

# Inspection of Elmridge Primary School

Wilton Drive, Hale Barns, Altrincham, Cheshire WA15 0JF

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Inspection dates: 28 and 29 November 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 16 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. 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.

The head of school is Rebecca Bolton. This school is part of Bright Futures Educational Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), John Stephens, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Daniel Rubin. There is also an executive principal, Gary Handforth, who is responsible for this school and two others.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Smiling, confident, happy and friendly pupils feel at ease in this school. They look out for one another. Pupils value the diversity in the school. For instance, they talk about each member of the school being unique.

The school has high expectations of pupils' achievement. This is evident in the newly designed broad and ambitious curriculum. In the main, pupils achieve well.

Pupils are well cared for and kept safe at Elmridge. Staff model the considerate conduct that they expect from pupils. Older pupils take on monitoring responsibilities to help ensure that the school rules are followed by others. Younger pupils look up to the older ones as their role models. The school has recently made changes to the behaviour policy. Pupils, therefore, understand what is expected of them and they behave sensibly.

Pupils live out the school's value of collaboration. In early years, children work together to solve problems. Pupils are highly supportive of one another. They gladly celebrate each other's successes. Pupils are proud of the contributions that they make to the school community, such as designing the décor in the refurbished library.

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

Trustees and governors have a clear and accurate oversight of the school's strengths and areas for development. Since the appointment of the head of school last year, there has been a period of rapid change. This has been supported successfully by the trust. In some areas, although changes have been made, it is too early to be able to measure the impact of them.

There is now a robust curriculum in place, including in the early years, which has been carefully put together to allow pupils' knowledge to build over time. The school has considered the knowledge and concepts that pupils should learn and when they should learn these. Pupils can successfully recall their recent learning. However, due to a previously weak curriculum, a small number of pupils have gaps in their knowledge and struggle to make links in their learning.

The trust has been instrumental in developing teachers' expertise and subject knowledge. Teachers are passionate about their subjects. They explain ideas clearly. However, on occasion in some subjects, teachers do not provide appropriate activities to deliver the curriculum. This means that at times, pupils do not have opportunities to apply their learning. Consequently, some pupils do not learn as well as they could in these subjects.

The school has processes in place to swiftly identify any additional needs that a pupil may have. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) immerse themselves in school life. They learn the same curriculum as their peers.

Nevertheless, sometimes teachers do not make appropriate adaptations to pupils' learning. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could.

Reading is a high priority at this school. Children in the early years love hearing stories and listening to rhymes. Pupils can be found engrossed in a book during breaktime. They read often and share a passion for books. The school introduced a new phonics programme last year. Teachers are still building their early reading expertise but, on the whole, the programme is delivered consistently well. This helps pupils to read confidently and fluently.

Assessment strategies are used successfully to check how well pupils have learned phonics. This assessment information is used to provide tailored support for pupils who are struggling. It is early days, but already, the positive impact on pupils is evident. However, in most other subjects, assessment strategies are less developed. Teachers do not systematically check how well the curriculum has been learned. This means that sometimes pupils have gaps in their knowledge that go unnoticed.

The school has a robust approach to improving attendance. Pupils' attendance at school is therefore above average and is rising. Pupils are extremely articulate and express themselves well. They display excellent attitudes to learning and engage enthusiastically in lessons.

The planned activities and opportunities for pupils' personal development help to prepare them successfully for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about different religions and enjoy celebrating each other's religious festivals. There are plentiful opportunities for discussion that allow pupils to explore morality. Children in early years understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils benefit from a careers fair, which widens their knowledge of different careers. They have high aspirations for the future.

Staff spoke highly of the support that they receive from the school which helps them to develop their teaching practice. This makes them feel valued. They are united in their vision of providing a high-quality education for pupils. Staff have welcomed and embraced the recent changes made in the school to improve the quality of education.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- At times, some teachers do not always choose the most appropriate pedagogical approaches. Some pupils do not have the opportunity to apply their knowledge. As a result, a small number are not able to consolidate their learning. The school

should ensure that staff are well trained and supported to deliver the curriculum effectively.

- Across the curriculum, some teachers do not systematically check on how well pupils have learned the intended curriculum. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their learning that go unchecked. The school should ensure that it finalises its assessment strategies so that staff can check how well pupils have learned the curriculum.
- The school has not ensured that some staff know how to adapt the curriculum effectively for pupils with SEND. From time to time, this hinders how well pupils with SEND achieve. The school should ensure that staff understand how to adapt the curriculum effectively for pupils with SEND.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138654
<b>Local authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211834
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	224
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>CEO</b>	John Stephens
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Daniel Rubin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rebecca Bolton
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.elmridge.bright-futures.co.uk">www.elmridge.bright-futures.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 December 2007

## Information about this school

- The school became part of the Bright Futures Educational Trust in 2021. Since then, there have been some changes to the local governing body.
- The head of school took up post in September 2022.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for its pupils.

## 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 that 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 held discussions with the head of school, other senior leaders and staff. The lead inspector met with the CEO, trustees and representatives of

the local governing body. She also held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited lessons in some other subjects 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 observed pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan and minutes of local governing body meetings.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View including the free-text responses. They spoke to parents at the start of the day. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Jenny Jones, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gillian Crompton

Ofsted Inspector

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