

# Inspection of a good school: East Anstey Primary School

East Anstey, Tiverton, Devon EX16 9JP

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Inspection date:

12 January 2023

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The caring and nurturing ethos of East Anstey Primary School is clearly evident. Pupils, staff, parents and carers see the school as a 'family'. Parents comment positively on the support for their child and how well staff understand their individual needs. Staff want the best for pupils. However, the current work to improve the curriculum is in the very early stages of development. Pupils do not yet learn and remember the curriculum well enough.

Pupils enjoy school. There are no concerns from pupils about bullying or poor behaviour. Pupils meet the high expectations staff have of them. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and respectful. Staff model expectations clearly. This leads to pupils, of all ages, supporting and caring for each other. Pupils feel confident that they have a trusted adult to talk to if they have any concerns or worries.

Pupils experience a rich and varied range of opportunities to enhance their learning. Although some of these have been paused due to COVID-19, there is still a focus on increasing pupils' confidence and resilience. For example, pupils enjoy participation in the Exmoor challenge.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have prioritised the development of the curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This has resulted in significant changes, which are not yet embedded. These changes include individual subject leadership and a shift in the understanding of how pupils learn successfully. There is a clear drive for improvement from leaders, including those responsible for governance. They know what they want the impact to be. However, these developments still require action so that gaps in learning are addressed quickly and all pupils, from early years to Year 6, learn as well as they should.

Subject leaders are clearly dedicated to their roles. Some know the expectations of what pupils should be learning well. However, the range of expertise and subject knowledge they have is too variable. Some subject leaders do not fulfil their roles effectively. They do not have a secure overview of their subject or how well pupils learn. Some teachers do not break down learning into smaller steps successfully. Consequently, pupils, including those with SEND, do not build on prior learning well enough. Senior leaders and governors are aware of this and are seeking ways to address it.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with SEND effectively. They know what the challenges are and are proactive in addressing these. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND have appropriate support in place. However, they learn the same underdeveloped curriculum as their peers. As a result, along with their peers, pupils with SEND do not remember important knowledge over time.

Leaders identified the need for a more effective approach to reading. The new programme for phonics has started to impact on how well pupils learn their sounds. They practise the sounds they learn in books matched to their ability. Pupils in class 1 know the routines and expectations of learning new sounds and 'challenge words'. However, this is not fully embedded. Leaders have not checked how secure staff are in their knowledge and expertise to deliver the new phonics curriculum. Consequently, pupils in the earliest stages of reading are not always clear about strategies to support themselves successfully in their reading. Pupils enjoy reading. Older pupils say they read daily. They know how the school helps them read more fluently and with increased comprehension. Pupils can talk about the books and authors they enjoy. They value the time adults spend reading to them.

Pupils, from Nursery through to Year 6, show positive attitudes to their learning. They are eager to learn and use ambitious vocabulary when talking to peers, adults and inspectors. Leaders know the value in pupils' development beyond the academic. They maximise on what pupils can learn from events and experiences by building them into the curriculum. Pupils take part in fundraising opportunities. These help them to learn about the importance of enterprise and working together. These opportunities also ensure that pupils also experience the benefits of being part of a community. Leaders have strengthened pupils' cultural awareness and understanding of diversity in the world beyond their local community. This helps to prepare them for the next stage in their education.

Governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. They know that improvements need to continue. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration for their well-being and workload. Staff value the team they work in and how it supports them to manage the specific demands of working in a small school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders makes sure staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to support them to understand their responsibilities to keep pupils

safe. Staff know pupils and their families well. Leaders work with external agencies where appropriate to ensure that pupils and their families receive the right support as early as possible. Leaders complete appropriate checks during recruitment for new members of staff.

Pupils learn how to keep safe as part of the curriculum. They know how to stay safe online and manage other potential risks. This helps them to feel safe.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The curriculum is not sufficiently developed from early years through to Year 6. Leaders are not clear enough about what they want pupils to learn or how to sequence this effectively. As a result, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and they do not learn as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum design for all subjects is carefully considered, clearly communicated and sequenced across all key stages so that pupils know and remember more over time.
- The school has recently adopted a new phonics programme. This is not yet fully embedded. As a result, there is not a consistent or systematic approach to phonics as part of early reading. Children at the earliest stages of reading do not learn to read as well as they could. They are not fluent or accurate in the strategies they need to support themselves. Leaders need to ensure that the new phonics programme is fully embedded so that there is a rigorous and consistent approach to the early reading curriculum.
- Some subject leaders do not have the capacity to support teachers in their delivery of the curriculum. In addition, they do not have a well-informed and fully accurate view of their subject areas. Consequently, there are too many gaps in pupils' knowledge and pupils do not learn as well as they should. Leaders need to make sure that they have sufficient expertise and time to check how effectively the curriculum is taught so they can impact positively on how well pupils learn.
- Teachers are not secure in their knowledge of how to sequence learning effectively. This means pupils do not build knowledge as well as they could. Leaders need to make clear the knowledge that pupils should learn over time so that teachers can best support pupils to learn the intended curriculum.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2013.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113146
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227168
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	28
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Catherine Jennings
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tim Gurney
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.eastansteyschool.org">www.eastansteyschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised into two mixed-age classes.
- The school is part of the Exmoor Link Federation.
- The school does have provision for two-, three- and four-year-old children.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders from the Exmoor Link Federation, staff and the members of the governing body, including the chair. An inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- An inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors analysed school documentation, including leaders' evaluations and plans for improvement. The inspector scrutinised a range of policies and procedures, including those that relate to the curriculum, SEND, safeguarding and behaviour.
- An inspector listened to the views of parents at the start of the inspection. The responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including three free-text responses, were also considered, along with the responses to the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Leanne Thirlby, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Wendy Marriott

Ofsted Inspector

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