

Inspection of Ecchinswell and Sydmonton Church of England Primary School

Ecchinswell, Newbury, Berkshire RG20 4UA

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

This is a highly inclusive school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are particularly well included, as staff understand their specific needs. Staff place great emphasis on knowing every child well. This is recognised by pupils, who say that they feel valued by their teachers and that they know everyone in the school. Pupils comment on the uniqueness of each other. They feel this helps to contribute to the vibrancy of their school.

Pupils have positive relationships with each other and staff. As a result of this, pupils feel happy and safe. These relationships develop from the early years. Pupils show consideration for one another in classrooms and on the playground. They understand the importance of the STAR values of 'stickability, teamwork, aiming high and resilience'. They strive to achieve these in all they do.

The curriculum is well designed to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. Pupils learn well because teachers present information clearly. This helps pupils to understand key content. Pupils are enthusiastic about their school. They enjoy reading and love the vast range of books in their library. They know these books have been especially chosen to reflect their varied interests.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve and be prepared for future learning. This is reflected in the well-designed curriculum. As a result of carefully considered planning, pupils learn well in the mixed-age classes. Leaders identified that outcomes in writing were not good enough. They took swift action to change the curriculum. They are now embedding a new system, which is improving pupils' writing skills.

Leaders have a strong focus on ensuring that children begin to learn as soon as they join the school in the early years. Here, children are enthusiastic about their learning across the provision. They enjoy, for example, taking turns in the role-play area to book holidays for their customers or finding minibeasts in the outdoor area. At times, however, adults in the early years miss opportunities to extend children's understanding. During activities, staff do not always intervene quickly enough to develop their vocabulary.

Teachers ensure that pupils understand the key concepts they study. They use models to help pupils grasp content and questioning to check pupils' understanding. In most subjects, resources are well chosen to support all learners. In a few subjects, teachers do not always follow the planned steps of learning rigorously. This means that some pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Leaders make sure that pupils with SEND can learn alongside their peers. They do this by ensuring that all staff are well trained and have a strong understanding of

different types of need. As a result, teachers adapt learning appropriately and provide additional support, where needed. There is an emphasis on early identification of pupils with SEND. Staff use a range of strategies effectively to help pupils learn well. This contributes to the inclusive culture of the school, which is evident.

Leaders have successfully prioritised reading. They have an ambition for every pupil to become a fluent reader as soon as possible. This is being achieved through the consistent approach used by all staff. Children begin to learn phonics in the first week of school. All staff follow the agreed approach to teaching early reading. This helps pupils to learn to read quickly. Pupils read books that are matched to sounds they have learned. As a result of this, they see themselves as readers from the early stages of learning to read.

Pupils understand the importance of the school rules. They are proud to follow these. Mutual respect permeates through the school. This is modelled by adults and pupils alike. Pupils report that they are encouraged to demonstrate the school values in all they do. This helps to create a calm and positive environment, where everyone can learn. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic and engaged in their learning.

Pupils' personal development is developed in a deliberate and considered way. Leaders have thought about how the curriculum can support pupils to build character as they journey through the school. Pupils learn about relationships in an age-appropriate way. They talk positively about the opportunities they have to represent the school and play an active role in school life. House captains are proud to fulfil their job, and the school council plays a significant part in organising events. Pupils value 'Wellbeing Wednesdays'. They talk maturely about the importance of being mentally and physically healthy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors, prioritise safeguarding effectively. The approach to safeguarding is tenacious. There is a clear understanding that pupils may be exposed to risks outside school. Leaders have ensured that all staff are well trained and remain up to date about key issues related to safeguarding. All staff are vigilant. They know what to do if they notice anything concerning and are confident that all concerns are taken seriously.

There is a strong emphasis on educating pupils in how to stay safe and what to do if they find themselves in an unsafe situation.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the intended curriculum is not always implemented in line with leaders' expectations. This means that teachers do not always focus on the most important information that pupils must remember, and there are small gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders must ensure that the specific content that must be covered is understood by all staff.
- In the early years, adults do not always extend children's understanding of key concepts through targeted interactions. This means that children are not consistently exposed to a broad, rich vocabulary. Leaders need to continue to ensure that staff in early years have the skills needed to intervene effectively during learning activities.

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	116285
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10242162
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	55
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kathy Gordon
Headteacher	Sharon Pole
Website	www.ecchinswellsydmonton.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Winchester.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 the assistant headteacher. They also met with staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke with a representative from Hampshire local authority.

- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- Inspectors also reviewed curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other subject areas.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- The inspection team considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 14 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional seven free-text responses. An inspector talked with some parents on the first morning of the inspection.
- The inspection team met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school development plan and pupil premium funding plan.

Inspection team

Sara Staggs, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Stephen Jackson

Ofsted Inspector

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