

Inspection of a good school: Eastfield Academy

St Albans Close, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 2RJ

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 July 2024

Outcome

Eastfield Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Peter Fairbrother. This school is part of the David Ross Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Stuart Burns, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Ross.

What is it like to attend this school?

Eastfield Academy is a caring school which promotes a real sense of belonging. Pupils are happy and feel safe. There is a strong family feeling at the school. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and nurturing. Pupils consistently show each other and staff courtesy and respect. One pupil shared, 'The adults at our school all care about us – they always fix any problems we might have.'

Pupils are proud of their school and its diverse community. Difference is celebrated and cherished. One pupil shared, 'It is important to be respectful of difference. People can believe in what they want to believe.' Pupils enjoy having the opportunity to share important things from their own religions and cultures with their peers. They help to plan the school's summer carnival and enjoy tasting foods from different cultures.

Pupils develop their leadership skills while having a meaningful impact on their community. These opportunities include the eco team's involvement in the local 'big help out' and aspirational opportunities to compete against other schools in debating competitions.

Pupils respond well to the school's ambitious curriculum. They display positive attitudes to their learning and show a desire to do their very best.

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

Children in the early years enjoy their learning. They are encouraged to develop their independence and to explore and follow their own interests, learning through play.

Children happily interact with each other cooperatively, showing that they know how to take turns. The curriculum ensures that there is a clear progression from Nursery to the end of the Reception year. Children's writing is celebrated and shows how children are using their knowledge of phonics to help them to spell words.

Reading is prioritised at the school. The phonics programme is implemented well. The books that pupils take home to read are carefully matched to the sounds that they have been learning. This helps to develop their reading fluency. Reading for pleasure is encouraged. Staff read to pupils daily. High-quality texts are used across all areas of the curriculum, ensuring that pupils experience a wide range of genres. The school's 'reading ambassadors' play an active role in choosing which books each year group will loan from the local library service.

Mathematics is comprehensively planned to ensure that pupils develop their fluency, problem solving and reasoning skills. Lessons follow a clear structure which includes the use of clear instruction and consistent models, with a heavy focus on the language of mathematics. Staff promote the correct use of key vocabulary and support pupils to explain their mathematical thinking accurately. All pupils have access to a range of appropriate resources to support their understanding of mathematics.

The school's wider curriculum is ambitious and well sequenced. There is a clear focus on developing pupils' vocabulary and their understanding of the specific skills involved with each subject as well as the important knowledge they must recall. Pupils can talk about their learning with confidence. They feel that the ways their teachers ask them quick questions about what they have recently been taught is helping them to remember more of what they have learned. However, in some lessons, there is some inconsistency in how well tasks are adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. This means that, on some occasions, pupils do not learn as well as they could.

In lessons, pupils show high levels of engagement. Highly effective pastoral support supports some pupils with managing their own behaviour and emotions. The school swiftly identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders work with a range of external agencies to access appropriate support and advice. A small number of pupils access the school's newly introduced Willow Room. This provision is resourced to cater for these pupils' individual learning needs. The school is proactively networking with specialist settings to develop the provision further.

Pupils demonstrate a mature understanding of the British values. They know what they mean and can relate them to their own personal contexts. Pupils can talk about different world faiths with confidence. The school's work to broaden pupils' horizons is extensive. The school carefully plans opportunities for pupils which enable them to support and engage with the local community. Pupils access a wide range of clubs and trips which enhance their learning.

Staff feel well supported with their workload and well-being. They feel trusted by leaders. Staff access high-quality training and networking opportunities across the trust. Those with responsibility for governance know the school's strengths and priorities well. They offer the school appropriate support and challenge and fulfil their statutory duties.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is some inconsistency in how well lessons are adapted to meet individual pupil's needs. As a result, pupils learning is not always maximised. The school should ensure teachers adapt lessons consistently well so that all pupils have the opportunity to maximise their learning.

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 January 2020.

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	138423
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10347536
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	223
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Ross
CEO of trust	Stuart Burns
Headteacher	Peter Fairbrother
Website	www.eastfieldacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the David Ross Education Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2023.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and physical education. For the deep dives, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also considered the curriculums for art and design and history and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, subject leaders and several teaching and support staff.
- The inspector met with leaders with responsibility for SEND, the early years, behaviour and personal development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, the school development plan and documentation relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector met with members of the local governing body, the trust's senior regional director and the director of primary quality assurance.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the results of the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Luella Dhoore, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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