

Inspection of Queen Emma's Primary School

Burwell Drive, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 5JW

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Victoria Musson. This school is part of the Mill Academy, which means other people in the trust also have a responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Wendy Hemmingsley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Claire King.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are thriving at this kind, nurturing and caring school. One pupil represented the views of many when they stated, 'The school helps me to become the best I can be.' There is a strong sense of community, which results in pupils feeling happy, safe and well looked after. Pupils know there is always someone to talk to if they need help.

The school has clear expectations for pupils' achievement, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils behave well and work hard. Teachers present learning in inspiring and engaging ways, which motivates pupils' curiosity and eagerness to learn. From early years onwards, pupils take pride in their work and achieve well.

Pupils enjoy the range of important leadership opportunities available to them, such as being school councillors, classroom monitors and playground leaders. Breaktimes are filled with excitement, with pupils playing with the wide range of resources and activities, including large tyres and scooter boards. Pupils are polite and courteous to their peers and adults, showing respect and kindness.

The extensive range of school trips and opportunities, including learning first aid and CPR, are notable experiences. These experiences help pupils to build confidence, increase their understanding of the world and prepare for life beyond school.

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

The school provides an ambitious and carefully designed curriculum. It outlines the essential knowledge and key vocabulary pupils should learn over time. Effective teaching of this knowledge leads to pupils achieving well. Children get off to an excellent start in the early years. Adults introduce ambitious vocabulary that children use enthusiastically when learning alongside their classmates. Children have a rich and engaging environment to explore and discover new things. Adults provide carefully considered activities that inspire and engage children. The curriculum is delivered consistently well, which ensures that children are ready for Year 1.

Pupils are keen and eager to participate in their learning. Teachers model learning effectively and explain new ideas clearly. They select thoughtful learning activities that support pupils to improve their knowledge and skills. Pupils have opportunities to revisit essential knowledge, which helps them to link learning together. For example, 'flashbacks' help pupils to remember past learning and enable teachers to check for any gaps in understanding. However, in a small number of subjects, pupils do not always remember what they have been taught previously and struggle to recall some important aspects. This affects how successfully they are able to build on this prior learning.

Pupils learn more successfully than published results might suggest. Where pupils join the school late, such as in Years 5 and 6, they do not have enough time to

make up for previous lost learning. Consequently, despite learning well once they join the school, some pupils did not achieve as well as other pupils nationally by the end of Year 6 last year.

The school is determined for all pupils to flourish in this fully inclusive school. It has high expectations for pupils with SEND and identifies their needs accurately. Staff skilfully adapt how the curriculum is delivered to pupils with SEND. This means that these pupils access the same full curriculum as their peers and that they achieve well.

Reading is a top priority. The school's approach to reading is vibrant and ambitious. The teaching of phonics is sharp and matches pupils' needs precisely. Staff swiftly identify any pupils who need extra support with their reading and provide the help they need to catch up quickly. Pupils enjoy listening to adults reading to them and talking about their favourite authors.

Pupils' attitudes to school are positive. However, some pupils do not attend school often enough. As a result, they are missing out on essential learning and not benefiting from attending school regularly. The school is relentless in how it challenges poor attendance. This has aided secure improvements over time for some pupils, but for others, absence remains high.

The school is ambitious about its opportunities and experiences for all pupils. The emphasis placed on pupils' wider development is exceptional. The school ensures that pupils understand how to be respectful and value diversity, such as through visits to places of worship. Fundamental British values are taught as an integral part of the curriculum. The school's junior citizenship programme develops pupils' responsibilities in the community. Pupils are encouraged to pursue interests and take up new experiences. They love attending many activities such as yoga, martial arts, science, arts and sports clubs. Events such as sports competitions and festivals are accessible to all, ensuring that pupils with SEND are able to participate fully. The school's highly effective emotional and well-being programmes give pupils the confidence to seek advice about any concerns they may have.

The school is highly committed to excellence, striving for continuous improvement. Staff appreciate the support they receive to do their jobs effectively and to help pupils to learn well. Those responsible for governance have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, pupils have not learned or retained essential knowledge in their long-term memory. This means that pupils' understanding and recall of some subject knowledge are not secure. The school should ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge in these subjects are identified swiftly and addressed effectively via future teaching, so that pupils learn consistently well.
- School attendance is low for some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Low attendance means these pupils are missing out on important learning for their future. The school should ensure that their ongoing work with families leads to improvements in attendance, so that all pupils attend school regularly.

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	142362
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10296428
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Claire King
CEO	Wendy Hemmingsley
Headteacher	Victoria Musson
Website	www.queen-emmas.oxon.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Mill Academy Trust.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not currently use alternative providers.

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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff and pupils. The lead inspector also met with the chair of trust, the chair of the local committee and the CEO.
- The inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils during playtimes and in lessons.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work across some other subjects.
- Responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, including parents' free-text comments, were considered. The inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; evaluated safer recruitment practices; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; met with the designated safeguarding lead and deputy safeguarding leads; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Darren Aisthorpe, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kimberley Kemp	Ofsted Inspector

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