

# Inspection of a good school: Eckington CofE First School

School Lane, Eckington, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 3AU

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Inspection dates: 18 July 2023

## Outcome

Eckington CofE First School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

This is a small but happy school. Governors, parents and pupils describe it as having a 'family feel.' Pupils say learning is fun. They like and trust their teachers. They know that staff will help them if they have any worries. Leaders work hard to involve parents in their child's education and in school life. Parents appreciate this. Many commented on the extensive enrichment opportunities the school offers.

High expectations stem from the headteacher. They are shared by every staff member. Pupils rise to these expectations in terms of behaviour and achievement. They are polite and very respectful. They demonstrate exemplary attitudes to learning. Everyone contributes to lessons and there are no disruptions.

Staff have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of every pupil. They make sure that pupils' safety and well-being are their top priority. For example, leaders deal promptly with any minor disagreements or reports of bullying. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure at school.

Staff provide a rich variety of opportunities to develop pupils' character and interests. Innovative clubs include bellringing and 'quidditch'. Other activities range from bell-boating to visiting different places of worship. Many take on additional responsibilities, such as learning ambassadors or house captains.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about how to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of pupils. They have developed an ambitious curriculum for pupils from the early years to Year 5. Leaders have identified the precise knowledge, skills and important vocabulary that pupils must learn in all subjects. Children in the early years get off to a strong start, particularly in reading and mathematics. Staff ensure that they have the foundation blocks necessary to build their future learning. Pupils in all key stages achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Teachers have good subject knowledge and present the curriculum content clearly to all pupils. They regularly check pupils' understanding and achievement during lessons. They provide helpful feedback and address misconceptions where needed. However, leaders' systems to check what pupils remember in foundation subjects are less well developed. This means that staff are unsure how well pupils have deepened their knowledge of the content and concepts identified.

There are effective systems in place to identify pupils with SEND. Leaders work in close partnership with parents and specialists to meet the needs of individuals. Pupils follow the same curriculum as their classmates. Teachers work with these pupils before the lesson to give them a head start. They adapt tasks and resources to ensure that pupils can access the work and achieve as well as they should. Pupils with SEND are fully included in lessons and school life.

Leaders have rightly prioritised reading. They are determined that all pupils should learn to read and enjoy books. They closely monitor the quality and consistency of how well reading is taught. The curriculum is supported by high-quality texts and books of different genres. Staff have been well trained to teach phonics. Children in the early years quickly learn the early letters and sounds they need to read simple words and sentences. Extra support is provided for those who struggle so that they do not fall behind. As a result, most pupils become confident and fluent readers.

Staff rarely use sanctions because pupils behave so well. This is because pupils are clear about the routines and expectations in place, including in the early years. Behaviour around school is calm and orderly. Pupils make good use of the well-equipped playground at breaktimes. All age groups play happily together, and pupils are well supervised.

The promotion of pupils' personal development is another of the school's strengths. Pupils have a strong understanding of what diversity and equality mean. They also have a good appreciation of religions and faiths that are different to their own. Pupils are equally well supported to look after their mental and physical health. They know what constitutes a healthy relationship, and the importance of a good diet and regular exercise.

Staff are happy and proud to work at the school. They value leaders' and governors' strong support for their well-being. They also appreciate the regular training and development they receive. Leaders have taken steps to ensure that staff workload is reasonable. All staff are committed to caring for pupils and providing the best education they can. Morale is extremely high.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding sits at the top of leaders' agenda. They have established a strong culture of safeguarding. They ensure that staff receive regular training which equips them to recognise and report signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff record all incidents.

Records are regularly reviewed by leaders to detect changes in pupils' behaviour. Leaders respond promptly and seek any external agency support needed.

Pupils are taught about online safety and how to stay safe in the community. This includes water, rail and road safety. Pupils are confident to report any concerns to a trusted adult in school.

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

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

- Systems to assess pupils' learning are not fully developed in all foundation subjects. This means that teachers do not consistently have a secure enough understanding of whether pupils have learned all the essential subject knowledge and skills set out in the school's curriculum. Leaders should further develop their systems to check how well pupils learn and retain crucial information in all subjects.

## **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 a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some 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 May 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **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>	116806
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227013
<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 10
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Ruth Kessell
<b>Headteachers</b>	Sarah Roberts and Louise Bishop
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.eckingtonfirstschool.co.uk">www.eckingtonfirstschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 March 2017 under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher is contracted for four days a week and a co-headteacher covers the fifth day.
- The governing body added nursery provision for three- to four-year olds in January 2018.
- The school has a Church of England ethos. The religious character of the school was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in June 2017. The school's next section 48 inspection is due in the 2024-2025 academic year.
- The school does not use any 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders and all teaching staff. A meeting was held with five members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and physical education (PE). Inspection activities in these subjects included: lesson visits, discussions with staff and pupils, meeting with subject leaders, and work scrutiny. Curriculum planning and pupils' work in art and history were also checked. The lead inspector observed pupils in key stage 1 reading to a member of staff.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. Minutes of governors' meetings and reports from local authority improvement advisers were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors looked at records of attendance and behaviour. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school and talked to them informally about behaviour, bullying, and welfare.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- The inspectors talked to parents at the end of the school day and considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed the responses to the staff and pupil surveys and gathered their views through discussion.

### **Inspection team**

Heather Simpson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Paul Whitcombe

Ofsted Inspector

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