

Elkesley Primary and Nursery School

Headland Avenue, Elkesley, Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22 8AQ

Inspection dates	24–25 February 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Very effective leadership, particularly by the headteacher, has ensured that the school has improved a great deal since its last inspection. Other leaders, including the assistant headteacher and the governing body, have also helped the school improve.
- The school is highly regarded by parents. It is outward looking and works in close partnership with the local community and with other schools.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good throughout the school. Well-trained teaching assistants help pupils make good progress.
- Early years provision is good. Young children enjoy coming to school. They are well taught, know how to behave and make good progress in their learning. As a result, they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils enjoy school a great deal. They recognise that they are well cared for and say that they always feel safe at school. They have very positive attitudes to learning, especially in Years 5 and 6. They are proud to say that behaviour is always good in their school.
- Throughout the school, pupils achieve well and make good progress. The small number of disadvantaged pupils attain similarly to other pupils due to the wise use of additional funding.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress and mostly attain in line with standards expected for their ages.
- The most-able pupils are often given additional challenge, which helps them achieve well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills in different subjects, such as history and geography, are not always well promoted. As a result, pupils' progress in writing is not yet outstanding.
- Pupils are sometimes unclear about where to focus their efforts to improve their writing and mathematics.
- The learning of some pupils in mathematics is slowed a little because they are not quick enough with basic number facts such as multiplication tables.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching in writing and mathematics by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their skills in extended writing, particularly in subjects other than English
 - speeding up pupils' recall of number facts, such as multiplication tables
 - helping pupils gain a clearer view of where they need to focus their efforts to improve their writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Strong, determined leadership by the headteacher has brought about rapid improvements in the last two years. She has ensured that all staff are clear about the school's vision and high expectations. As a result, all work well as a team to provide the goal of providing the best possible quality of education and care for all pupils.
- The school is strongly committed to promoting equal opportunities for all its pupils and they all, irrespective of their age and ability, receive a good-quality education and are well prepared for their next school and the world of work beyond.
- Leaders at all levels know the school inside out and they miss nothing; any weaknesses are quickly addressed. Consequently, the school is well placed to continue to improve in the future.
- Staff guidance and training, for all staff, are closely focused on appropriate priorities and all staff learn together and from one another. Effective checks by leaders help ensure that staff work consistently in line with school policies and expectations.
- Staff are observed teaching and they value the clear feedback on their work provided by leaders. Leaders are continually improving their systems for checking the quality of teaching and learning; this is evident in the increased focus on evaluating the learning of different groups of pupils in the class.
- The leadership and management of pupils' personal development and welfare are effective. For example, the school has a good-quality behaviour management policy, which is not only consistently implemented by all staff, but clearly understood by the pupils. This results in good behaviour and positive relationships throughout the school.
- The headteacher has effectively used the high-quality support and level of challenge provided by the local authority to help improve the quality of teaching and learning and ensure that safeguarding arrangements are robust and fully meet requirements.
- The school's leading role in the Tuxford Academy collaborative partnership of 12 primary schools has had an important effect on helping the school become more effective. For example, teachers from the primary schools meet and look together at samples of pupils' work to ensure that they all assess work as accurately and consistently as possible.
- The school spends its budget, including additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils, wisely. Disadvantaged pupils, and other pupils at risk of falling behind, are quickly identified and given any additional support necessary to help them fulfil their potential.
- Good use is also made of the additional funding provided to promote physical education and sports in school. Pupils enjoy the wide range of sports coaching provided and staff benefit from working alongside sports specialists. Year on year, an increasing number of pupils enjoy participating in inter-school sports.
- The school has revised its curriculum in the light of new national requirements and is making a very good job of making the curriculum not only more interesting, but also more challenging. Different ways of teaching mathematics have increased pupils' interest and, as a result, rates of progress in mathematics are improving. The school is aware that too few opportunities are provided for pupils to write at length in other subjects.
- The curriculum is modified well to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities and needs. Additional support is regularly provided for those who find learning more difficult. The most able are often given harder work and they enjoy rising to this challenge. Pupils with special educational needs or disability receive an appropriate and carefully tailored curriculum; small group and individual support is effective in supporting them to develop their skills.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Consequently, relationships in the school are very good and many pupils say that the school is just like a family and that 'we all look after each other'. Pupils' knowledge of other ways of life in modern Britain is promoted well across the school.
- The school works effectively to promote British values and pupils demonstrate tolerance and respect in their actions and their words. For example, they learn to vote on issues and to apply for and be interviewed for jobs around school such as librarian.

