum on offer underpin the progress their children make.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and her deputy have worked tirelessly to ensure that much of the school's first-class curriculum provision has been preserved throughout a challenging period of staffing and recruitment challenges.
- Senior leaders understand the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They apply their expertise and knowledge of the school to create pertinent plans for improvement, involving training and seeking outside support where necessary. This approach ensures that appropriate actions are prioritised and then evaluated effectively.
- Most middle leadership is strong. For example, those with responsibility for leading mathematics, art, physical education (PE) and the provision for pupils with SEND have a clear and accurate overview of their areas of responsibility; they support their colleagues effectively and have well-developed plans for improvement.
- Staff are united in their support of the headteacher. All staff with whom inspectors met, or who responded to the Ofsted survey, think the school is well led and managed. They believe that leaders and governors take staff members' well-being into account and they feel well supported by the school. Staff new to the school feel very well supported by their more experienced colleagues.
- Senior leaders have used flexible timetabling to allow staff with subject expertise to be deployed to maximum effect and ensure that all classes receive a rich and balanced curriculum. In this way, art, PE and French continue to be strengths of the school. However, in other areas, teachers' subject knowledge and planning is not as well developed. This means that, over time, some groups of pupils are not sufficiently challenged in science, technology and history.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted particularly well. The school's values underpin learning and assemblies are used well to promote teamwork, reflection and celebrate success.
- Leaders provide high-quality religious education and have supplemented this with visits to different places of worship. This ensures that pupils are taught to understand and respect a wide range of faiths and cultures. Pupils I spoke with showed a very mature understanding of fundamental British values, and of their importance in society. Pupils' cultural awareness is very effectively promoted through regular opportunities to take part in sports, drama and musical activities in and beyond the school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school who are supported through the pupil premium funding is very small. Leaders have ensured that the additional funding is used appropriately to support pupils' learning and personal development, but their planning for the use of this extra funding lacks enough detail. Similarly, leaders have not ensured that all policies and information on the school's website are up to date.

Governance of the school

- The governors are a committed team who are knowledgeable about the school. Together, governors possess a wealth of relevant skills honed from their experience in

educational, financial and safeguarding careers. This enables them to offer useful support and challenge to leaders.

- Governors are rightly proud of the school's inclusive nature and very rich stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments. Many members of the local governing body visit the school regularly to support reviews of the school's priorities and check these against the improvement plan.
- Governors understand the school's main strengths and areas to develop but they have not sufficiently challenged in some areas. There have been recent changes and some governors are new to their current roles and engage enthusiastically in training. Some further training is needed to support them to have a better understanding of different groups of pupils' progress information. This will enable them to make more robust challenges to leaders and teachers in relation to the progress made by the most able pupils in English and mathematics.
- The information available to governors about the impact of the additional funding received through the pupil premium and the physical education and sport premium is not fully up to date. This limits governors' ability to be fully assured that this funding is used to maximum effect.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Well-managed systems and an effective team approach involving leaders, teachers and office staff ensure that all pupils are kept safe.
- There is a robust system in place to check adults' suitability to work with children and staff qualifications. Regular, high-quality training for all staff is provided by the school on safeguarding matters and staff know how to react if they have any concerns about a child's welfare.
- Clear and comprehensive record-keeping supports work with external agencies, where appropriate, to help vulnerable pupils and their families.
- Leaders carry out detailed risk assessments and regular checks on all aspects of health and safety. This includes reviewing trips and visits and working with governors to conduct regular reviews of site safety. Staff are appropriately qualified in first aid.
- The school's curriculum includes suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about different aspects of safety, including when online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Typically, teachers plan engaging activities which are well matched to pupils' needs and abilities, and this means that they learn and progress well.
- Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour in lessons. There are very positive learning environments across the school and pupils make the most of their time for learning. Pupils respond quickly to instructions and work well individually and in groups. As a result, lessons flow smoothly.
- Pupils are keen, thoughtful and reflective readers. They are confident to tackle challenging texts with clear enjoyment and demonstrate high-level reading skills. Pupils

are well supported in their reading, both at school and at home.

- Teachers give pupils regular feedback in line with the school's policy. This encourages pupils to learn from their mistakes. Pupils are given opportunities to improve their written work. However, assessment is not always used effectively enough to refine teaching to provide sufficient challenge to the most able pupils. Leaders are aware that more opportunities are needed to improve this group's extended writing skills in English and across the curriculum.
- Clear leadership and consistently strong teaching have ensured that attainment and progress in mathematics are good across the school. Effective use is made of assessment and reasoning and problem-solving skills are promoted well. Pupils enjoy mathematics and their books demonstrate high standards and good progress over time.
- In most classes, teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils. They work skilfully alongside teachers to offer both challenge and support where they are needed. However, in a minority of classes, teachers need to make better use of teaching assistants during lessons so that targeted groups of pupils receive higher levels of challenge.
- There is some variability in teachers' subject knowledge in science and some aspects of the wider curriculum across the school. Sometimes, pupils are given tasks that are not suitably pitched towards meeting their needs. Where this happens, some pupils struggle to keep up, while others are not sufficiently challenged to deepen their subject-specific understanding through suitably challenging applications of their literacy skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. As one member of staff, new to the school, reported in the staff survey, 'I can honestly say it's a wonderful school ... children are happy to be here because the teaching team really do care.'
- Pupils benefit from an exceptionally rich range of opportunities to develop their skills and interests beyond the classroom. After-school clubs are well attended and include activities as varied as chess, competitive sports, dance and gardening. In addition, they have the chance to perform to their peers, for example in a talent show, and engage in a wide range of sporting, artistic, musical and cultural visits.
- Elangeni School gained international school status in 2017. Leaders have used this to great effect to provide children with rich learning experiences relating to different faiths and cultures. In addition, pupils have considered the challenges of being a refugee, the importance of recycling and celebrated World Peace Day. This work has underpinned pupils' high levels of empathy and promoted a shared belief in fairness and equality.
- Pupils develop their understanding of democracy and leadership by holding elections for the school council, the eco council or acting as experts to support learning in other classrooms. Pupils told me that they enjoy helping to run lunchtime activities, while

