

Inspection of a good school: Ellistown Community Primary School

Whitehill Road, Ellistown, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 1EN

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 July 2023

Outcome

Ellistown Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They say that their lessons are fun and describe 'the joy of getting more knowledge'. They enjoy 'dance breaks' to refresh their brains and the active playtimes that they share with their friends. Parents are highly supportive of the school, and many say that they 'cannot fault it at all'. One parent summed up these views when they said: 'This school is a home for our family.'

The school rules are understood by all. Pupils are generally highly attentive in class. The youngest children quickly follow well-established routines. Pupils understand that some of their classmates need more help to make the right choices with their behaviour. They are proud of the way they work together - for example, to earn treats at the Year 6 camp out. Pupils know the school's values well. They say, 'This school makes you into a better person.'

Pupils know about different types of bullying. They say that adults at the school help them to resolve any disputes quickly. Older pupils speak with pride about their roles as playground buddies, who make sure that younger pupils always have someone to play with.

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

Leaders are determined that every child will quickly become a fluent reader. To this end, a new phonics curriculum is now in place. All staff have been trained, and there is a common approach to teaching. Sounds are modelled well. Children in the Reception Year make strong progress. They learn to recognise and blend sounds together efficiently. They use this knowledge when they write notes in class. Staff pay close attention to how children write letters. They make sure that children form them correctly.

Pupils who need help to catch up get it. Staff know how to provide the right support during these lessons for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Usually, the books that pupils read match the sounds they know. Occasionally, the books that pupils read contain sounds that pupils have not fully secured. There is a special time every day for pupils to read together, both individually and as a class. Teachers use this time to help pupils encounter new vocabulary. Older pupils explain that a precise knowledge of the meaning of words helps them to picture in their head what the author wants them to imagine.

Teachers value the training they have received to teach mathematics well. They say that they have had all the help they need to learn 'The Ellistown Way' of being a teacher. The curriculum is organised well. Pupils' knowledge deepens with practise. For example, younger pupils use money when they revisit counting in multiplications of two, five and 10. Older pupils use their knowledge of how to divide by 1,000 when they convert millilitres to litres. Teachers check what pupils can remember. They make sure that pupils get help to refresh their memories and fill gaps. Pupils, including those with SEND, say that this helps them to stay on top of what they are learning.

Pupils enjoy the broad curriculum. The youngest children make detailed designs of vehicles and label them. Pupils in key stage 1 can explain how making a moon buggy out of plastic bricks helped them to find out how axles work. Some parts of the curriculum, such as learning about healthy eating, are sequenced well so that pupils revisit knowledge and build on it. In other parts of the curriculum, this is not as clear. For example, leaders have not clearly identified what pupils will need to know and be able to do in order to undertake more challenging design problems in key stage 2.

Leaders want to 'spark an interest' in pupils. Much thought goes into the new experiences they plan. For example, pupils learned about new aspects of the arts as part of a residential visit. Some pupils were inspired by what they learned about 'stop/go animation'. They run a club and share their knowledge with others. Pupils say that one of the best aspects of their school is that everyone is included. They explain that differences are to be celebrated and that all are welcome.

Staff, including those who are new to teaching, feel exceptionally well supported. They say that leaders, including governors, are highly mindful of their workload and well-being. They feel appreciated and rewarded and are willing to work together as a team to make the school the best it could possibly be for the pupils and families.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are highly vigilant and tenacious. They challenge decisions made by external agencies where leaders feel that these are not in the best interests of the child. Staff are constantly alert to signs that pupils might be at risk and act on these without delay. All staff understand their responsibility to record and report these.

Leaders check that pupils feel safe at school. They act on what pupils say. Pupils learn about the risks they might face as they become increasingly independent. They

understand why they should protect personal information and the challenges that peer pressure presents.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not identified precisely what pupils need to know and be able to do in a few areas of the curriculum. Occasionally, pupils do not build on prior learning as well as they might. Leaders should continue the review of these subjects that is already in place to improve the precision with which disciplinary knowledge is sequenced. They should ensure that staff have the subject knowledge they need and check that pupils are building their knowledge over time.
- A few books do not match the sounds that pupils know as well as they could. A small number of pupils do not always get the chance to practise blending these familiar sounds so that they can become fluent and confident readers. Staff should continue to thoroughly check all the books that pupils have to make sure that they provide the right opportunities for them to learn to decode and blend words fluently.

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 October 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	119914
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10254914
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	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Clive Taylor
Headteacher	Simone Fellows
Website	www.ellistown.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	31 October to 1 November 2017 under section of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up her position in January 2020.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school has a breakfast club and after-school club, which are run by the governors.

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 leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, and design and technology. This involved meeting with subject leaders, visiting lessons, speaking with pupils, and scrutinising samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and the school leadership team. She met with the chair of governors and other members of the

governing body. The inspector met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and curriculum leaders.

- The inspector met with leaders responsible for safeguarding. She reviewed records and documentation, including the single central register. She spoke with pupils and staff.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the end of the day. She took account of the opinions expressed through the Ofsted Parent View survey.
- Groups of staff met the inspector. She took account of the responses to the pupil and staff surveys.
- The inspector visited playtimes and lunchtimes. She spoke with groups of pupils, both formally and informally, during the inspection. The inspector visited the breakfast club at the beginning of the day.

Inspection team

Hazel Henson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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