

Inspection of a good school: Eastover Primary School

Wellington Road, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 5EX

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2023

Outcome

Eastover Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and staff strive to live out the school's aim of pupils 'discovering and growing together'. They work hard to ensure the school is inclusive and provides the pastoral support that pupils need. As a result, pupils feel safe and happy at this school.

Pupils broaden their knowledge of the world through many activities that take learning beyond the classroom. For example, pupils take part in trips to places such as art exhibitions, the theatre and a farm. They also enjoy a wide range of after-school clubs. This includes activities such as sports, forest school and mindfulness.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of all pupils' behaviour. Pupils typically respond well to this. In Reception, children work together and follow well-established routines with minimal support from staff. Older pupils concentrate well on their learning in class and take pride in the presentation of their work. Pupils enjoy their playtimes and look after each other. Bullying rarely happens. When problems do occur, leaders take decisive action to stop poor behaviour. However, they also provide the support that some pupils need to improve their behaviour.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and well sequenced. It is strongest where it develops knowledge step by step and is tightly matched to the aims of the curriculum. For example, the curriculum builds pupils' knowledge of the different areas of scientific enquiry. This helps pupils to learn a variety of approaches to answer scientific questions. However, leaders know the curriculum needs strengthening in some subjects, but this work is not yet complete.

The early reading curriculum starts at the beginning of the Reception Year. The curriculum breaks learning into small steps that are gradually introduced and practised. Teachers model sounds accurately. The books that pupils read match the sounds they are learning.

Pupils receive extra teaching if they need help to keep up. This is helping pupils to learn to read fluently.

Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach. They present learning clearly and break down complex ideas well. This supports pupils' learning, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, while producing observational drawings, pupils learn a number of ways to use 'line' to create different effects. Pupils use this knowledge to improve their work. Teachers also model important vocabulary set out in the curriculum. However, pupils do not always get enough opportunity to practise using the language they have learned. This results in some pupils finding it difficult to explain the concepts they are learning.

Leaders carefully consider how the early years curriculum prepares pupils for key stage 1. For example, teachers use stories to inspire an interest in art and to learn about famous artists. Pupils also use readily available art resources to explore art ideas in their play.

In English and mathematics, teachers use assessment well to identify pupils who have fallen behind. Teachers then adjust learning to close gaps in pupils' knowledge. The published outcomes for mathematics, for example, reflect the success of this strategy. However, in some subjects, effective assessment systems are not yet in place. As a result, leaders do not know how well pupils learn the most important knowledge in these subjects.

Leaders support pupils' personal development well. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. They know not to share sensitive information on the internet and how to respond to negative incidents. Pupils know that they can share worries with staff in school, who are always willing to help. They say that they learn about right and wrong from their teachers. This reflects the school's focus on encouraging pupils to be self-reflective. This helps pupils to develop their self-control and care for others. Pupils learn the importance of respecting diverse cultures, faiths and backgrounds through their work in geography and religious education.

Governors act strategically to create an inclusive school. This informs school development and ensures that leaders have the resources they need to support pupils' needs. For example, the school offers therapeutic support to those who need it. Leaders have forged a strong team ethos which supports the well-being of staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff are appropriately trained. They ensure that there are effective systems in place to report and record concerns. Staff understand the importance of their roles and responsibilities. They use the school's systems effectively. Leaders know when to seek advice from external agencies and when to escalate concerns. Pastoral leaders provide effective support for pupils who need additional help. Governors carry out checks on safeguarding practice.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is being redesigned as the sequencing of knowledge needs to be strengthened. This is because the current sequencing of knowledge does not always enable pupils to reach all the aims of the curriculum. Leaders need to ensure that these curriculums are carefully sequenced so that pupils build their knowledge as well as they can.
- In some subjects, fully effective systems for checking pupils' understanding are not in place. As a result, leaders do not know how well pupils learn the most important knowledge in the curriculum. Leaders need to ensure that assessment identifies what pupils know and what is not yet understood and remembered. Leaders need to use this information to adapt the curriculum to support pupils' learning further.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2017.

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	123679
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10268721
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	412
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Beryl Cockerell
Headteacher	Nicola Darby
Website	www.eastoverschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school provision.
- The school does not currently use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, school leaders, other school staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design.
- For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector talked to pupils, staff and leaders about how the school supports the safety of pupils.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour when arriving at school, in lessons, at lunchtime and during breaktimes. The inspector met senior leaders to discuss the school's approach to behaviour management and how staff respond to behaviour incidents.
- The inspector reviewed and sampled leaders' checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. With leaders, he discussed behaviour records, support plans for pupils with SEND, and safeguarding records.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and spoke with parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Gareth Simons, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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