- Many parents recognise how much the school has improved since the last inspection and are very complimentary about how hard the head has worked to improve so many aspects of the school's work. Many said, 'I would recommend this school to anyone.' All 22 parents spoken to at the start of the second day of the inspection expressed their full support for the school's work.

■ **The governance of the school**

- The governing body has reviewed and improved all aspects of its work since the previous inspection and now plays an invaluable part in helping the school to improve. Governors' work is effectively coordinated by the Chair of the Governing Body, working in close partnership with the headteacher. The governing body has a wide and very useful range of skills, which include, for example, expertise in checking that safeguarding fully meets requirements.
- Good-quality concise information provided by the headteacher enables the well-trained governors to ask the right questions to ensure that the school is continually improving. Governors have also introduced good systems for checking on things for themselves through visits to classrooms and meetings with staff. They carefully audit the use of funding, such as pupil premium and school sports funding to check that it is having the desired effect.
- Governors are fully aware of the quality of teaching throughout the school and they check that teaching staff salary decisions are made in the light of the performance of teachers and the learning of pupils in their classes.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Training is fully up-to-date and all members of staff are highly vigilant when it comes to pupils' welfare, protection and safety. The school's clear procedures are understood and consistently applied by all members of staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers have very secure subject knowledge in English and mathematics and use this to set just the right level of challenge for each pupil in the class. Explanations are often clear and are followed up by demanding questions to check and extend understanding. Pupils are often given time to discuss their answers to questions and this extends their thinking and helps them learn from one another.
- Pupils respond well to the high expectations of behaviour and work that staff communicate throughout the day. Pupils also respond well to the interesting and challenging activities provided. For example, they were very proud of the high-quality illuminated script writing displayed around the school.
- Classroom displays are extremely well used to motivate pupils and show them how to improve and what to aim for.
- The teaching of writing is good. Punctuation and grammar are particularly well taught. Pupils are taught to take a pride in the presentation of their work and to do their best. Opportunities to develop writing, especially extended writing, in subjects other than English are sometimes missed.
- Reading is well taught from the early years to Year 6. As a result, pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills. In younger classes, pupils benefit from well-taught daily phonics lessons where they learn to use their knowledge of letters and sounds to help them spell and read. Daily guided reading lessons in Years 1 to 6 also help pupils learn to read. Many parents support the good progress their children make by reading with them at home. Regular access to the school library and daily story reading in class also help pupils develop a love of books and reading.
- Mathematics is well taught, especially problem-solving. Mathematics was the weakest subject at the time of the previous inspection, but now the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils in mathematics is going from strength to strength. This is very evident in in Years 5 and 6 where the teaching of mathematics is often outstanding. A slightly weaker aspect of mathematics is pupils' knowledge of number facts, such as multiplication tables, but the school is aware of this and is taking action to address this.
- Good-quality additional support for pupils with special educational needs or disability and other pupils at risk of falling behind, such as disadvantaged pupils, helps these pupils make good progress and enjoy school. Parents of pupils who find learning more difficult told the inspector that they were pleased with how well the school helps their children overcome difficulties and learn well.
- The most able benefit from being provided with suitably challenging work. The proportion of pupils exceeding standards expected for their ages is growing throughout the school.