others happily support others at breaktimes.

- Pupils are rightly proud of their school and their own achievements. They speak with genuine affection about their teachers, in whom they have high levels of trust. They wear their uniforms smartly and are very well-mannered towards visitors and each other. They are confident, articulate and love to talk about what they have been learning.
- All pupils say that they feel safe in school and there is someone they can talk to if they have any concerns. Pupils say that teasing or bullying are extremely rare and, when it does happen, they trust staff to resolve it very quickly.
- Pupils are proud to be elected or chosen as e-safety officers or junior road safety officers. Teachers ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Staff share high expectations of behaviour, which are consistently reinforced. Pupils are articulate, confident and polite in lessons and around the school. Learning engages pupils, and relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils are excellent.
- Elangeni is a calm, caring and happy school. Pupils behave exceptionally well in class and feel safe in school. The very rare incidents of low-level disruption or poor behaviour are closely monitored by leaders, who put in place appropriate support when necessary. Consequently, incidents of poor behaviour are rarely repeated.
- On the playground, pupils play with joy and enthusiasm and invite others to play in their games. They welcome visitors, proudly showing off the school's various outside learning resources and environmental areas.
- Pupils link their learning from personal, social and health education to how they should behave. They understand and value the importance of responsibility, kindness and respect and demonstrate these qualities in class and around the school.
- Pupils love coming to school and are rarely absent. As a result, overall attendance and that of groups are consistently high. Excellent behaviour is the norm around the school and there have been no exclusions for several years.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- A high proportion of pupils arrive at the school with high levels of prior attainment. Across the school, the rate of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently good.
- Progress by the end of key stage 2 has been in line with the national average in mathematics for the past two years. Progress in reading was very strong in 2017 and in line with the national average last year. Historically, progress in writing has been weak, but this improved to be in line with the national average last year.
- The school's latest assessments show that current pupils in most year groups are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This was confirmed during the inspection by checking learning in lessons across the school and the work in pupils'

books.

- Across a range of subjects, pupils learn well and acquire a strong body of knowledge and skills. They are well supported in this by the enthusiasm and expertise of their teachers, many of whom have strengths in particular subjects. Examples were seen of teachers skilfully using assessment to boost pupils' oracy skills in French or to nurture better performing and listening skills in music. The sport premium funding has enabled the school to improve its provision, and pupils are proud to be enjoying success in local sporting competitions.
- The small number of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND typically make strong progress from their starting points. This is because these pupils are supported appropriately, and leaders carefully track how well they are doing. Leaders coordinate a range of interventions which support these pupils well in the short term. Refinements to planning, and more consistent use of teaching assistants, are needed to enable these groups to make the accelerated progress needed to catch up with their peers.

School details

Unique reference number	110353
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10084280

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Frances Burke
Headteacher	Alex Burns
Telephone number	01494 721436
Website	www.elangeni.bucks.sch.uk
Email address	office@elangeni.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 January 2009

Information about this school

- Elangeni School is an average-sized junior school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is well below the national average.
- Over the past three years, there has been a period of staffing changes at the school. In addition, several members of the governing body are new to their roles.
- Elangeni School offers a very wide variety of clubs and activities, both before and after school.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out as a result of Ofsted’s risk assessment procedures for exempt schools. This process identified that standards since the previous inspection had declined, so the school was selected for inspection under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was subsequently deemed to be a section 5 inspection under the same Act by Her Majesty’s Inspector, and a full section 5 inspection was then carried out.
- Inspectors visited each of the classrooms to gather evidence to contribute to the evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment. Many of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors heard pupils read, and visited a support session offered before school and an assembly.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and members of the governing body. A telephone call was made to a representative of the local authority to gather its views and inspectors considered reports from external consultants.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their learning and looked at their work across a range of subjects. They spoke to pupils on the playground and during lessons. An inspector met with a group of pupils to gather their views.
- Inspectors considered feedback from 119 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, conversations were held with several parents at the beginning of the second day of the inspection to gather their views. Inspectors also considered the views represented in the school’s own parental surveys and those expressed within six replies to a staff survey.
- A wide range of school documentation was scrutinised, including that relating to policies, self-evaluation, improvement planning, safeguarding, and pupils’ achievement, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors reviewed the record of leaders’ vetting and checks on the suitability of adults to work with pupils and spoke to staff and governors about safeguarding procedures in the school.

Inspection team

Matthew Newberry, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Graham Marshall

Ofsted Inspector

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