

Inspection of a good school: Ewelme C of E Primary School

Burrows Hill, Ewelme, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 6HU

Inspection date: 22 March 2023

Outcome

Ewelme C of E Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming school where pupils feel happy and safe. Many say that they 'love school, their teachers and friends'. One parent commented that this school is a 'nurturing and supportive environment where children feel respected'.

The school is rooted in the heart of the community. The school buildings contain grade 1 listed buildings, some of which date back to 1437. This gives pupils a deep appreciation of history and the many changes that have taken place over nearly six hundred years.

All pupils know the school's values of being ready, respectful, responsible, reflective and resilient. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding of these values. For example, pupils learned to be ready when leaders arranged for a helicopter to land near the school. Pupils participate in many trips, including residential in Years 5 and 6. These experiences help to develop pupils' self-confidence and responsibility.

Leaders have high aspirations for pupils' academic work and behaviour. Pupils are thoughtful learners and are motivated to succeed. Both in lessons and around the school, pupils are keen to show respect and behave well. Incidents of bullying are rare and leaders are swift to resolve any concerns.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that is ambitious and well sequenced. This helps pupils to build their knowledge over time. In most subjects, leaders have identified the key knowledge that they intend pupils to learn and remember. This begins from the early years, where the building blocks of knowledge and skills that children learn are well planned and link carefully into the Year 1 curriculum.

Staff use a range of teaching strategies to support pupils to learn the curriculum. Leaders identify and meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities

(SEND) with accuracy. Pupils with SEND make strong strides in their learning and achieve well from their individual starting points. Teachers have high expectations of the work that all pupils will cover across different subjects. This supports pupils usually achieving well. However, staff have not had subject-specific training in some subjects. In these subjects, they do not always deepen pupils' knowledge as well as they could. In most subjects, teachers check pupils' knowledge and understanding carefully. However, in a few subjects, staff do not gain an accurate understanding of what pupils already know.

Reading is a priority in this school. Children begin learning phonics as soon as they start in Reception. Pupils who arrive new to the school are helped to catch up quickly. Staff routinely listen to pupils reading every day and they ensure that books are closely matched to the sounds that pupils know. Pupils develop their phonic knowledge well and quickly become fluent readers. Pupils are proud of their reading abilities and they talk confidently about the types of books they enjoy. The school library is well resourced with an inviting range of fiction and non-fiction books.

Leaders have planned a personal development curriculum that supports pupils to be well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils have the opportunity to experience many events, such as dance and music festivals. The school choir takes part in concerts at Dorchester Abbey and Oxford Town Hall. Staff help pupils to understand how to stay physically and mentally healthy. For example, in Year 2 pupils learn about the importance of keeping active and eating a balanced diet. Pupils talk confidently about British values. They learn how voting works by taking part in elections for the school council. Pupils are taught to respect other people who have views that are different from their own.

Pupils behave well and are respectful. There is genuine care and trust between staff and pupils. Reception children quickly learn the class routines that are modelled by older pupils. Incidents of low-level disruption are almost non-existent.

Governors and leaders share an ambitious vision for the school. They fulfil their statutory duties well and hold leaders to account for the school's performance. Staff are proud to work at the school. They speak highly of the support that leaders provide and say that leaders take account of their workload and work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff are well trained so they can identify any early signs that have an impact on pupils' safety and well-being. Staff act on concerns quickly. The headteacher works closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get the help and support they need.

Pupils feel safe. They know they can talk to a trusted adult if they have any worries. Some have recently taken part in a junior citizenship scheme where they explored scenarios about keeping safe on the roads, railways, when using the internet and at home.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A few subjects are underdeveloped. This means that staff do not emphasise and then check that pupils have learned the most important content. Leaders should make sure that subject leaders precisely identify the skills and knowledge they intend pupils to learn and that staff check pupils' understanding and recall of this knowledge.
- Curriculum leaders have not always had sufficient subject-specific training. This means that pupils' knowledge is not deepened as successfully as it could be because staff have not developed their subject expertise. Leaders should ensure that staff have had sufficient training so that the knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember is implemented effectively.

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 October 2012.

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

Unique reference number	123197
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10256438
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Ryding and Sam Masters
Headteacher	Joseph Ottaway
Website	www.ewelmeprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	3 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There is a before- and after-school club managed by the governing body.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England school within the Diocese of Oxford. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, was in September 2017. The next section 48 inspection is due in 2024.

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 met with the headteacher and other staff. The lead inspector met with a co-chair of the governing body and had telephone calls with a representative from the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the

curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils read with a familiar adult. Inspectors also looked at a range of curriculum documents, pupils' books and displays. The inspectors met with pupils throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day. The views of staff were gathered through discussions and Ofsted's online survey.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents, including the school's single central record. There was a meeting with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors spoke with staff about the school's procedures and systems for safeguarding pupils. The inspectors discussed with pupils how the school teaches them how to keep safe, including when on the internet.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Kimberley Kemp

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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