- Marking is thorough and pupils are given time to correct and improve their work in the light of teachers' comments. Sometimes the language used to tell pupils what they are learning in lessons is too complicated and this limits pupils' understanding of exactly where to focus their efforts. Although the school has developed many strategies to guide pupils on the next stage of their learning, too many pupils still lack a sufficiently clear idea of where to focus their efforts to improve. The school has recognised this and plans to review all aspects of guidance for learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and know that they can turn to any adult if anything worries them, and they will be taken seriously.
- Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe; this was very evident in their responsible attitude and awareness while workers were repairing the roof during the week of the inspection.
- They know about various forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, and are knowledgeable about good practice on the internet. They recognise, for example, the need to keep personal details and passwords secure while online and to check with an adult before using a new website that they are not sure about.
- Pupils are polite and sensible and show good social skills. Older pupils are given many chances to take responsibility. The volunteer librarians rise well to the tasks they are given to lend books and ensure that pupils behave well in the library at lunchtimes. They take their duties seriously and carry them out in a mature fashion.
- The school provides extensive support for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, in assemblies, through its personal development curriculum and through the good-quality role models that all adults provide.
- Attitudes to learning are good throughout the school and particularly strong in Years 5 and 6. Pupils concentrate well, work hard and are keen to do their best. In lessons, pupils hold mature conversations with a partner or a group about their work. They discuss the teachers' questions and concentrate on the matter in hand. They are becoming much more confident to learn from their mistakes and know that when a teacher criticises their work, it is only to help them learn and do better.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Rates of attendance have improved and are now good. Pupils enjoy school and arrive punctually.
- Staff and pupils confirm that behaviour is always good in their school. Pupils show a clear understanding of the 'behaviour ladder' used in all classes, which rewards them for good behaviour and checks them if their behaviour is not good enough. They are keen to earn the rewards for appropriate behaviour and work.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school, on the playground, in assemblies and in the dining hall are good.
- Relationships throughout the school are effective. Pupils relate well not only to adults, but also to one another and older pupils are very keen to help others.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- National data indicate that pupils are making much better progress in reading and writing and mathematics between Year 2 and Year 6. In 2015, all pupils made the nationally expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics between Year 2 and Year 6. Also, a good proportion of pupils made better than expected progress in comparison with the national picture.
- School records and pupils' work since September 2015 confirm the view that pupils make good progress throughout the school in reading, writing and mathematics and that rates of progress are improving and that standards are rising. This is confirmed in pupils' positive results in national assessment in Years 2 and 6. Pupils are being very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- The school has ensured that all groups of pupils are doing well. Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities make good progress. Their needs are very well known to the school and they are continually helped to develop new skills and confidence. The curriculum and teaching they receive is carefully tailored to meet their sometimes complex needs well; their social and emotional development is also sensitively catered for.
- The small number of disadvantaged pupils do well because of good-quality teaching and the wise use of additional funding provided for these pupils. National data and school records indicate that the gap between the attainment of these and other pupils has closed really well and on occasions they do better than other pupils.
- National data, school records and pupils' work also indicate that the most able are well provided for. More pupils are now attaining above levels expected for their ages in all year groups.

Early years provision

is good

- The recently appointed early years leader is building on the good-quality provision she inherited. Leadership and management are good because the new early years leader has quickly developed a clear view of what works well and is making improvements to ensure that provision is even better for the children.
- The indoor classroom has been re-organised and special areas are provided for each area of learning. Good-quality and interesting resources are used to help children make good progress and enjoy their learning. Children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children are expected to behave well. They are taught to sit still, to listen carefully and to put their hands up before answering questions. They are treated with kindness and sensitivity and are very well cared for. The early years classroom has a very positive and happy atmosphere where children are valued and often encouraged to do their best.
- The writing and number work in children's books and their learning logs show the good progress they are making in their learning. They make good progress in reading and benefit from daily phonics lessons when they learn letters and sounds and use these to help them read and spell new words.
- The outdoor classroom is continually being improved. It helps children progress in all areas of their learning and helps them also with their personal development.
- Teaching and learning are good and assessment is used effectively to guide the way that adults work with children. Although provision meets all pupils' needs, much of the time, enabling all pupils to make good progress, there are occasions in the morning when the most-able older children could undertake more demanding tasks.
- Any child who finds learning difficult, including disadvantaged children, make particularly good progress because of the sensitive individual care they receive. Pupil premium funding has been used effectively to improve levels of staffing so that teaching is more individualised.
- Parents hold the early years in high regard and many parents are thoroughly involved in helping their children learn. Links with parents are good.

School details

Unique reference number	122640
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	10001799

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sioned James
Headteacher	Jen Lane
Telephone number	01777838615
Website	www.elkesley.notts.sch.uk
Email address	office@elkesley.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 October 2013

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. An average proportion of pupils speak English as their first language, although there are no pupils at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is also average.
- There is a slightly above-average proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or are disabled is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector saw teaching and learning in all classes, including a joint observation of a full lesson with the headteacher. In addition, a number of shorter visits were made to the early years and to see particular aspects, such as the teaching of spelling and reading, or pupils participating in support programmes. A range of other school activities including playtimes and lunchtimes was observed.
- Past and current work of pupils of all abilities, in all year groups, were scrutinised and some pupils were heard reading.
- Meetings were held with school staff and with two members of the governing body and a telephone conversation was held with the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Documents, including plans for school improvement and reports showing the school's view of its own performance, safeguarding documents, and policies and records relating to personal development, behaviour, welfare, safety and attendance were inspected. Information on the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally was analysed. The school's records of pupils' progress were also inspected.
- The inspector held short discussions with 22 parents of a total of 38 children at the beginning of the second day of the inspection. The views of 11 parents who responded to the online 'Parent View' questionnaire were also analysed, as were the 30 returns from a recent survey of parents' views carried out by the school in October 2015.
- The inspector received the views of staff through discussions and by analysing the 15 responses to the inspection survey of staff views. The inspector also received the views of pupils through both informal and pre-arranged discussions.
- A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.

Inspection team

Roger Sadler, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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