

Inspection of Eversholt Lower School

Church End, Eversholt, Milton Keynes, Bedfordshire MK17 9DU

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Gaynor Miller. The school is part of the Eversholt Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by the board of trustees, chaired by Alik Goodman.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Eversholt Lower School as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. They are motivated by the school motto of 'believe, achieve and succeed'. Pupils are kind, polite and encouraging of each other. They are proud of their school and include everyone. They accept that everyone is different. All opportunities arranged by the school are available to all pupils. However, currently, pupils have access to a limited number of after-school clubs.

Most pupils behave well and concentrate in lessons. They work hard and thrive on sharing their learning. Pupils want to do as well as they can. Many live up to the school's high expectations of them. Overall, pupils leave well prepared for learning in middle school.

Pupils enjoy the space and the wide range of activities available at playtimes. Older pupils have several leadership opportunities available to them, including house captains, sports ambassadors, and prefects. Pupils know and understand the democratic process used to allocate roles. They are proud to have a role and ensure that they fulfil it. This helps to develop their confidence and sense of responsibility before they move on to middle school.

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

The school has developed a curriculum suited to its pupils. In most subjects, the knowledge that pupils should learn has been organised so that it builds year on year, starting in the early years. Staff have secure knowledge and teach these subjects well. Pupils make strong progress in these subjects. However, in a few subjects, the knowledge and vocabulary that pupils should learn are not as clearly identified. Staff do not highlight this important knowledge, so pupils do not remember it, and they do not make as much progress as they could.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are exceptionally well supported. There is a wealth of knowledge of different needs within the school. Staff identify pupils' needs early, ensuring that all pupils get the support they need quickly. Pupils with SEND are able to access the curriculum due to adaptations made by teachers. This means they learn successfully alongside their peers and make progress.

The school actively promotes reading from when children start in the early years. Phonics and reading are taught well. Pupils read books that are matched accurately to the sounds they are learning. This ensures that pupils are developing their confidence by using their phonics knowledge. The school provides information so that parents can support pupils' reading at home. Most pupils are fluent readers by the time they leave school.

Pupils enjoy reading. They have access to a wide range of texts within the school and class libraries. The school encourages pupils to complete the school reading challenge. This encourages pupils to read new authors and expand their knowledge of other topics.

The school sets clear expectations for pupils' behaviour. The school values of 'ever ready, ever respectful, and ever safe' are in place to reinforce this. Pupils know these expectations and work hard to achieve them. This ensures that there is a calm environment. However, at times, a few pupils disengage from their learning and become disruptive, which is not always addressed by staff.

Pupils are an integral part of the local and wider community. Pupils collect food for food banks, and the choir sings for local elderly residents during luncheons. They raise money for charity and sing for large audiences. Pupils demonstrate respect and responsibility when taking part in these activities. However, there is a limited number of extra-curricular opportunities like clubs. Pupils have enjoyed and benefitted from the opportunities they have had.

Staff at this small school cover many roles. They are skilful and knowledgeable of their roles. Trustees know the school well. They challenge staff to ensure the school vision is achieved. Staff are well supported by the school, and their workload and well-being are carefully managed. This ensures that the school is a happy place to work.

Parents are extremely supportive of the school. They have opportunities to have their say and feedback their experiences to the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school ensures that it keeps pupils safe from harm. There was oversight in the training for the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and staff who deputise in this role. Relevant staff had completed other training in keeping children safe in education. Before the end of the inspection, the school ensured that relevant, up-to-date DSL training was in place.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not ensured that the DSL training has been kept up to date through appropriate refresher training. The school should ensure that arrangements are put into place to ensure that the DSL training does not lapse again.
- In a few foundation subjects, the school's curriculum plans do not identify the knowledge and vocabulary that pupils should learn as clearly as in other subjects.

This means that teachers do not emphasise this important knowledge when teaching and planning activities, so pupils do not remember it easily. The school should ensure that curriculum plans precisely identify the important knowledge and vocabulary that pupils should learn in each subject.

- The number of extra-curricular clubs available is limited. Pupils cannot develop all their talents and interests. The school should ensure that a wider range of extra-curricular opportunities that reflect pupils' interests is available.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	137555
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10255024
Type of school	Primary
Age range of pupils	4 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	72
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair of trust	Aliki Goodman
Headteacher	Gaynor Miller
Website	www.eversholtschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Eversholt Lower School opened as an academy on 1 October 2011.
- The predecessor school, also called Eversholt Lower School, was inspected by Ofsted in January 2009 and was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The headteacher took up her substantive position in September 2020 having been interim headteacher since April 2019.
- The school operates its own breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is an academy. It refers to its trustees as governors on the school website and in communications with parents.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector spoke with governors from the governing body and with the school improvement advisor.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils by speaking to them during lessons, in the dining hall and at breaktimes. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of staff, to gather their views of the school. Twelve responses to Ofsted's staff survey were also considered.
- The inspectors considered 50 responses, including free-text submissions, to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Katie Devenport, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Bridget Harrison

His Majesty's Inspector

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